



OUR LADY OF MERCY HIGH SCHOOL
2009-10 STUDENT HANDBOOK



Our Lady
of Mercy High School Grades
7-12

1437 Blossom Road
Rochester, NY 14610-2298

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ALMA MATER

Glory to Mercy High, our dear old Alma Mater,
Let's sing her praises joyfully,
For well does she deserve them.
Via, Veritas, et Vita to us has sacred meaning.
Glory to Mercy High,
She teaches truth and leads the way.
Mother, thou wilt be proud of us, as we are proud of thee.
Ne'er shall we leave the path of light and truth and loyalty
Thanks and undying love, we owe to her high standards,
Her halls have led us to our guiding star.
Dear Mary, the Mother of Mercy.
Glory to Mercy High, beloved Alma Mater!
Glory, may her banner float aloft a guide for aye.
Wafting heavenward may our hearts
Joyful sing her praises far and near.
Ne'er shall we forget our cherished Mercy High,
Our dear O.L.M.

BELIEF STATEMENT

We believe that we are a caring school community for young women shaped by our Catholic and Mercy identity, rooted in Gospel values, dedicated to the ministry of service and respectful of cultural and religious diversity.

We believe that our pursuit of academic excellence is centered in Christian character formation and values-based education.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Lady of Mercy High School
A Ministry of the Sisters of Mercy

Animated by our Motto – **Via, Veritas et Vita**
We educate Young Women in ...
the **Way** – rooted in Gospel Values
the **Truth** – unleashing creative energy for the pursuit of knowledge and
the **Life** – nurturing a hope-filled vision for leadership and responsible service.

PHILOSOPHY

Our Lady of Mercy High School is a Catholic secondary school for young women in grades 7-12 founded in the vision of Catherine McAuley and the ministry of the Sisters of Mercy; we are committed to the education of young women of all faiths and backgrounds.

In an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust, all are encouraged and motivated to develop individual talents to meet the challenges of the 21st century. In collaboration with families in grades 7-12, we promote educational excellence and the development of the entire individual.

At Our Lady of Mercy High School we expect students to take an active role in their learning and personal development while preparing for a life-long pursuit of knowledge and wisdom in the light of Christ's teachings.

GRADUATE PROFILE

A graduate of Our Lady of Mercy High School continues to deepen her faith, reflecting and witnessing gospel values. She demonstrates integrity and is responsible for her own actions. She is aware of God's presence in her own life and in the lives of others worldwide. She expresses her compassion for others through ministry and service.

A graduate of OLM is a confident and responsible woman who embraces cultural diversity by serving the local and global communities. Her particular focus is on the needs of women and children.

A graduate of OLM possesses problem solving, organizational, and technological skills. She is an independent yet contributing member of the community. She exercises her leadership capabilities in a variety of situations, and makes decisions that promote a healthy lifestyle.

A graduate of OLM's rigorous academic program has critical thinking skills, an appreciation of all educational disciplines, and a desire to share this knowledge throughout her lifetime.

SCHOOL PROFILE

School

Our Lady of Mercy High School, a private Catholic all-women school established in 1928, is sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy of Rochester, New York. The school is located in the Rochester suburb of Brighton and has over 625 students in 7th - 12th grades.

Accreditation

Our Lady of Mercy High School will admit any young woman with adequate elementary school preparation regardless of race, creed, or cultural background. Non-discrimination is practiced as a matter of philosophy as well as of policy. All incoming students take an entrance examination to determine educational background and to assist the guidance department and administration in scheduling. A registration form and required medical paperwork must be completed before admission is final.

In cases of questionable admission, administration and guidance personnel will determine whether Our Lady of Mercy can serve the needs of a particular student.

OUR LADY OF MERCY HANDBOOK CONTRACT

In the non-public school and therefore, in the Catholic school, contract law is the predominant governing law. Under this contract, Our Lady of Mercy agrees to provide educational services to a student in return for payment of tuition and adherence to school rules.

The parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will accept all the conditions set forth in the current Student/Parent Handbook and agree to comply with all school regulations. The parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and the students are responsible for all regulations promulgated by the school. In case of doubt, they are to contact school administration.

The school reserves the right to review and update the handbook as it sees fit. The parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

Principal's Right to Amend: The principal has the right to amend or revise any policy in the Student/Parent Handbook. Parents will be notified of any such changes.

For everyone's protection, parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and students are asked to sign the enclosed statement that you have read and agree to be governed by the handbook. Thank you.

FINANCES

Tuition Policy

Tuition is due in the following manners:

1. Full payment July 1 prior to the beginning of the school year.

2. Two payments: ½ July 1 prior to the beginning of the school year and the second half, plus applicable service charge, by December 1 of the school year.
3. An 11-month bank loan with M & T Bank effective July 1.
4. Partial payment July 1 prior to the beginning of the school year and the balance through the 11-month bank loan.

Financial Checkpoints

January or June examinations cannot be taken if tuition is not current to the school or to the bank. Neither graduation tickets nor a diploma will be issued to any student who has an outstanding balance due to the school or the bank. **These include, but are not limited to, school sponsored trips, graduation, and special activities.** All tuition must be paid in full in order to participate in extra-curricular programs.

Insurance

There is a school accident policy from Blue Cross Blue Shield that covers some payment (up to the maximum) in accordance with the benefits provided on the information brochure that each family receives at the start of the school year. If the student qualifies for coverage under another contract or policy, all claims will be processed first against that policy.

VISITORS

Visitors to Mercy

Parents and alumnae are most welcome to visit Mercy during the school day. To ensure the safety of students and staff, all visitors are asked to check in at the office, to sign in and to receive a visitor's pass. Visitors spending all or part of a day need to contact the Assistant Principal prior to the visit.

Shadowing Program

Visits are limited to girls who are planning to enroll in Grades 7-12.

Procedure:

1. At least 3 days before the visit, the parent of the guest should acquire a visitor's permission slip from the Admissions Coordinator. The parent or guardian of the guest must sign this form. The office will approve or disapprove the visit. We do not accommodate visitors after June 1st.
2. Upon entering the building, the guest should come to the main office. A hostess from the next grade will be assigned to student visitors.
3. During the visit, it is assumed that the guest will:
 - a. Wear a visible name tag;
 - b. Conduct herself in an appropriate manner;
 - c. Be introduced to staff and faculty by hostess;
 - d. Dress appropriately for the day. (No jeans etc.)

ACADEMICS

A. Curriculum

The curriculum is college preparatory. Approximately 99% of Mercy graduates enter college. Honors courses are offered in English, Social Studies, and Mathematics.

AP Courses are offered in English Literature and Composition, World History, United States History, European History, Spanish Language, French Language, Biology, Calculus, Chemistry, Physics, and Psychology. A senior who is taking three AP courses could have the 7.0 credit requirement waived to 6.0.

B. Classes

All students are required to have 7 ½ credits in their schedules, except for juniors and seniors who are required to take 7 credits. Seniors must successfully complete and pass 6 credits including required courses in order to graduate.

C. Testing

For full year courses, midterm exams are given in January and final exams in June. Final exams are given at the end of semester courses. Students must take midterms and finals when scheduled. A student who misses a midterm or final exam for reasons other than medical or family emergency will receive a grade of zero. Parents must call the Assistant Principal to make other arrangements when a student will miss an exam due to illness. A doctor's note is required. If a student is absent from a Regents exam, she must take it on the next scheduled date.

D. Academic Records

In accordance with the Buckley Amendment, also known as the Family and Privacy Act, parents and students have the right of access to the student's official record. Each student has an official folder in which are placed academic transcripts and academic testing. If a parent wishes to view the record, the school requires twenty-four hours notice and a written request from the parent.

Our Lady of Mercy abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide the non-custodial parent access to the academic records and to other school related information regarding the student. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

E. Schedule Changes

No course changes may be made after the first 6-day cycle of the semester unless teacher initiated.

F. Academic Progress

All students are required to meet certain academic standards. The Counseling staff and Assistant Principal review these periodically. The Athletic Director and Activity Moderators will review the student's grades and confirm eligibility to participate in the sports program and other school activities.

G. Report Cards

Report cards are mailed to parents at the end of each quarter. Progress reports are mailed home midway through each quarter. Parents are encouraged to meet with teachers to discuss the academic progress of their student. Parents should call the school office or email the teacher to arrange an appointment.

H. Scholarship and Honor Rolls

Scholarship Roll: A student must achieve an average of 95.0% or above and no grade below 80%.

Honor Roll: A student must achieve an average of 88.0% or above and no grade below 65.

I. Summer School

No course (except foreign language) may be repeated at Mercy. A student who fails a course or a Regents exam must register for summer school and pass the course(s) and/or exam.

If a student fails a course, she must repeat and pass the course in summer school.

If a student fails a required Regents course/exam, she must repeat the course in summer school, retake and pass the Regents exam in August or the next offered date.

If a student attends summer school in order to raise a grade earned during the school year, the grade earned during the school year and the summer school grade will be averaged together.

If a student fails a course and there is no summer school for that course, she must receive 30 hours of private tutoring, and pass an exam given by Mercy High School. The tutor must verify in writing the dates and times of tutoring.

J. National Honor Society

The Catherine McAuley Chapter of the National Honor Society exists to create enthusiasm for scholarship, stimulate a desire to render service, promote leadership, and develop character in the students of Our Lady of Mercy High School. The National Honor Society is a service organization and is not meant to be a duplication of the scholarship and/or honor rolls.

To be eligible for membership, a candidate must be a member of the junior or senior class and have a cumulative, scholastic average of 93.5%. Faculty members evaluate eligible candidates on the basis of scholarship, leadership, service, and character. The Faculty Council reviews the evaluations. Selection of members to the National Honor Society is by majority vote of the Faculty Council.

K. Counseling Department

The Counseling Department is committed to every student's personal growth. By meeting the academic, social and emotional needs of students, we prepare young women for informed decision making regarding course selection, career exploration and college search. We encourage positive peer relationships and offer support and assistance with any personal concerns.

Please visit our webpage, www.mercyhs.com high school, for contact information, helpful links and resources.

L. Media Center

The Media Center is a quiet environment conducive to study. The Media Center staff reserves the right to ask disruptive students to leave.

The Media Center is closed to students during homeroom – **no exceptions**. Students must sign in at the circulation desk during school hours and before/after school. During the school day, no student will be admitted into the Media Center without a pass. Students from study hall are expected to remain in the media center during the entire period. They will not be permitted to leave early or return to study hall.

Cell Phones: Since the Media Center is a quiet environment; cell phones are not permitted at any time.

Computer Use: The computers in the Media Center are to be used for academic purposes only. Any student violating this rule may be asked to leave.

Circulation of Materials: All materials must be checked out at the circulation desk before leaving the Media Center. Reference materials do not circulate.

Overdue Materials

Media Center materials should be returned in a timely manner and in good condition. Overdue materials *will not* incur a fine. There is a fine or replacement fee for books that are damaged while on loan to a student. Instances include broken binding, wet or stained pages, missing cover or broken barcode. **Students may not receive report cards until all Media Center obligations are met.**

Works Cited Format

The purpose of a Works Cited page is to list alphabetically the sources used in a research paper. Mercy students are expected to use MLA format for **ALL** subject area research papers. Not all formats for sources are listed here.

For any other formats that may be needed, you may refer to Microsoft Works. When it opens up, go to Bibliography. When the different formats are shown, click on MLA where different sources and the ways to cite them are illustrated.

1. The Works Cited is always the last page of a research paper.
2. Works Cited entries are **NOT** numbered.
3. Center the title Works Cited one inch from the top of the page. The title Works Cited is **NOT** underlined.
4. Alphabetize entries according to the author's last name. If the author's name is not given, use the title of the work. If two or more books are by the same author, arrange the titles in alphabetical order. **HOWEVER**, do not repeat the author's name, but instead type three hyphens and a period, skip two spaces, and give the title for the second and all successive works.
5. The first line of each entry is flush with the left margin. The second and following lines of each entry are indented 5 letter spaces.
6. The lines of a works cited entry is double-spaced. Double spacing is also used between each entry.

Book – One author

Author (last name first). Title. City of publication: Publisher, Date.

Lauber, Patricia. Living with Dinosaurs. New York: Bradbury, 1991.

Magazine (monthly)

Author (last name first). "Title of Article." Title of Magazine. Month Year: page numbers.

Folger, T. "The Blood of Dinos." Discover Jan.1993: 49.

General Encyclopedias

Author (last name first). "Title of Article." Name of Encyclopedia. Edition.

Dodson, Peter. "Dinosaurs." Compton's Encyclopedia. 1994 ed.

CD-ROM (Encyclopedias or other single works)

Author (last name first). "Title of Article." Title of CD-ROM.

CD-ROM. Place? (if given) Publisher, Date of Publication.
Dodson, Peter. "Dinosaurs." Information Finder. CD-ROM. World Book, 1994.
World Wide Web site
Author (last name first, if known). "Title of Item." Title of the Complete Work (if applicable). Document date if known and different from the date accessed. Date of access (network address).
Arlington Convention and Visitors Service. "The Washington Monument." 1 Oct. 1997. 11 March 1998. <<http://www.co.arlington.va.us/acvs/tour1.htm>>.

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Absences: An absence is recorded every time a student is missing from class. Reasons may include illness, appointments, college visits, attendance at other school events, retreats, tardiness, skipping class, or reporting to the nurse's office. Regardless of the legality of the excuse, it is considered an absence. Students must make up all missed work.

Absences in excess of 15% of the marking period affect the student's ability to successfully master the course.

1. The Physical Education Department sets the maximum at 5 absences per quarter. More than 5 PE class absences require the student to make up the quarter's work.
2. In courses other than PE, more than 7 cumulative absences in any quarter will result in a home contact either by phone or letter from the Assistant Principal.
3. A student may not miss more than 14 classes for a semester course and 28 classes for a full course during the school year. Failure to meet the class attendance policy may result in loss of academic credit.

The parent or guardian must write a note for all tardies, early dismissals or absences stating the students' name, dates of absences and the reason. Without a note, the student will be marked "unexcused" (Note: certain absences are always considered unexcused, for example, family vacations, truancies). When a student is absent, a parent or guardian must call the school no later than 7:45 a.m. (585-288-7120). Please remember to include homework requests with your call or refer to www.schoolnotes.com for assignments. Homework requests cannot be honored for single day absences. With regard to extended absence, it is ultimately the responsibility of the student and parent/guardian to see that the required work is completed and returned in a timely fashion.

In order to participate in any after school sport, assembly, play or event, **the student must be present in school that day.**

Late Arrivals: Students must get the necessary pass to be admitted to homeroom or class.

Any student accumulating 3 unexcused tardies in any quarter will serve an after school detention. The 4th unexcused tardy will result in a Saturday detention from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. She will do academic work during that time.

Early Dismissal: To leave school early the student:

1. Leaves a note or school form signed by a parent or guardian in the school office by 8:00 a.m.
2. Completes a pass with all requested information.
3. Keeps yellow copy to use as her pass for dismissal.
4. Brings yellow copy to office when she leaves.

All ill or injured students must report to the Health Office. The nurse contacts the parent or guardian of an ill or injured student and arranges for early dismissal and transportation. **STUDENTS SHOULD NOT CALL HOME ON THEIR OWN.**

Field Trips: During the year field trips and class releases may be arranged for approved activities. Students need to have the Field Trip form signed by all their teachers. The form must be signed by the parent/guardian after they have read and acknowledged any faculty comments.

1. A student driver must have a parental release form signed by a parent or guardian. This release form must be presented to the teacher/coach/moderator at least two days prior to the scheduled event. All New York State laws regarding learner permits and junior drivers apply. A copy of the law can be obtained from <http://www.nysdmv.com/broch/c41.htm> and <http://www.nysdmv.com/license.htm>
2. Any student riding with an adult driver, must have a parental release form signed by her parent or guardian. This release form must be presented to the teacher/coach/moderator at least two days prior to the scheduled event.

College Visitation: Two (2) scheduled school days will be allowed for excused college visitations. Any visitation beyond the two (2) will be considered an unexcused absence.

Special Days/Family Vacation: Family vacations during school days are unexcused absences. Parents should schedule vacations during school vacations.

Teachers are not required to give make-up work, pre-vacation work or tests to students who were absent due to vacation, unapproved class release, or any unexcused reason.

Emergency Closing/Snow Days: In the event of inclement weather or emergency, students and parents/guardians should listen to these radio stations: WARM, WHAM, WVOR, WXXI, WPXY, or watch channels: 8, 9, 10, 13, or 31.

CHEMICAL USE POLICY

This policy is based on the Mercy High School philosophy, which recognizes that the responsibility for our students' spiritual and personal growth is shared among students, parents, faculty, and administration. It is additionally based on the convictions that school must be a drug-free environment and that possession, use, or abuse of illegal substances, and alcohol are against the law. We believe with early intervention, the abuse of mind-altering substances is a treatable illness. Effective identification of drug problems coincides with consistent, progressive consequences incurred for violations of our school's chemical use policy. Therefore, violations of the chemical use policy incur simultaneous disciplinary action and referral to the student's counselor, emphasizing Mercy's code of conduct and our commitment to help troubled students.

The guidance department provides school based, short-term educational counseling and referral services for students and their families. A referral to our guidance department, in coordination with disciplinary action, is made to address any incident involving the use of drugs as stated in this policy.

Following New York State Law, smoking is not permitted anywhere on a school campus. Disciplinary and referral measures as stated in this policy are in response to the use of ANY drug, including, but not limited to, nicotine and alcohol. This policy also refers to misused prescription or over-the-counter drugs, illegal drugs (including steroids), look-alike drugs, pills or other substances, which are misrepresented and sold or distributed as restricted or illegal drugs, or products misused for the purpose of mind-altering effect (aerosols, solvents, etc.).

The following actions involving alcohol, illegal drugs and chemicals, or paraphernalia associated with their use will incur consequences:

1. Attempting to secure or purchase.
2. Using or having used.
3. Possessing.
4. Intending to, or attempting to, sell or distribute.
5. Selling or distributing.
6. Being knowingly present when used, possessed, or consumed.

RESPONSE FOR CHEMICAL USE VIOLATIONS BY STUDENTS:

First Offense: Punishment will range from a minimum of one detention and three demerits to dismissal from Our Lady of Mercy High School, depending on the severity of the situation; referral to the student's counselor, notification of parents, and, if necessary, legal authorities.

Students involved in extracurricular activities, may lose the privilege of that activity, depending on the severity of the situation. These include, but are not limited to, loss of student office, loss of participation in student performances, non-attendance at proms, trips, athletic games or practices. Seniors may lose senior privileges. Students involved in any extra-curricular activity "must be in good academic and disciplinary standing in order to participate in proms, trips, plays, and athletics or serve as a student officer" (Student Handbook).

Second Offense: A second offense warrants immediate suspension from Our Lady of Mercy High School pending the completion of a drug evaluation from an authorized agency, notification of parents, and, if necessary, legal authorities. A meeting with the school administration, student, her parents and counselor will be held to review the drug evaluation and the student's re-entry to school, or dismissal depending on the severity of the situation.

While on suspension, students may not participate in any extra-curricular activities. As stated above, students involved in any extra-curricular activity "must be in good academic and disciplinary standing in order to participate in proms, trips, plays, and athletics or serve as a student officer" (Student Handbook). Depending on the severity of the situation, students may forfeit their right to continue in such activities.

The "Chemical Use Policy" is in effect at all times, on and off campus, during the school year and on breaks. Remember the use of alcohol and other drugs is against NYS Law.

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Steps to be taken for a course, sport or classroom concern:

1. Contact the teacher or coach.
2. If no resolution is reached, please contact the following in the order listed: department chairperson, Assistant Principal, the Principal.
3. If you feel the problem has not been addressed by any of the above personnel, then contact the President.

Student/staff conflicts:

Students and staff may request a meeting with the Assistant Principal/Middle School Director if the problem has not been resolved through dialogue.

DANCE GUIDELINES/PROCEDURES

General Guidelines (all dances grades 7 – 12)

1. Students must keep all belongings with them. They are discouraged from bringing expensive items or large amounts of cash to the dance.
2. Backpacks and large purses are not permitted.
3. Students and guests must arrive by the time determined by the sponsoring moderator of the dance and may leave during the final hour unless otherwise stated.
4. All refreshments must be purchased at the dance. No containers may be brought into the dance.
5. The use of alcohol or other drugs is STRICTLY FORBIDDEN. Students and/or guests who arrive under the influence of alcohol or other drugs or become under the influence while at the dance will not be permitted to remain. Breathalyzer tests will be administered to any student suspected of being under the influence of alcohol. Parents of students in violation will be called to pick up the student and her guest. No ticket refunds will be given.
6. Proper attire is required at all times and should be consistent with the event; i.e. formal, semi-formal, casual.
 - i. Formal: tuxedo and tie, matching slacks and dress shoes, suit and tie for boys; full-length gowns, short dressy dresses, modest exposure* and dress shoes for girls.
 - ii. Semi-formal: suit and tie, sports jacket and tie, dress shoes for boys; full-length gowns, dressy dresses, modest exposure* and dress shoes for girls.
 - iii. Casual: slacks, skirts, or shorts (no more than 3 inches above the knee), casual shoes; no exposed midriffs or low or revealing necklines or backs
*no plunging necklines, no cutout designs, no back exposure below the belly button level, slits and hemlines must be no more than 3 inches above the knee.
7. Dance moderator and/or attending Administrator will make the final determination on questionable attire. Students in violation will not be permitted to enter the dance. No refunds will be given.
8. Inappropriate or immodest dancing will not be tolerated. Students deemed in violation will be given a verbal warning. A second violation will result in sending the student and guest home. If multiple students are involved, the music will be turned off and the lights turned on for a period of time.

9. Mercy students are responsible for notifying their guests of all dance guidelines.
10. All students must be in good standing. Mercy students with unserved detentions, attendance or behavior concerns are not considered in good standing. Administration has the final determination of students in question.
11. Students who arrive without the necessary documentation will not be allowed to enter the dance.
12. Once a student enters the dance, the student may not leave and re-enter the building. If a student chooses to do otherwise, her parents (and guest's parents) will be notified.
13. Students, who are absent from school for any reason, including in/out of school suspension, may not attend dances.

Middle School Dances

1. Middle School dances are NOT open to the public. They are for Mercy students and their invited friends.
2. Guests must be registered in 7th and 8th grade.
3. Guests from McQuaid's 7/8 grades may enter by showing their McQuaid I.D. They do not have to be sponsored by a Mercy student.
4. Guests, (either male or female) from any other middle school, must be sponsored by a student from Mercy's 7th or 8th grade. A Mercy student may sponsor a maximum of two guests. A guest pass must be completely filled out, signed by both the Mercy student and her parent, and submitted to the main office at Mercy no later than 8:00 a.m. on the day before the dance. That document indicates that the parent of the Mercy student will be responsible for the actions of the guest as well as any damage to Mercy property caused by the guest. Parents should not sign a guest pass for someone who is not well known by the parent or their daughter.
5. In order to enter the dance, guest students from schools other than McQuaid must have a completed guest pass file AND show either a school I.D. or a note on school letterhead signed by the principal.

Senior High School Guidelines

1. Senior high is considered grades 9 through 12. This applies to Mercy students as well as their guests. Guests may be no older than 20.
2. All specific guidelines for these events must be followed.
3. The Winter Formal, Junior Prom and Senior Ball are for students presently attending Mercy. Each student may bring one guest.
4. All guests must provide picture ID; e.g. school ID or driver's license.
5. Mercy parents must sponsor all guests. Unless otherwise stated by the moderator of the event, the completed guest form must be turned into the Assistant Principal no later than two school days before the event.

DRESS CODE POLICY

Purpose:

- to identify individuals as a member of the Mercy community
- to show pride in being a member of the Mercy community.
- to promote an awareness of equality among individuals, regardless of economic background, ethnic or cultural differences or social environment.
- to encourage students to concentrate on academics and not styles, brands, etc.

Middle School Dress Code – White Mercy short-sleeved or long-sleeved polo or turtleneck or navy blue Mercy polo. Navy blue slacks, walking shorts, Capri pants, or navy school plaid skirt.

High School Dress Code – White Mercy short-sleeved or long-sleeved polo or turtleneck or navy blue Mercy polo. Navy blue slacks, walking shorts, Capri pants, or navy blue skirt. Seniors may wear khaki colored slacks, walking shorts, Capri pants, or skirts.

Optional: All students – Navy blue or grey Mercy sweatshirt available in the school bookstore. No hooded sweatshirts. Navy blue sweaters are available at Stitchworks, only.
Note: This is the only knit sweater permitted.

Guidelines:

Shirts: White short or long-sleeved polo or turtleneck with “Mercy” lettering on the collar or the navy blue polo sold in the Mercy bookstore. Students may not wear colored t-shirts or shirts with visible lettering underneath their polo; nor may they wear long-sleeved t-shirts underneath short-sleeved polo shirts.

Slacks/Capri’s: Must be navy; not faded. No jeans styling, knit, denim, drawstring styles, sweatpants, or athletic pants are permitted. Seniors may choose to wear khaki colored slacks/capri’s; guidelines apply.

Skirt (Grades 7-8 only): Navy school plaid stitched down pleated skirt (no shorter than 2 inches above the knee). Available at Stitchworks.

Skirt (Grades 9-12 only): Navy blue skirt (no shorter than 2 inches above the knee). Drawstring style or knit, denim, fleece skirts are not permitted. Seniors may choose to wear khaki colored skirts; guidelines apply.

Walking shorts (Grades 7-12): Navy blue twill/cotton twill blend (no shorter than 2 inches above the knee). Seniors may choose to wear khaki colored shorts; guidelines apply.

Shoes: Shoes must be closed in front and back with heels no higher than 1½ inch. Socks (any color) must be worn at all times.

Mercy students are expected to show pride in their appearance at all times. Writing or drawing on any part of a student’s clothing is not permitted.

The student’s hair, make-up and jewelry must be clean and neat; dread locks or knotted hair are not permitted. Only natural hair colors are acceptable during regular school days. No facial jewelry (including tongue piercing, nose studs, and spacers), hats, bandannas, or visible tattoos are permitted.

In keeping with the standard of modesty and safety in dress, certain items of apparel are never permitted (including dress down days); for example, skin-tight clothing, lingerie-or pajama-style clothing, bare midriffs, slit or ripped skirts/shorts/slacks, micro-mini skirts, cut offs, halters, spandex, camouflage or oversized clothing, low cut shirts/tops, see-through shirts/tops, spaghetti straps, exposed bra straps, exposed underwear, flip-flops, or extremely high-heeled shoes.

The Administration reserves the right to determine if a student is within the dress code. The strict interpretation of this dress code is left entirely to the judgment of the Administration and Our Lady of Mercy High School faculty. Students in violation will receive a detention. In the instance of repeat offenders, parents will be contacted.

Consequences: Students not complying with the school Dress Code may be denied entrance to class and sent to the Assistant Principal’s office to be given the opportunity to comply with the Dress Code. Parents/Guardians may be notified to bring appropriate attire or to pick up their daughter. Further consequences will be at the discretion of the Assistant Principal for Student Life.

FIGHTING

Combative physical contact or other violent encounter with another student or students will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, hitting, punching, pushing, and kicking. Students involved in fighting will immediately be brought to the Assistant Principal who will conduct a thorough investigation and the student’s parents will be called. Consequences will range from in-school suspension to dismissal from Our Lady of Mercy High School.

HARASSMENT/SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Acts of harassment committed by students or staff shall constitute disorderly conduct and insubordination and are in violation of Mercy’s code of conduct. All violations must be reported to the principal so that the matter may be fully investigated. (If the principal is not available, the president should be contacted.)

INTERNET USE

Parents and students must sign and return the Internet Disclaimer in order to have the privileges of internet use in school.

PARENT/GUARDIANSHIP POLICY

Any student who is not living with natural parent(s) or stated guardians is required to submit a written release statement from the natural parent(s) within 10 days of the occurrence. The Assistant Principal and a guidance counselor will set up an appointment with the parent/guardian to sign the necessary document. The school will not be held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that have not been made known. Any changes, which occur during the school year, must be reported to the Assistant Principal. All legal agreements pertaining to child custody and visitation rights must be on file with the Principal at Our Lady of Mercy High School. Students will not be released to any individual without proper identification and custodial approval. Please notify the school in the event of short-term change of guardianship due to parent illness or vacation.

PREGNANCY POLICY

The philosophy of Mercy High School states that the special spirit in the school is that of concern for one another and respect for all persons. Our Catholic belief in the sanctity of life makes it our responsibility to give compassionate and caring support if a student becomes pregnant. The Administration, in conjunction with the Guidance Department, will deal with each student individually and provide educational options for her during pregnancy.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

School administration may conduct a search of a student's locker or backpack when there is sufficient cause. Any search is to be done in the presence of another staff member.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation forms are available at the school office or from the school district transportation office. The form must be completed and returned by April 1st each year. For any change in the school schedule, the school will be responsible for contacting the transportation department or the school districts. Some districts will not transport students to Mercy on days when their district schools are closed and Mercy is open. It is the responsibility of the families to provide transportation to and from school.

STEALING POLICY

Respect for property, our own and others', is inherent in Our Lady of Mercy High School's philosophy and practices. Stealing will not be tolerated. Any student found stealing, or suspected of stealing, will be immediately brought before the Assistant Principal who will call the student's parent/guardian. Pending an investigation by Administration, immediate disciplinary action ranging from in-school suspension to dismissal will result. Legal authorities may be contacted. Where possible, arrangements for restitution will be made by the individual(s) responsible for the loss.

WEAPONS

No implement that can be construed as a weapon will be allowed on school premises.

FACILITIES

McAuley Wing/Motherhouse Circle

The Motherhouse circle and McAuley Wing parking lot are properties of the Sisters of Mercy. Students and families must use the school's Clover Street entrance and school driveway for all arrivals and departures. The Blossom Road entrance and driveway serve as our bus loop from 7:00 – 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. on school days are closed to other traffic at those times.

Book Store

The bookstore is located on the ground floor of the Motherhouse, near the cafeteria. It is open during lunch periods.

Cafeteria

The cafeteria is open before school as well as during the lunch period. It is the only area for food and drink. Breakfast and lunch are available. (Mercy does not participate in the Free or Reduced Lunch Program). Students are responsible for leaving the cafeteria in good order, that is, uneaten food, food wrappers and other debris should be picked up and discarded in the receptacles provided, and trays should be returned. Due to limited seating space during the lunch period, students must eat lunch during their assigned lunch period only.

Lockers

Each student is assigned a hall locker in September for use during the school year. Locker assignments may not be changed without the permission of the Assistant Principal. The combination lock that is to be used on the locker is available in the Media Center during the last week in August or in homeroom in September. Afterwards a student may obtain a lock from the Assistant Principal. **Students must use Mercy locks.** The student is responsible for safeguarding the combination and keeping the locker closed and locked at all times. The school is

not responsible for stolen items. A member of the Physical Education staff assigns each student in grades 7-12 a gym locker. The student is responsible for providing a lock and must leave a copy of the combination in the gym office.

Lockers are the property of Our Lady of Mercy High School and are subject to inspection by the Administration. Lockers must be kept clean inside and out. On birthdays and holidays, the outside of lockers may be tastefully decorated.

Parking Lot

The parking lot is off limits to all students during school hours.

Rest Rooms

Students should use these facilities for the purpose for which they are intended. Students are to be considerate of the needs of others by leaving the area clean for those who will use it next.

STUDENT LIFE

After School

When a student is on campus after 3:00 p.m., or after her supervised activity, she is to abide by the following rules:

1. Remain in the designated supervised area; e.g. gallery or the media center. The media center is open until 4:15 p.m.
2. The cafeteria is closed to students after dismissal time unless supervised by an approved adult and signed out in advance in accordance with building procedures.
3. Students who are found in an unsupervised area after 3:15 p.m. will receive consequences.
4. If students need to use the phone, they may use one of two pay phones located in the north hall outside the cafeteria and one in the gallery entranceway. A student may also use her cell phone after school.

Backpacks

Backpacks are permitted to and from school only. They may not be used during the school day. Sports bags and equipment may be stored in the Middle School gym balcony or gym locker rooms. The doors are open from 7:50 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Before School

All students are to remain in the cafeteria until 7:45 a.m. and at this time they may report to their homeroom.

Cell Phones/Pagers, Radios, Cassette/CD Players/Ipods

Cell phones, pagers, radios, cassette, CD players and Ipods may not be carried by students during the school day (8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.). Phones and pagers must be

locked in the student's locker and turned off. If used during the school day, such devices will be confiscated and turned over to the Assistant Principal.

First offense: Student may pick up her cell phone (or other electronic device) from the Assistant Principal at the close of the following school day. The student will receive a detention.

Second offense: The Assistant Principal will hold the phone for one week, after which time the student's parent(s) may pick up the cell phone (or other electronic device) from the Assistant Principal. The student will receive two detentions.

Third offense: The student will forfeit her right to have a cell phone or any other electronic device in school for the remainder of the school year.

Parents, please do not call or text message your daughters during the day

Cheating/Plagiarism

A student will receive a grade of zero for any forms of cheating, plagiarism or enabling of cheating. Parents will be notified.

Containers

To ensure the safety of all students, glass containers are not permitted in the building or on the school grounds. Students are NOT PERMITTED to carry sport bottles or any other container in the building.

Driving to School

On campus parking space is limited. Parking permits will be issued on a first come first served basis. Preference will be given to any licensed seniors and licensed juniors, if the juniors live in districts that do not provide transportation to Mercy. If space remains, parking may be open to other licensed juniors. Students must obtain a permission form from the Assistant Principal available in June for the following school year. Parking permits cost \$30.00.

A student driving a car to Mercy High School must adhere to the regulations stated on the permission form. Failure to do so may result in her parking privilege being revoked. No refunds will be made.

Fire Drills

State law mandates that Administration conduct 12 fire drills yearly. To ensure the safety of all persons the following guidelines will be enforced:

When the alarm rings students should be silent and:

1. Use the assigned exit for the room.
2. Leave immediately in silence - take purse only.
3. Go in single lines on either the right or left side of the corridor.
4. Move quickly to exit, use handrail to avoid tripping.

5. If the assigned exit is not passable, move to the nearest alternate exit.
6. The first girls at outside doors open both sides hold the door.
7. Line up in specified areas facing the building.
8. Move out far enough from the building so the last people are at least 200 feet from the building.
9. Remain quiet while attendance is taken and listen for instructions.
10. Return to classroom quickly and quietly when a signal is given.

Gum

Gum is not permitted.

Illness

If a student becomes ill during the school day, she reports immediately to the School Nurse or the Assistant Principal with a pass from her classroom teacher.

Students should not report to the Nurse during class changes without first reporting to their next period teacher.

Lost and Found

Found items should be taken to the office of the Assistant Principal.

Mass and Prayer Services

Students are expected to attend all school celebrations of the Eucharist and other all-school prayer services. Behavior at Mass, during morning prayers, and other liturgical services should reflect the centrality and seriousness that Our Lady of Mercy faith community associates with worship. Students are expected to be respectful and attentive during the services as well as when entering or leaving the place where services are celebrated.

Medical Information

Medical information may be shared among staff on a need to know basis to ensure the safety of a child while in the care of the school. Parents who do not want protected health information shared on this need to know basis must contact the school nurse. Parents must sign a release form, referred to as HIPPA, for their health care providers to share protected health information with the school.

Messages

All emergency phone messages from a parent or guardian are handled promptly. Please make every effort to communicate routine messages to your daughter before school.

Physical Examinations

Every student is required to present a current Physical Examination Form upon entering grades 7 and 10. This must be on file in the Mercy health office no later than mid-October. Any student participating in the sports program must have a physical (within a year of the sports tryouts) and a parental permission form returned to the health office before tryouts.

Prescription Medications

The school nurse must have a written order from your daughter's health care provider as well as written permission from a parent to give a prescription medication. The medicine must be in its original container.

Non-Prescription Medications

If you would like your daughter to have an over-the-counter medicine such as Tylenol, Advil, Midol, Cough drops, etc. during the school day, please follow these guidelines:

1. All medicines must be in original containers.
2. A written note is necessary from her health care provider as well as a parent/guardian.
3. Authorization for medicine must be updated each year; this information may be included on the physical form.
4. Medication must be picked up at the end of the school year or it will be discarded.

Verbal orders from a parent are accepted as necessary for one day only and must be followed up with a written note.

Senior Privilege

Senior privileges are determined each year (and may vary each year depending on circumstances) by the Senior class officers and Assistant Principal and approved by the Principal of OLMHS. They may include but are not limited to the following:

1. **Early Dismissal Privilege** – a senior in good standing may leave at 1:30 if she has a study hall scheduled during her last two classes of the day or at 2:10 if she has a study hall scheduled during her last class of the day. Seniors must complete and return the appropriate permission slip and return to the Assistant Principal.
2. **Senior Shirt** – may be worn (with dress code slacks) by seniors in good standing one day per week on the day designated by the Senior Class President and the Assistant Principal.
3. **Senior Dress Up** – Seniors in good standing may dress up on Fridays during fourth quarter. In June, seniors may dress down every day.
4. **Senior lounge area** - Seniors in good standing may report to the Senior lounge area during her scheduled study hall provided she first reports to her study hall for attendance.

5. **Ordering lunch out** – Seniors may order lunch out on designated days. Guidelines for this privilege are posted in Senior homerooms and Senior hall.

In order for a student to be considered “in good standing”, she must:

- Maintain an overall average of 80% each quarter and have no failures.
- Carry a full academic program of seven periods of scheduled classes.
- Not have more than three unexcused tardies per quarter.
- Respect and comply with the rules and regulations of OLMHS.
- Have no outstanding detentions.

The following guidelines must also be observed:

1. Students are responsible and accountable for any announcements or messages missed because of early dismissal privileges.
2. Students may not use early dismissal privilege on assembly days (including liturgies) class meeting days, or picture days.
3. Senior privileges are earned each quarter. They are not an entitlement.
4. Senior privileges may be revoked or suspended for skipping any class, assembly, or an after school commitment. Parents may revoke or suspend any privilege by notifying the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Textbooks

Any damage to student textbooks beyond the normal wear and tear will be assessed a fine at the end of the school year. A student must pay for the cost of a lost textbook. The money will be reimbursed if the textbook is found. Mercy will not send final report cards and transcripts until the student has met his obligation.

Unscheduled Teacher Absence

If a teacher does not report for an assigned class, a representative student must contact the school office 5 minutes after the start of the class period. A teacher will be immediately assigned to the classroom. Students must remain in the classroom for the entire period.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Our Lady of Mercy strives to educate the total person by helping the students to grow academically, physically, spiritually, socially and culturally. All students are encouraged to participate in at least one club, organization or activity. The life skills that are learned add valuable memories to the high school experience.

Arts Fest
Basketball
Bowling
Campus Ministry Board
Children's Theatre (7-12)
Class Office
Crew
Cross Country
D.E.C.A.
Drama Club
Ecology Club
Envirothon
F.O.C.U.S.
French Club
Golf
Lacrosse
Math League
Masterminds

Youth and Government

Melders (7 & 8)
Mercy TV Club (MTV)
Mercedes
Mock Trial
National Honor Society
The Quill
Sailing
Ski Club
Soccer
Softball
Spanish Club
Student Council
Swimming & Diving
Tennis
Track & Field
Veritas (yearbook)
Volleyball

A student must have an 80% over-all average with no failures in any course to be considered for election, selection or appointment as an officer of a club or organization, a member of a team or theatrical production or as a staff member of a publication. In addition, students who wish to run for any office in a co-curricular organization or class office may not have more than 6 demerits.

The Administration and Club Moderators encourage students to think carefully about making responsible choices when accepting leadership roles. To enable more students to serve in leadership capacities, students are discouraged from accepting more than one major or highly time-consuming leadership role.

While serving as an officer, member of a team or drama group or a staff member of a production, a student must:

1. Maintain the 80% over-all average with no failure.
2. Obey all school rules and regulations.
3. Behave at all times in a manner that is acceptable and compatible with the philosophy of the school.
4. Attend all classes each day regardless of the demands of the extra-curricular activity, i.e. late games or theatrical performances, field trips, project deadlines.

Names of students who do not meet the above criteria will be brought to the attention of the appropriate personnel.

Students must be in good academic and disciplinary standing in order to participate in prom trips, plays and athletics or serve as a student officer.

RULE VIOLATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Detentions for rule violations will be for 45 minutes served on the day assigned, unless stated otherwise.

Cell Phone or other electronic devices:

- 1st offense – Confiscation of device and 45 minutes of detention.
- 2nd offense – Confiscation of device and 90 minutes of detention.
- 3rd offense – Forfeit of cell phone use for the remainder of the year. (See page 20 for Cell Phone policy)

Skip: An illegal absence or tardy from class or study hall.

- 1st skip: 45 minutes of detention.
- 2nd skip: 90 minutes of detention. Parent notified.
- 3rd skip: 90 minutes of Saturday detention. Student placed on probation and parent/guardian notified. Parent meeting called.

Truancy: Absence for all or part of the school day without parent/guardian and school permission.

1st truancy: 90 minutes of detention. Notification of parent/guardian.

2nd truancy: 135 minutes of Saturday detention. Meeting with parent/guardian. Probation.

3rd truancy: Further disciplinary action up to and including the possibility of dismissal.

Disciplinary Terms:

Detention - time spent after school, usually 45 minutes, during which students sit in silence in the detention room. The Assistant Principal detention times for the Wednesday or Thursday following the offense. Classroom teachers or any member of administration may also assign detentions.

After school detention begins promptly at 3:15 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday and ends at 4:00 p.m. except in unusual circumstances. **After school jobs, appointments, team practice, athletic competitions, or other activities do not excuse a student from detention.**

The Assistant Principal will notify parents if a student fails to fulfill her detention obligation.

Probation – a contract for behavior that is signed by the student, her parents, her guidance counselor, the Assistant Principal and the Principal. A student may be placed on probation for behavioral concerns. A student on probation places her continuation at Our Lady of Mercy High School in jeopardy. Any student on probation who continues to violate Mercy’s behavior expectations and school policies may be placed on in-school or out-of-school suspension, or be dismissed depending on the severity of the offense.

Suspension (in-school) – suspension from classes and assignment to a supervised area for a period of one to three days as a result of a violation of a student’s probation contract or other circumstances deemed necessary by Administration.

Suspension (out-of-school) – suspension from classes during which time the student remains at home, usually for a period of one to three days, longer if deemed necessary by Administration. Some examples of offenses that warrant out-of-school suspension are: use of illegal substances, including smoking on school property, stealing and fighting. (Please see section entitled “Chemical Use Policy”).

The Assistant Principal will notify parents in all cases of suspension (in- or out-of-school). Our Lady of Mercy High School will contact legal authorities if necessary.

While student is on suspension, she may not participate in extra-curricular activity. Please refer to specific guidelines in the extra-curricular activity handbook, where applicable. Students placed on out of school suspension will be allowed to return to school after a re-entry conference with the Principal, Assistant Principal and their parents..

In instances of further disciplinary problems, the Assistant Principal will call a meeting with the student, her parents, the principal, and her guidance counselor to determine whether or not the student should be allowed to continue her education at Our Lady of Mercy High School.

PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Preamble: Our Lady of Mercy Parents Association is comprised of all Mercy parents and guardians. Its goals are to promote greater family involvement in Mercy, to strengthen and encourage close bonds among parents/guardians, faculty, staff, Sisters of Mercy and administration and to support the many Mercy traditions and new initiatives.

Advisory Board of the Parents Association: The Parents Association has recognized the need to have a smaller group work with the administration and so has formed the Mercy Parents Association Advisory Board (the “Advisory Board”).

Purpose: The Advisory Board shall work to encourage greater family involvement in Mercy, particularly directing its activities toward the participation of the members of the Parents Association in public relations, the religious and the social activities sponsored by the Parents Association or the school.

PARENTS ASSOCIATION DATES

September	17	Parents Association Mtg. – 7p.m.
October	8	Parents Association Mtg. – 7 p.m.
	16	High School Dance 7-9 p.m.
November	12	Parents Association Mtg. – 7 p.m.
December	10	Parents Association Mtg. – 7 p.m.
January	14	Parents Association Mtg. – 7 p.m.
February	11	Parents Association Mtg. – 7 p.m.
March	10	Parents Association Mtg. – 7 p.m.
	19	Teacher Appreciation Luncheon

April	8	Parents Association Mtg. – 7 p.m.
	11	Spring Open House
May	12	7 th gr. Picnic – 4-6 p.m.
	13	Parents Association Mtg. – 7 p.m.
June	10	Parents Association Mtg. – 7 p.m.
	11	Senior-Parent Breakfast

SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

Scholarship Committee

This group meets one morning each week to research scholarships, awards, and special opportunities for our students. They publish a bi-weekly flyer available on the website to make students aware of the opportunities and the necessary process for application.