

# Saint Mary's School

## *Environmental Learning Center*

### Policies & Procedures for 2007-2008

#### **What is the Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center?**

Wolf Ridge began in 1971 and is currently located on the bluffs overlooking Lake Superior in Finland, Minnesota.

Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center (ELC) is an accredited residential environmental school for persons of all ages. It offers immersion programs that involve direct observation and participation in outdoor experiences and focus on ecology and science, human culture and history, personal growth, group building, and outdoor recreation.

#### **Who Goes to ELC and Why?**

While congruent with our science and social studies curriculum, Saint Mary's School (SMS) provides the ELC experience as an outside activity for our eighth grade students during the spring of the eighth grade year. ELC is a participation based program that provides hands on activities in both the physical and social sciences.

#### **Work Philosophy**

The cost of the ELC trip is approximately \$200.00 per participant. We require students to earn the equivalent of this amount by working service hours that benefit the school.

#### **Rationale**

When SMS began attending ELC, the cost of this experience was determined to be prohibitive for some families. In order to assure that all students would be able to participate in this experience, SMS opted to pay for the trip in exchange for custodial service hours.

In recent years, the number and type of service opportunities has expanded beyond sweeping classrooms and vacuuming carpet. While these other service activities are important, the need for additional help with custodial work at SMS remains. As a result, administration now requires a *minimum of 10 hours* of custodial work be completed by each student.

#### **Hours**

Current 8th Grade students are required to earn 30 hours before attending ELC. Students can begin earning these hours as early as sixth grade, but priority is given to eighth grade students who need to complete hours. Banking of hours above 30 is not allowed.

Hours are worked before school, after school, or on weekends. No credit will be given for volunteering during the school day.

## What Counts?

Hours need to be in direct service to Saint Mary's School. The list below is an outline of the service opportunities that are counted:

Type of Service	Minimum Hours	Maximum Hours
Sweeping & Cleaning	10 hours	30 hours
SMS Bingo at SCFF	0 hours	8 hours
Auction / Carnival	0 hours	8 hours
Other	0 hours	20 hours

### Other includes but is not limited to:

- ◆ Meals that directly benefit an SMS group or organization
- ◆ Babysitting for Home & School meetings
- ◆ Helping teachers as requested
- ◆ Assisting with Kindergarten Open House
- ◆ Eighth Grade graduation banquet
- ◆ Clean-A-Thon
- ◆ Helping with Donut Sunday at either Parish

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## What Does Not Count?

While all volunteerism is important and encouraged – because SMS pays for the ELC trip, no credit will be given for volunteerism that does not directly benefit SMS. For example, helping grandparents with lawn work is great, but does not directly benefit SMS. Babysitting, serving, or singing at Mass does not count.

### Pre—Approval

Sometimes unique situations and opportunities arise for volunteerism. In order to assure that you will be given credit for a service opportunity, PRE-APPROVAL from the Student Services Coordinator is required. Mrs. Slotsve is the Student Services Coordinator.

## Consequences for Not Showing Up

When you volunteer, people are counting on you to provide that service at that time. When you don't show up – there are consequences. Other people are inconvenienced by your neglect.

Therefore, if you fail to show up for a scheduled duty you will be docked double of what you would have earned. For example, if you sign up to sweep for one hour and fail to show, you would be docked two hours. If you volunteer for four hours at bingo and fail to show, you will be docked eight hours. Please keep in mind that these numbers can go into the negative and make it increasingly difficult to earn your required hours.

# Turn In Procedure for Hours

1. Hours must be turned in on the official form that is located in Mrs. Slotsve's room.
2. Mrs. Slotsve is the Student Services Coordinator responsible for tracking ELC hours. All inquiries regarding ELC hours are directed to her.
3. Each student is responsible for turning in his or her own hours. Hours turned in by someone else, student or adult, will not be counted.
4. Hours must be turned in within **one week** of the activity—**no exceptions**..
5. Hours turned in after that time will not be counted – **no exceptions**.
6. Any hours accumulated over this past summer must be turned in by **Friday, September 14, 2007**.
7. Where to sign up: A calendar is located in Mrs. Slotsve's room on which to sign up for cleaning and sweeping hours. If no student signs up to work, Mrs. Slotsve will sign up the student(s) with the least amount of hours to work.

## Eighth Grade Student Quarterly Hour Requirement

### Where Hours are Posted

Hours will be updated and posted on the wall outside of Mrs. Slotsve's room weekly.

### Who and When To Call with Questions

If students have questions regarding their ELC hours they may contact Mrs. Slotsve either before or after school. If parents have questions regarding ELC hours a good time to call Mrs. Slotsve is Monday – Friday after 2:00 PM.

**507-446-2300**

Eighth Grade Year	Hours required to be complete and recorded
End of First Quarter	10
End of Second Quarter	20
End of Third Quarter	30

### Making Satisfactory Progress

Eighth grade students who fail to make satisfactory progress according to the chart listed above will result in their being scheduled. Student's ELC hours will take precedence over any other outside activity.

Being forced to work is an inconvenience to both the student's and parent's schedules. Therefore, it is in the students best interest to plan ahead and keep current.