

**Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women
Grades 6-12**

Life Changing



**STUDENT HANDBOOK
2022 – 2023**

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A ministry of the Sisters of Mercy since 1928

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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.

MISSION STATEMENT

We, the community of Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women, are animated by the charism of Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy and by our motto: "Via, Veritas et Vita." (I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life) The school, opened in 1928, remains a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Mercy.

We are a sixth through twelfth grade all women's college preparatory school. We are guided by the values of our Catholic identity while respecting and welcoming students of diverse backgrounds.

We empower young women to unleash their potential through a vigorous pursuit of knowledge, service to others, a global perspective and leadership opportunities. This pursuit is guided by a commitment to the virtues of hospitality, compassion, integrity and respect for the inherent dignity of all.

Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women encourages students to be pioneers of change. Our mission is to provide an enriching balance of learning, serving and loving that creates a community of care and sisterhood.

PHILOSOPHY

Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women is a Catholic secondary school for young women in grades 6-12 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 who share Mercy's philosophy and commitment to partnering with the school for the benefit of their daughters, we who share Mercy's philosophy and commitment to partnering with the school for the benefit of their daughters, we promote educational excellence and the development of the entire individual.

At Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women 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.

CRITICAL CONCERNS OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY

In keeping with the charism of Catherine McAuley and the Sisters of Mercy, Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women aims to educate and involve the Mercy community in the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy. These are:

- to deepen and assimilate more consciously the practice of nonviolence as an integral aspect of the charism of Mercy;
- to deepen our response to the unrecognized and unreconciled racism, past and present, within our community;
- to reverence Earth and work more effectively toward the sustainability of life and toward universal recognition of the fundamental right to water;
- to continue to embrace our particular concern for women;
- to stand in solidarity with immigrants.

ATTRIBUTES OF A MERCY STUDENT

A Mercy student is a world-class learner and leader who pioneers positive change, animated by the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy and by the motto, "Via, Veritas, et Vita" (I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life).

A Mercy graduate....

...is grounded in her Faith:

- Applies a faith-based discernment to decisions and actions, and in navigating the ambiguities of the world.
- Gives value to and embraces opportunities for service.
- Acts with compassion, respect, and empathy.

...is a healthy Risk Taker:

- Challenges herself to actively seek new opportunities outside of her own skill set.

- Acknowledges her shortcomings and is willing to be wrong.
- Explores alternative problem-solving strategies.
- Advocates for others.

...demonstrates a Growth Mindset:

- Demonstrates persistence despite setbacks, viewing these setbacks as learning opportunities.
- Is open to diverse perspectives and to new ways of thinking and doing.
- Shows responsibility and self-advocacy.
- Is on a continual quest for knowledge, building on prior learning.

...is Globally Ready:

- Recognizes and demonstrates sensitivity to diverse cultures, perspectives, behaviors, and languages.
- Possesses an awareness of how interconnected she is with the local, national, and global communities.
- Adapts to innovations in technology due to her mastery of foundational skills.

...is Resilient:

- Understands that success takes time and effort.
- Uses her strengths and actively learns from others with different strengths.
- Demonstrates a positive self-image.

...is a Problem Solver:

- Thinks independently and reflectively.
- Uses persistence and resilience to find solutions to real-world problems.
- Examines and solves an issue from multiple perspectives, both independently and collaboratively.

...is a Communicator:

- Speaks and writes with clarity, fluency, structure and command.
- Articulates her passions in a collaborative and flexible manner.
- Actively and respectfully listens when communicating with others.
- Seeks to find her own voice and exercises that voice appropriately.

BELIEF STATEMENT

We believe that...

- a caring community for young women is shaped by our Catholic and Mercy identity, rooted in Gospel values, dedicated to the ministry of service, and respectful of cultural and religious diversity.
- an all-girls education empowers young women to unleash their potential through a vigorous pursuit of knowledge, service to others, a global perspective, and leadership opportunities.
- an effective learning environment is created through communication, collaboration, mutual respect, and a deep understanding of our Mission Statement.

- all should be welcomed in a spirit of hospitality, creating a safe environment that allows students, faculty, staff and parents to feel understood, appreciated, respected, and valued.
- using the lens of the Critical Concerns as a guide, students make moral decisions and are pioneers of change through their service to others.
- leaders are empowered, life-long learners who take responsibility, advocate for themselves, embrace the joy of discovery, and are willing to challenge themselves and their peers.
- wellness begins with “we”, and that a nurturing culture and climate allows individuals to balance the emotional, spiritual, and mental aspects of their lives.

The administration 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.

References herein to “Our Lady of Mercy”, “OLM”, or “Mercy” as a school pertain to Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women unleashes its students' creative energy for the pursuit of knowledge, and nurtures in them a hope-filled vision to make a difference in the world. We want to develop the potential of our students, and support and celebrate their growth. Our process:

- Matches our belief that academic excellence is defined in terms of specific, challenging, and rigorous learning criteria.
- Rewards the efforts of all our students who have exceeded the most rigorous academic standards in our program of studies.
- Aligns with the procedures that are practiced in most colleges and universities.

1.01 Curriculum, Requirements, and Scheduling

Curriculum

Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women offers a Middle School Program and a College Preparatory Program in its High School. Both programs take place in an atmosphere that supports the spiritual, intellectual, and emotional growth of all our students.

Credit Requirements

Students in grades 9 and 10 are required to take 7.5 credits each year. Students in grades 11 and 12 are required to take 7 credits each year. Seniors taking three Advanced Placement courses have the option of taking a minimum of 6 credits. Refer to the *Program of Study* for the specific breakdown of credits among the various academic disciplines. All students are required to take one Advanced Placement (AP) course and the associated AP exam or a dual credit course during their tenure in the school.

Students must satisfactorily complete these credits as well as other requirements to be eligible to receive a High School diploma from Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women.

Program of Study

Our Lady of Mercy publishes its [Program of Study](#) online and in print.

Scheduling Process

Student success and preparation for college and career is a top priority when it comes to scheduling. Each student consults with her counselor to develop a long-range academic program that will best situate her for personal and academic success. Students typically meet with their counselors in January to begin the process of developing their course of study for the following year. This conversation is informed by teacher recommendations. A confirmation letter is sent home in the spring indicating the course selections for the following year and are finalized within three weeks of receipt of the confirmation letter. Course selection does not guarantee placement in a

course. Mercy does not honor requests for particular teachers in the scheduling process.

Schedule Changes

There are many factors that go into building student and teacher schedules. Once staffing and class sizes are determined, changes are difficult or impossible to make. There may be times in the first weeks of school, however, when a student is struggling with content and her teacher determines that a schedule change is advisable. In such cases, counselors and/or administrators will engage in a conversation with the family to consider her options.

If a student withdraws from a course after the first five weeks of classes, she will receive a “WP” (withdraw passing) or a “WF” (withdraw failing). This grade will be included on the student’s transcript.

1.02 Grading and Records

Course Grading System, Course Grade Calculations, and GPA Weighting

Letter Grade Ranges: A+ (95-100), A (90-94.9), B+ (85-89.9), B (80-84.9), C+ (75-79.9), C (70-74.9), D (65-69.9), F (below 65)

If a course has a mid-term, it will be calculated as 5% of the course’s overall grade. Final exams will be calculated as 15% of the course’s overall grade.

Our GPA is calculated on a 4.5 scale. With weighting, a student can earn higher than a 4.5.

Course Weighting Policy for **cumulative** GPA ONLY:

- AP Course weighted 1.04
- Dual-credit courses weighted 1.04
- Honors Courses weighted 1.02
- All other courses weighted 1.00

Assessment: Midterms and Finals

Some full year courses may have midterm assessments that will be administered in January. The final assessment will be administered in June. Final assessments are administered at the conclusion of semester courses. These assessments may be in the form of examinations, portfolios, or projects. Students are expected to adhere to the schedule set for midterms and final assessments. A student cannot receive credit for a midterm or final which she has not completed, for reasons other than medical or family emergency. Parents must call the Dean of Academics to make other arrangements when a student will miss an exam due to illness. A doctor’s note is required. Middle School students who take high school courses must follow the assessment requirements for that course.

Report Cards and Progress Monitoring

Electronic report cards are available to students and parents at the end of each quarter. Parents can access report cards through the Mercy Grades link on the Student and

Parent Portal on the Mercy web page, or by accessing it at <https://mercy.myschoolapp.com/app#login>.

At the five-week point in all marking periods we alert families to check the Open Gradebook in the Student and Parent Portal to confirm their students' progress. Teachers will have all grades current at these checkpoints. The Open Gradebook is explained further in Section 1.06.

1.03 Honors

Quarterly Scholarship and Honor Rolls

Scholarship Roll: A student must achieve a minimum GPA of 4.3 and no grade below B. Honor Roll: A student must achieve a minimum GPA of 3.8 and no grade below C.

Graduation Honors

Exemplary scholars will be recognized upon graduation with the following designations:

- *Summa Cum Laude*: Students must have a minimum 4.5 with completion of at least 3 AP or dual-credit courses.
- *Magna Cum Laude*: Students must have a minimum 4.3 with completion of at least 2 AP or dual-credit courses.
- *Cum Laude*: Student must have a minimum 3.8 with completion of at least 1 AP or dual-credit course.

National Honor Society

The Catherine McAuley Chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) 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 School for Young Women. The National Honor Society is a service organization and is not meant to be a duplication of the scholarship and/or honor rolls.

At the conclusion of the third quarter, members of the Sophomore and Junior classes who have a cumulative weighted GPA of 4.3 or higher will be invited to apply for membership in NHS. A faculty council evaluates the application materials of those who choose to pursue membership. Equal consideration is given to each applicant's academic achievement (scholarship), leadership, service, and character. Those applicants who earn a majority vote by the faculty council are invited to become members of NHS.

1.04 Failure to Meet Academic Standards

We pride ourselves on our high academic standards that prepare our students for college-level work. All students are held to these standards of excellence and will be supported to achieve them. Teachers monitor their students' progress and alert parents and guardians. Students should monitor their own progress toward proficiency and mastery of their coursework and make use of resources available to them [See Academic Support, Section 1.06].

Academic Probation and Eligibility Policy

All students are required to meet minimum academic and behavioral standards in order to participate in co-curricular and after school activities. High School students on academic or disciplinary probation are ineligible to participate in the sports program, plays, clubs, and other school activities, including dances and non-academic trips. Senior privileges are revoked for students on probation. Middle School students on academic probation are ineligible to participate in clubs, and other school activities, including dances and non-academic trips.

Students are placed on Academic Probation if they fail a course in a quarter. High school students on Academic Probation will be assigned to Structured Advisement and are expected to meet with their teacher to develop a plan for improving their grade. Middle school students on Academic Probation are expected to meet with their teacher to develop an Academic Intervention plan for improving their grade.

After one full letter day cycle (eight school days), if a student on Academic Probation is no longer failing any courses, she may be returned to good standing. Students will need to see their counselors to pick up a Reinstatement Form and have it filled out by their teacher(s). All students 7-12 who participate in a junior varsity, or varsity sport must maintain a high standard of academics in order to remain eligible to participate in their chosen sport.”

Any student whose course grade is 70(C) or below at the five-week period or as reported on quarterly report cards will meet with her counselor to discuss resources available to her. She will be required to attend Structured Advisement.

Summer School

A student who fails a course must register within their district for summer school and pass the course(s). If a student fails a course and there is no summer school for that course, she must either pass an approved online course or she must receive thirty hours of private tutoring and pass an assessment given by Mercy that is pre-approved by a Mercy administrator. The tutor must verify in writing the dates and times of tutoring.

Multiple Course Failures/Return to Mercy

Failures must be remediated. Students may take up to two approved courses in summer school and move to the next grade level if they pass those courses. All course approvals must go through the Dean of Academics. Students who fail three subjects within a school year will not be invited to return to Mercy.

1.05 Academic Records

Academic Records and Privacy

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”), parents and students have the right of access to the student’s education records. Each Mercy student has an official folder that includes academic transcripts, academic and other testing, any student discipline records, and any other records kept by the school as part

of your student's enrollment at Mercy. Parents of students under 18 years old have a right to review their student's records upon written request and one business days' notice to the school.

Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women also abides by FERPA's provisions with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, Mercy will provide a non-custodial parent access to education records 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. For more information on custodial arrangements, see the Parent/Guardianship Policy in Section 3.07.

1.06 Academic Support

Counseling Department

The Counseling Department at Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women strives to provide every student with the support that she needs throughout her tenure. Our team of dedicated professionals works to promote mental and physical health, overall emotional wellness, and a sense of belonging. In addition, counselors aid with academic support services, course selection, career exploration, college applications, and post-secondary options. We endeavor to create a safe and accepting space where students receive compassionate and individualized guidance from their school counselors.

Visit the Counseling Department's webpage, www.mercyhs.com/counseling, for contact information, helpful links, and resources.

Academic Advisement Periods

An Academic Advisement period is part of Mercy's daily schedule. The purpose of Advisement is for students to study, work on assignments, and/or meet with their teachers for extra help or to make up tests. Students are expected to use Advisement time for academic purposes. High school students may be assigned to Structured Advisement if additional support is needed [See Academic Probation in Section 1.04].

Parent-Teacher Communication, Conferences, and Mini Schedule Night

Parents play an integral role in ensuring Mercy's Philosophy and Belief Statement is effectively implemented. Mercy relies on parents to be partners in education to nurture the growth of each student socially, emotionally, and academically. Teachers are expected to reach out to parents/guardians when they see patterns of behavior or academic effort that concern them. Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact their daughters' teachers if they have questions or see areas of concern. [Guidelines for Parent Communication, see Section 10.01]

Parent-Teacher conferences may be scheduled at the school at the family's request.

Mini-Schedule Night, held in the fall, is an opportunity for parents/guardians to follow their daughter's schedule for a brief overview of courses by her teachers.

Open Gradebook

Students and their parents/guardians have access to their electronic gradebooks. As students mature as learners and agents of their own futures, they need to increasingly take ownership of their learning. The goal is for our students to be conscientious owners of their own academic outcomes by tracking their grades and knowing where they stand academically in a course so that their averages at the end of a quarter or a term are rarely a surprise. Having access to their gradebook allows all students to easily access this information and assess where they need to devote their energies. Parents and guardians serve as supports to their children as they grow, while honoring their increasing independence. As partners, parents and guardians should continue to encourage their daughters to monitor their own progress and advocate for themselves. Still, an open gradebook allows parents and guardians to intervene with their children when they see patterns emerging that are of concern. When issues arise, students and teachers should begin the conversation about corrective measures, only bringing in parents and guardians when the issues persist.

Each year, the gradebook system opens prior to the five week progress report in the first term. Teachers are expected to grade assignments in a reasonable amount of time which varies according to the assignment. Gradebooks will generally be updated on a weekly basis, but some assignments may take up to two or three weeks to grade.

To access the gradebook:

1. Go to www.mercyhs.com
2. Click *Student-Parent Portal* at the top right of the screen (this can be found within the horizontal 'three-line menu' if accessing via mobile device).
3. Once on the Portal, click the *MercyLINK* button to be brought to MercyLINK (where you go to view anything grade-related like assignments, progress reports, and report cards).

1.07 Academic Integrity

Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women is devoted to the highest standards of academic honesty and intellectual integrity. Mercy challenges students to develop sound moral and ethical practices in their study, research, writing, and presentations; in their examinations and portfolios; and in all their relationships and actions as members of the academic community. We believe that our pursuit of academic excellence is centered in Christian character formation and values-based education, with academic integrity as a core belief.

Students are expected to work independently unless otherwise directed by their teacher. All work submitted for a grade must be their own unless it is a group assignment. When an assignment requires research, information that is taken from the internet or other sources must include citations. Students are expected to neither give nor receive help on a test or graded assignment unless their teacher grants permission.

Allegations of plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academics or the Dean of the Middle School. The Dean will conference with both the teacher and the student to determine consequences.

2.00 CODE OF CONDUCT AND BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

By their dress, demeanor, and presence and participation in class, Mercy students demonstrate respect for themselves and others. This section outlines our behavioral expectations and the consequences for violations of Mercy's Code of Conduct.

2.01 Dress Code/Uniform Policy

Mercy's uniform has been worn by over 13,000 young women since our founding in 1928. The uniform, just like the Mercy ring, signifies an unbreakable bond of sisterhood that must be respected while at school and in the community. Never forget that when you wear the Mercy uniform, you are a representative of the school. You represent your classmates, our history, and the alumnae who came before.

The purpose of the dress code at Mercy is to foster a sense of community and a safe, secure, and productive learning environment. Students of Our Lady of Mercy are expected to follow the dress code. Our expectation is that parents will act as partners with the school in the enforcement of the dress code. Consequences for violations of the school Code of Conduct, including the dress code, are covered in the section on Rule Violations and Disciplinary Action [Section 2.04].

The purposes of the Mercy uniform are:

- To identify individuals as members of the OLM 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 on styles, brands, etc.

Students are expected to fully comply with the dress code each and every day. Students who are not in uniform will not be permitted into class.

School Uniform

Top:

Mercy Polo: White or navy and long or short sleeved (undershirt must match color of polo). Available for purchase at Stitchworks or Mercy Bookstore.

Student ID Card/Lanyard:

Students are required to wear their Student ID card on the provided lanyard during school hours. Students may not add any accessories to their ID or lanyard.

Bottoms:

Skirt, shorts, or navy blue pants. Skirt (must hit just above the knee/no shorter than 2 inches) and shorts, only available at Stitchworks.

Pants must be relaxed fit, straight leg, with 1-2 back slit pockets (No Capri length or Skinny-Style).

Biker shorts are permitted under the skirt, but must not be longer than skirt.

Optional Uniform Tops to Wear with Polo

(Available at Stitchworks or Mercy Bookstore)

Official Sweatshirt

Official Sweater

Official Blazer

Shoes:

Sneakers or loafer style shoes only. Students are not permitted to wear knee high boots, backless shoes, sandals, slippers, or heels - crocs, birkenstocks. Boots are permitted with the Winter weather beginning November 1st.

Socks/Tights/Leggings:

Socks, tights, and leggings must be white, navy, black, or gray. No fish-net style permitted.

Hair/Jewelry/Accessories:

The student's hair, make-up, and jewelry must be clean and neat. Only natural hair colors are acceptable. This pertains to hair extension as well. Scarves, hats, bandanas, or head coverings are never permitted, with the exception of religious/cultural head coverings.

The following are never permitted (this includes on Dress Down Days, see below):

- Facial jewelry, including tongue piercing, eyebrow rings and nose studs.
- Animal style headbands
- Dog collar style/studded necklaces
- Wallet/belt chains
- Visible tattoos or temporary tattoos including drawing or writing on exposed skin
- Headphones/earbuds
- Apple watches
- Writing or drawing on any part of a student's dress code clothing, including shoes

Seniors:

Seniors have the option of wearing khaki uniform pants, skirts or shorts. Skirts and shorts must be purchased at Stitchworks. Pants policy as listed above. Seniors may wear the approved senior sweatshirt.

Call the Middle School Dean or the Dean of Student Life if you have uniform-related questions.

Non-Uniform Dress Code/Dress Down Days

In keeping with the standard of modesty and safety in dress, some items of apparel are never permitted, including on dress down days:

- Yoga pants and leggings are acceptable as long as the wearer's bottom is covered by shorts or a long shirt or blouse.
- No jeans or spandex shorts. Shorts must not be shorter than fingertip length.
- Sneakers or loafer style shoes only. Students are not permitted to wear knee high boots, backless shoes, sandals, slippers, or heels - crocs, birkenstocks. Boots are permitted with the winter weather beginning November 1st.

The following are never permitted:

- Ripped-Style clothing
- Skin-tight clothing
- Lingerie- or pajama-style clothing
- Bare midribs/Crop-Tops
- Slit or ripped skirts/shorts/slacks
- Micro-mini skirts
- Halters, spandex, low cut shirts/tops, see-through shirts/tops, spaghetti straps, exposed bra straps, exposed underwear

Mass Dress Code/Prayer Services:

Modest dresses, skirts, or pants. Girls **may not** wear: strapless dresses, dresses with a plunging neckline, halter dresses or one shoulder strap dresses. **(Dresses with spaghetti straps with a sweater or a wrap are acceptable.)** We recommend shoes that have a medium to low heel or are flat.

Mercy students are expected to show pride in their appearance at all times. The Administration is the final arbiter of whether a student is in dress code. The strict interpretation of this dress code is left entirely to the judgment of the Administration and Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women faculty. Students in violation will be required to change and their parents or guardians will be contacted. Violators may be subject to further disciplinary action.

2.02 Attendance Policy

Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women is committed to the philosophy that a Mercy education has value. The Mercy experience is all encompassing, embracing academic, social, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of life. A successful student participates in the life of the school, engaging in collaborative discussions and interactions with teachers and other students both in and out of the classroom. Daily attendance and participation are expected in all classes. The school and the student's family will intervene with students whose absences are interfering with their academic and personal growth.

Reporting an Absence

The Parent/Guardian must call the school no later than 7:45 a.m. (Attendance Clerk: 585-288-7120 ext 370). A robo call from Mercy will be sent out mid-morning to any

student listed as absent at that time. Parents are responsible for ensuring that the school has up-to-date contact information.

Mercy records absences as either excused or unexcused, and attendance records are part of a student's education record. The following are examples of reasons for each type of absence:

Excused Absence/Tardy	Unexcused Absence/Tardy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Child's illness ● Doctor or Dentist Appointments ● Sickness or death of an out of town family member (for up to three days within New York State or five days outside of the state) ● Court appearances ● Religious observances ● Participation in a school sponsored event. (For example, at the secondary level, field trips which require students to be absent from the other classes.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Oversleeping ● Problem with transportation ● Missing the bus ● Traffic ● Family vacations ● Unexplained or undocumented absences

Absences of five or more consecutive days due to health or medical problems must be documented by a doctor's statement in order for the student to return to school.

An anticipated student absence for two or more weeks due to health or medical problems must be documented by a physician's statement and submitted to the Attendance Office as soon as possible. This must include a statement saying that the student is not able to attend school and why.

What to Do When Returning to School After an Absence

A note from a Parent/Guardian which contains the following information is to be provided to the Attendance Office within one school day of the student's return to school following an absence:

- Student's First and Last Name
- Grade level
- Date(s) of absence
- Reason
- Parent/Guardian Signature
- Telephone number(s) where Parent/Guardian may be contacted

Failure to follow these attendance procedures may result in disciplinary action.

What to Do if a Student is Late to School

A student is considered tardy if she is not seated in her homeroom by 7:45. Upon a tardy arrival to school, a student must report immediately to the attendance office and sign in. **Students must be in attendance by 9:00 AM in order to participate in after school athletic games/practices, performances, events or dances.**

1. If a student has a note for the tardy arrival, she will receive an “admit” to class pass. Notes must include the following information:
 - Time of arrival
 - Date of tardiness
 - Reason for tardiness
 - Parent/guardian signature and phone number where parent/guardian can be reached during the school day
2. If a student does not have a note this will be documented by the Attendance Assistant and parents will be notified.

Any student accumulating five unexcused tardies within a quarter will serve an after-school detention. Any student who continues to arrive late to school will receive escalating consequences such as a parent-administrator conference or suspension.

What to Do if a Student Needs to Leave School Early

To leave school early, the student must:

1. Leave a note or school form signed by a parent or guardian in the school office by 8:00 a.m. Students are not permitted to leave without a parent note.
2. If a parent needs to pick their daughter up early and cannot get a note to the Attendance Office by 8:00, they need to notify the Main Office and sign their daughter out.
3. Complete a pass with all requested information.
4. Keep a yellow copy to use as her pass for dismissal.
5. Bring a yellow copy to the office when she leaves.

Going Home Sick

All ill or injured students must report to the Health Office. The nurse will contact a parent or guardian and arrange for early dismissal and transportation if necessary. Students should not call on their own and will not be permitted to leave without a note or verbal confirmation from the nurse. Students and parents should not call, text or email between themselves during the school day. All communications must go through the nurse.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule appointments after school so that student learning is not adversely affected. A pattern of early dismissals may require an intervention by the administration.

Missed Classes

It is the student’s responsibility to obtain classroom notes, assignments and other work from their teacher’s Google Classroom page when they are absent. Students must

adhere to the teacher’s late assignment policy on the class syllabus to ensure timely completion of work. Students are at risk of losing credit for assignments if they are not handed in according to the established deadline.

Course Attendance Intervention Stages and Actions

The following describes the typical processes and communications that occur when a student is chronically absent or late. However, it is ultimately the parents’ and students’ responsibilities to ensure that students attend school. Students who are continually chronically absent, even with excuses, may be asked to withdraw if the school feels that they are unable to provide a suitable educational program.

Stage 1 Absences reach 5 in a quarter
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher notifies parent ● Teacher meets with student and writes a referral to the school counselor ● Teacher and student design a plan for making up work when applicable ● Counselor meets with student for a wellness check
Stage 2 Absences reach 10 total within two consecutive quarters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher refers the student to the school counselor and Dean of Student Life/Dean of Middle School. ● Dean of Student Life/Dean of Middle School notifies parents. ● Teacher and student design a plan for making up work when applicable. ● Counselor notifies the Dean of Academics/Dean of Middle School who determines further intervention. ● Counselor meets with student and parent for a wellness check and to review intervention plans.
Stage 3 Absences reach 15 total
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher refers the student to the school counselor and Dean of Student Life/Dean of Middle School. ● Dean of Student Life/Dean of Middle School notifies parents. ● Counselor notifies the Dean of Academics/ Dean of Middle School. ● Dean of Academics/Dean of Middle School arranges meetings with student, parent, teacher and school counselor to develop a credit recovery plan if necessary. ● Dean of Academics/Dean of Middle School places students on Academic Probation.
Stage 4 Absences reach 20 total
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher refers the student to the Dean of Student Life/Dean of Middle School. ● Dean of Student Life/Dean of Middle School notifies the Principal.

- Principal arranges a meeting with the student and parent to discuss consequences and develop a credit recovery plan with the Dean of Academics/Dean of Middle School.
- Failure to follow the credit recovery plan will result in the denial of credit and withdrawal from course.
- Child Protective Services may be contacted for suspicion of educational neglect.

2.03 Behavioral Expectations and Infractions

We expect Mercy girls to live lives of virtue and goodness. As a school community we strive for harmonious relationships and care for our physical environment. The following list of infractions are examples of ways students might harm relationships or demonstrate disrespect for the school. [Policies regarding Academic Integrity, Harassment, Chemical Use, and Computer Network Acceptable Use are outlined in sections 1.06, 3.05, 3.06, and 9.01 respectively.]

Minor and major violations of the Code of Conduct include, but are not limited to:

Minor	Major
Gum chewing Littering on campus Uniform infraction Excessive unexcused tardy to school/class Use of cell phone during school hours	Bullying/Cyberbullying Harassment/Threats Fighting Skipping school/class/mass/assembly Violations of the <i>Chemical Use Policy</i> Academic dishonesty Theft Possession of weapon Vandalism

2.04 Disciplinary Process and Actions

Discipline is the means by which we regulate our behavior. Ideally, students are able to regulate their own behavior in accordance with their consciences and reasonable social norms and rules. This is self-discipline. Mercy students are at various stages in their growth toward adulthood and its responsibilities. Parents, teachers, and mentors are responsible for offering guidance in proper behavior to those in their care, and the role of Mercy is to support those teachings. We take seriously our responsibility to nurture young women as leaders who will one day govern the world. For the time being, they may need help governing themselves. Discipline, therefore, should be a process of correction. With progressively vigorous responses to misbehavior, we strive to educate our girls with dignity.

In-class discipline is the responsibility of the classroom teacher. Serious or repeated infractions will be referred to the Dean of Student Life or Middle School Dean first and, if necessary, the Principal and/or President. Parents or guardians will be notified of problems with their daughter's conduct. Parents or guardians who have concerns are asked to communicate with the teacher directly.

2.04.01 Search and Seizure

The school administration will exercise its right to search anything brought onto school property including, but not limited to backpacks, cell phones, laptop computers, and cars, if there is reasonable cause as determined by the administration to do so. Lockers are school property and subject to search. Any search is to be done in the presence of another staff member.

2.04.02 Disciplinary Process

Accusations of misconduct that are brought to the attention of teachers and the administration will be investigated thoroughly and expediently. Every effort will be taken to ensure student confidentiality is maintained. In the case of major infractions, parents and guardians will be contacted and invited to speak with their daughter and the administrator handling the case.

All infractions are recorded in MercyLink and parents receive an electronic Official Note.

For minor infractions of the Code of Conduct, teachers and/or administrators will address the matter directly with the student. Major infractions or repeated minor infractions will result in further action by the administration as outlined below.

While the following actions are generally progressive, sometimes the initial infraction may be egregious enough to demand the most severe action.

2.04.03 Disciplinary Actions

Detention. Detentions require that a student remain quiet and under the supervision of a teacher, staff member, or administrator in a designated location. Detentions for rule violations are typically served on the day of the offense. Staff/faculty who assign the detention are required to notify the parent/guardian of the infraction and detention assignment.

After-school detention begins at 2:55pm and ends at 3:50pm. After school jobs, appointments, team practices, athletic competitions, or other activities do not excuse a student from detention. Lunch detentions are served during a student's assigned lunch block.

An Administrator will notify parents or guardians if a student fails to serve her detention.

In-School Suspension. A student who serves an in-school suspension will be suspended from classes and school activities and programs for a period of one to three

days. She will report to a designated location at school for the duration of her suspension and will be given class assignments. Parents of students who have received an in-school suspension will be notified as soon as practical. The school may require parents to attend a conference to discuss the incident that led to the suspension, and parents may also request a conference. Suspended students may be placed on Disciplinary Probation.

Out-of-School Suspension. A student serving an out-of-school suspension will not be permitted to attend classes, come on to school grounds, or participate in school activities, during their suspension period.

Parents of students who receive an out-of-school suspension will be notified as soon as practical. The school may require parents to attend a conference to discuss the incident that led to the suspension, and parents may also request a conference. The school may also require that parents attend a re-entry conference prior to the student's return to school. Suspended students may be placed on Disciplinary Probation.

In instances of further disciplinary problems and penalties the administration may request a phone conference or in-person meeting with the student, her parents or guardians, and/or her counselor to discuss whether or not the student should be allowed to continue her education at Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women. In all instances, the administration has the authority to make a determination regarding a student's continued enrollment at Mercy.

Disciplinary Probation. A student is placed on disciplinary probation in instances of suspension, for major offenses, and/or if she demonstrates a persistent pattern of violating school rules. Parents and students on disciplinary probation are required to sign a behavior contract that outlines the requirements a student must meet in order to remain enrolled at Mercy. The student's status will be reevaluated at the end of each quarter.

Students on academic or disciplinary probation are ineligible to participate in the sports program, plays, clubs, and other school activities, including dances and non-academic trips. Senior privileges are revoked for students on probation.

Dismissal/Expulsion

Our goal is to foster a harmonious academic and faith-filled community that values the contributions of each individual member. Mercy honors the power of redemption, so wherever possible we work with students and their families to nurture their personal growth and develop plans designed to keep students at Mercy. In some instances, where the administration determines that a student's behavior has been egregious and/or is not improving despite interventions and disciplinary actions, the student will be dismissed/expelled from school and ineligible for re-enrollment.

When a student is facing expulsion, the administration may choose to offer a family the option of withdrawing from Mercy rather than a documented expulsion. The student will be ineligible for re-enrollment.

2.05 General Rules and Guidelines Regarding Behavior and Daily Practice

Backpacks

During school hours, students may carry a reasonable-sized purse and one other bag or backpack. They may not carry a large purse or tote bag in addition to a backpack. The backpack must be able to fit under the student's chair. Backpacks with wheels are not permitted during the school day.

Cell Phones/Smartwatches

Smartwatches are not permitted to be worn during school hours. Cell phones must be turned off and kept in a student's backpack or locker at all times during school hours. Parent-student communication during school hours should go through the main office. Please do not contact your daughter via her cell phone during school hours.

Water Bottles and Other Containers

Reusable water bottles are encouraged in school because of Mercy's commitment to sustainable practices in keeping with the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy. To ensure the safety of all students, glass containers are not permitted in the building or on the school grounds.

Ordering Out/In Food

To ensure the safety and security of all students, faculty and staff, food services such as GrubHub, DoorDash, UberEats, etc., are not permitted at any time during school hours.

Lost and Found

Found items should be placed in the Lost and Found bins located in the cafeteria or inside the Kitchenette across the hall from M-8 in the Middle School. Any unclaimed items left in lost and found at the end of each quarter will be donated.

Textbooks

Any damage to student textbooks beyond the normal wear and tear will be assessed and a fine will be imposed 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 this obligation.

Social Media and Student Online Behavior

Mercy students represent themselves, their family and our school throughout all of her endeavors and activities. This includes a student's presence online, and especially on social media platforms. Student social media behavior is understood to be public, regardless of privacy settings, and ought to conform to the values and ideals of Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women. Students should be aware that their digital footprints are extensions of themselves; what is inappropriate in the halls of our school is also inappropriate online. We understand that a component of our digital age is the need for schools, in partnership with parents, to guide students' evolving understanding of their lives online. Mercy expects parents and guardians to be responsible for monitoring their daughter's social media platforms at all times.

Mercy reserves the right to address digital citizenry and the appropriate use of technology and social media, including the right to impose disciplinary consequences, up to and including disciplinary probation and expulsion, for inappropriate digital behavior that it deems to be connected to the school, even when school is not in session.

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 the 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. Non-Catholic students should not receive communion during Mass, but are encouraged to approach the extraordinary ministers for a blessing.

Morning Announcements

Morning Announcements begin with the start of Homeroom at 7:45. Students are expected to stand for the Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance, even if they choose not to recite the words.

Senior Privileges

Senior Privileges are earned each quarter. They are not an entitlement.

In order for a student to be granted Senior Privileges, she must be in good standing (i.e. not be on Academic or Disciplinary Probation – Sections 1.03 and 2.04) and:

- Carry a full academic program,
- Not have more than five unexcused tardies per quarter,
- Respect and comply with the rules and regulations of OLM,
- Have no outstanding detentions.

The following are senior privileges that are frequently granted to those who qualify:

- **Late Arrival** – Students who have a study hall the first period of the day/or first two periods of the day, may come in late. All students must be on campus in time for advisement. Late arrival is not permitted on days we celebrate mass/prayer service or have a morning assembly.
- **Early Dismissal Privilege** – may leave at 12:30 pm if she has a study hall scheduled during her last two classes of the day or at 1:55 pm if she has a single study hall scheduled during her last class of the day. Seniors must complete and return the appropriate permission slip and return to the Dean of Student Life. Seniors may not leave early during their sports season on days of games or practices.
- **Senior Sweatshirt** – may be worn over a polo (with dress code bottoms) as approved by the Dean of Student Life.
- **Senior Dress Up** – may dress up on Fridays during the fourth quarter.
- **Senior lounge area** – may report to the Senior lounge area during her scheduled study hall provided she first reports to her study hall for attendance.

- **Ordering lunch out (Seniors Only with Ms. Whipple approval)** – may order lunch out on Friday’s beginning the second quarter. Guidelines for ordering out will be provided in homerooms.
- **Lunch outside** – may eat lunch in designated areas, weather permitting, and with the approval of the Dean of Student Life.

The following guidelines must also be observed::

- Seniors are responsible and accountable for any announcements or messages missed because of early dismissal or late arrival privileges.
- Seniors may not use late arrival or early dismissal privilege on assembly days (including liturgies), class meeting days, or picture days.
- Senior Privileges may be revoked or suspended for skipping any class, assembly, or after school commitment. Parents and guardians may revoke or suspend any privilege by notifying the Principal or the Dean of Student Life.

2.06 Dance Guidelines/Procedures

General Guidelines (all dances grades 6 – 12)

1. Students must be in good academic and disciplinary standing to attend a dance. Attendance.
2. Students must keep all belongings with them. They are discouraged from bringing expensive items or large amounts of cash to the dance.
3. Backpacks and large purses are not permitted.
4. Students and guests must arrive by the time determined by the sponsoring moderator of the dance and may leave only during the final half hour unless otherwise stated. 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.
5. All refreshments must be purchased at the dance. No containers may be brought into the dance.
6. The possession and/or use of alcohol or other drugs is not permitted. Breathalyzer tests may be administered to any student suspected of being under the influence of alcohol. Parents or guardians of students in violation will be called to pick up the student and her guest. The administration may, in its sole discretion, contact law enforcement at any time, before or after it contacts a parent. No ticket refunds will be given. [See “Chemical Use,” section 3.06, for further consequences.]
7. Proper attire is required at all times and should be consistent with our dress code policies.
8. Inappropriate behavior or immodest dancing is not tolerated.
9. Mercy students are responsible for notifying their guests of all dance guidelines.
10. Students who arrive without the necessary documentation will not be allowed to enter the dance.
11. Students must be in attendance on the day of the dance to attend.

12. Senior high is considered grades 9 through 12. Guests may be no younger than grade 9 or older than 20 years of age.
13. All specific guidelines for these events must be followed.
14. Middle School dances (grades 6-8 only), The Winter Formal (grades 9-12 only), Junior Prom (grade 11 only), and Senior Ball (grade 12 only) are for students presently attending Mercy. Each student may bring one guest who is approved by the Dean of the Middle School or Dean of Student Life.
15. All guests must provide a picture ID; e.g., school ID or driver's license.
16. Mercy parents must sponsor all guests.

2.07 Catherine McAuley Statue Decoration

To ensure that Catherine McAuley's legacy is honored respectfully, we have established the following rules regarding decoration of her statue:

1. Student groups must receive permission from the Dean of Student Life to decorate her.
2. Permission will be granted upon review and approval of the plans.
3. Decorations must be removed completely within a week.
4. Decorations must be tasteful and honor Catherine's legacy.
5. Decorations must serve to celebrate school-wide events and traditions or Catholic or Federal holidays rather than individual or small-group interests.

3.00 HEALTH AND SAFETY

Safety is everyone's responsibility. If you see or hear of anything that might put you, your friends or our school in danger, contact a teacher or Administrator immediately. You can also use The Safe School Hotline that is available 24 hours/7 days a week. Information on this hotline is posted on our school website and is as follows:

web: www.safeschoolhelpline.com

text: 614-426-0240, then type TIPS

voice: 800-418-6423 ext. 359

3.01 Drills and Crises

Emergency Drills

State law mandates that the administration conduct a specified number of fire, lock-down, and emergency drills yearly. To ensure the safety of all persons, the following guidelines will be enforced. Orange Safety Reference Cards are posted in all classrooms and offices outlining emergency procedures.

Fire Alarm. When the fire alarm rings students should be silent and:

1. Use the assigned exit path 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 and hold the door for others.
7. Line up in their designated area on the athletic field.
8. Remain quiet while attendance is taken and listen for instructions.
9. Return to the classroom quickly and quietly when a signal is given.

Lock-down. During a Lockdown, students are to remain in their rooms and move to the corner of the room that avoids doorway sightlines. Students and staff in hallways are to seek the closest available room. Lock doors. Silence must be maintained, including cell phones. Administrators or first responders will release students and teachers from their rooms. Do not respond to fire alarms or knocks on the door.

Lock-out. During a Lockout, classes will proceed as normal. Lock all exterior windows. Leave blinds/lights as they are. No one is to be admitted into the building except by an administrator or teacher.

During emergencies and drills, students are to respond and follow procedures as directed by their teacher or administrator.

In the event of an actual emergency, parents/guardians will receive communication as soon as possible.

3.02 Illness and the Nurse

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 on their own.

3.03 Medical Information

Medical information may be shared among staff as needed to ensure the safety of a child while in the care of the school. If the school requests additional health information, parents and guardians must sign a release form for their health care providers to share that information with the school.

Physical Examinations and Immunizations

Valid New York State Physical examinations, dated within the previous year from the start of school are required for all NEW students entering Mercy and those entering grades 7, 9, and 11. These must be on file in the Mercy health office no later than mid-October.

Our Lady of Mercy complies with and implements all NYS immunization mandates, which can be found here: <https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/2370.pdf>. Requests for medical exemptions from an immunization must be made on the state-mandated form, which can be found here: <https://www.health.ny.gov/forms/doh-5077.pdf>, .

Please be advised that New York no longer allows immunization exemptions based on religion or sincerely held religious beliefs.

Sports. Any student participating in a sports program must have a physical (within a year of the first day of the sport's tryouts), a tetanus vaccine within ten years, and a parent permission form returned to the health office. These requirements are due a week before tryouts, for each sport season. For more information on sports requirements please visit the athletics section on our website or contact the Athletic Director.

Medications: Non-Prescription (OTC) and Prescription medications

The school nurse must have a written order from the student's doctor as well as written permission from a parent to administer any and all medications regardless of whether they are prescription or over-the-counter medications. Verbal requests or permissions from parents or guardians cannot be accepted.

- All medicines must be in original containers.
- A written note is necessary from her health care provider as well as a parent/guardian; this information may be included on physical form.
- Authorization for medicine must be updated each year.
- Medication must be picked up at the end of the school year or it will be discarded.
- Students who are permitted to independently carry and use medications need to provide a written attestation from their health care provider confirming the diagnosis and that the student has demonstrated effective self-administration.

3.04 Pregnancy

Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women values concern for one another and respect for all persons. Our Catholic belief in the sanctity of life further demands that we give compassionate and caring support to a student if she becomes pregnant. The administration, in conjunction with the Counseling Department, will deal with each student individually and provide educational options for her during pregnancy.

3.05 Bullying/Cyberbullying/Harassment

Students and employees of Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women have a right to live and work in an environment free of harassment, bullying, and cyberbullying. Mercy does not tolerate incidents of intimidation, taunting, harassment, or bullying on school property or at a school function by students or school employees.

Mercy prohibits the harassment or discrimination of students by employees or other students on school property, at a school functions, or in any other way connected to Mercy (as determined by the administration) based on their actual or perceived race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex.

Definitions:

Harassment is defined as the creation of a hostile environment by conduct or verbal threats, intimidation, or abuse that has or would have the following effect:

- reasonably and substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits; or
- would reasonably be expected to cause a student to fear for his or her physical safety.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.

Cyberbullying occurs when harassment or bullying happens through any form of electronic communication.

Social Media is text or internet-based means of communication that permit social interaction between individuals. Parents are expected to approve of and monitor their daughter's social media accounts and are responsible for all postings.

Responses

In the event that a student or employee believes they are the subject of harassment, students are to report the incident to a teacher, counselor, or administrator; employees are to report to the Principal or President. All students, parents, and employees are required to preserve and share with the administration any evidence related to an alleged incident. In addition, parents and guardians are encouraged to contact the police when events occur outside of school.

The administration will investigate allegations of student harassment/bullying that it deems connected to Mercy and will subsequently make a determination of consequences, if any, which may range from detention to dismissal. Parents/guardians will be contacted. Legal authorities will also be contacted when warranted.

Further information pertaining to the misuse of Mercy digital devices and network can be found in section 9.01.

3.06 Chemical/Drug Definition and Use Policy

For purposes of this policy, “drug” is defined as any illegal drug, misused prescription or over-the-counter drugs, nicotine, alcohol, steroids, look-alike drugs, pills or other substances, which are misrepresented, sold or distributed as restricted or illegal drugs, or products misused for the purpose of mind-altering effect (aerosols, solvents, etc.). “Use” is defined as any means of ingestion including smoking and vaping.

The following actions involving alcohol, illegal drugs and chemicals, or paraphernalia associated with their use will result in appropriate intervention and disciplinary action.

- Attempting to secure or purchase.
- Using or having used.
- Possessing.
- Intending to, or attempting to, sell or distribute.
- Selling or distributing.
- Being knowingly present when used, possessed, or consumed.
- Posting on Social Networks that may cause scandal for the school and are brought to the attention of the administration.

Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women recognizes that the responsibility for our students’ spiritual and personal growth is shared among students, parents, faculty, and administration. 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 the well-being of all students.

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

This policy is in effect at all times, on and off campus, during the school year and on breaks.

Response to Chemical Use Violations by Students

The response the administration takes in cases of chemical use violations will vary depending on the severity of the situation. In all cases, a thorough investigation will be conducted, administrators will confer among themselves and with the child's counselor, parents/guardians will be called in for a meeting, appropriate drug-treatment or counseling services will be suggested or required, and disciplinary action will be taken. Students may be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended, or expelled. [see Rule Violations and Disciplinary Actions, section 2.04].

3.07 Parent/Guardianship Policy

Any student who, during the course of her enrollment at Mercy, is no longer living with a natural parent(s) or legal guardian(s) is required to submit written documentation from the natural parent(s) within ten days of the date she separated from her parent/guardian. The school is not responsible for supporting/implementing arrangements that have not been made known and authorized. All legal agreements pertaining to child custody and visitation rights must be on file with the Principal at Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women and are part of a student's education record. Students will not be released to any individual without proper identification and custodial approval. Please notify the school, in advance wherever possible, in the event of short-term change of guardianship due to parent illness or vacation.

3.08 Notification of Student Photos for Marketing Purposes

At Mercy, we love to showcase all of our students' amazing educational and extracurricular experiences. During the school year, your daughter's image and name may be captured in photos or videos for use:

- in promotional materials
- on the school's web site
- on social media sites
- in newspaper/television advertising
- in other projects promoting Mercy

Your daughter may appear alone, in a small group, or in a large crowd. If you would like to place restrictions on usage of your daughter's image/video/name, reach out to the Main Office prior to October 1.

4.00 GENERAL SCHOOL PROCEDURES AND ADMINISTRATION

4.01 School Hours

The school day begins at 7:45 am and ends at 2:55 pm (School ends at 2:25pm on Wednesdays). [See Attendance Policy, Section 2.02, for further information regarding tardiness.]

4.02 School Closings and Weather Emergencies

In the event of inclement weather, students and parents/guardians should tune to local TV stations for updates on school closings. Families will also receive a recorded phone or text message from the Principal or a Dean for snow days and or other unexpected school closings. Families are expected to keep their contact information current with the school.

4.03 District Transportation, Busing, and Traffic Flow

Transportation forms are available from your school district's transportation office. By law, the form must be completed by a parent or guardian and returned by April 1 each year, or within thirty days of establishing residency in a new school district, in order for your daughter to be entitled to receive transportation. For any change in the school schedule, Mercy is responsible for contacting the transportation departments. Most districts will not transport students to Mercy on days when their district schools are closed and Mercy is open and possibly on early dismissal days. It is the responsibility of Mercy families to provide transportation to and from school and to be informed of their district of residence's transportation policies and calendar.

For those who drive their daughters to school, we have developed traffic flow patterns to efficiently and safely move cars through the campus. Please refer to the [Start of School Packet](#) for maps of the morning and afternoon traffic flow maps.

4.04 Visitors to Mercy

To ensure the safety of students and staff, all visitors must check in at the school office and present a valid NYS ID to receive a visitor's pass. Appointments are required.

5.00 ATHLETICS AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women strives to educate the total person by helping 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.

Eligibility

All participation in co-curricular activities is approved and monitored by the administration. A student must be considered in good standing (i.e. not be on Academic or Disciplinary Probation – Sections 1.04 and 2.04) to be considered for election, selection, and/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.

Students not in good standing may not participate in school athletics or co-curricular activities. [See Academic Probation and Eligibility, in section 1.04.]

More information regarding the sports program and its policies and procedures can be found in the Student Athlete Handbook posted online on the [Athletics page](#) of the school website.

Proposing a Club

Students interested in organizing a club must complete the required documentation and submit it to the Dean of Student Life for consideration.

Social Media Club Accounts

Mercy does not permit clubs or other extracurricular groups to create or maintain any social media presence on behalf of the school.

6.00 SPIRITUAL LIFE

Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women is a Catholic school and a ministry of the Sisters of Mercy, as such it is committed to the spiritual development of its students and the entire Mercy community. Aside from the daily immersion in a faith community that promotes love of God and of neighbor, our students participate in liturgical services, retreats, Christian service, and receive instruction in theology.

Campus Ministry

The Campus Ministry program anchors us in our identity as a Catholic institution founded by the Sisters of Mercy and enlivens us to joyfully embrace and live our faith. Campus Ministry fosters a community of faith making the essence of Catherine McAuley's mission accessible and attractive to people of diverse faith backgrounds. Through opportunities such as Catholic liturgies, faith sharing, pastoral care, and Gospel service, we aim to empower our students, families, faculty, staff, and Board to authentically bear witness to the Good News of Jesus.

7.00 FACILITIES

This section describes various elements of the campus and the hours or restrictions that may pertain to them.

7.01 Driveways and Traffic Patterns Entrances

The only traffic entrance to the Mercy campus is on Clover Street.

The north entrance is one way. During arrival and dismissal times (7:00 am – 9:00 am and 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm) the right-hand side of the driveway is reserved for buses and visitors. The left-hand side of the driveway is for families to drop off their daughters and for students who drive. Cars then circle counter-clockwise around the parking lot and out the south entrance on Clover Street. Traffic flow maps are located on the Student-Parent Portal of the school website.

McAuley Wing/Motherhouse Circle. The Motherhouse circle and McAuley Wing parking lots are properties of the Sisters of Mercy and are not for school use. Students and families must use the school's Clover Street entrances for all arrivals and departures.

The Blossom Road Exit and Driveway serve as our bus loop from 2:00pm – 4:00 pm on school days and is closed to other traffic at those times. Otherwise, the driveway is for staff and visitors to the school.

Student Parking

On campus parking space is limited. Parking permits will be issued on a first come, first served basis. Preference will be granted in the following order: any licensed senior, licensed juniors who live in districts that do not provide transportation to Mercy and finally, licensed sophomores who live in districts that do not provide transportation to Mercy. If space remains, parking may be open to other licensed juniors. Students must complete the Student Parking Form which can be found on our website and submit it to the Dean of Student Life. Parking permits cost \$30.00. This is a one-time fee. Students will be given an official parking tag for their car.

A student driving a car to Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women 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.

7.02 Hours and Expectations Regarding Facilities

Library Media Center

The Library Media Center and its faculty support the ministry of the Sisters of Mercy by creating and maintaining an environment of hospitality, integrity, and respect. Working in conjunction with the school's Mission Statement to unleash the potential of young women through a vigorous pursuit of knowledge, the Library Media Center contributes to lifelong, 21st century learners by stimulating interest in reading, viewing, and using information and ideas for academic and personal use, providing opportunities for

students to become ethical digital citizens when using technology for academic and personal use, and collaborating with teachers to develop authentic learning experiences that embody the Traits of a World Class Learner.

Bookstore. Bookstore hours for the school year are Monday- Thursday 10:00-2:00 pm, closed Fridays and by appointment only for visitors.

Items available in the bookstore are Mercy uniform polos, sweatshirts and blazers, required paperback novels for the school year, Mercy spirit wear, jewelry, assorted school supplies, birthday balloon-a-grams, and a selection of candy and snacks.

You can also shop 24/7 with our Mercy Online Bookstore

<https://www.mercyhs.com/shop/>

Contact Kim Klimowski, Bookstore Manager, at 585-288-7120 x332 or

kklimowski@mercyhs.com for more information.

Cafeteria. The cafeteria is open before school, during advisement, and during the lunch periods. Breakfast and lunch are available at posted times and snacks are available during advisement. Students are responsible for leaving the cafeteria in good order, that is, uneaten food, food wrappers, and other debris must be picked up and discarded in the receptacles provided, and trays must be returned. Due to limited seating space during the lunch period, students must eat lunch during their assigned lunch period only. The McAuley Room is available for lunch overflow at the discretion of the administration and lunch proctors.

Mercy does not participate in any federal school meal or milk programs.

Library Media Center. The Library Media Center is open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. every school day unless announced otherwise. On early dismissal days it is open from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (Exceptions: Golden Mass and May Day celebrations - it will close at 12:00 p.m.) It is a quiet environment conducive to learning.

Passes to the Library are needed during school hours and students are expected to sign in at the circulation desk for attendance purposes. Students will remain in the Library during the entire period, and any devices used in the Library are for academic purposes. The Library staff will ask disruptive students to leave.

All library materials must be checked out at the circulation desk before leaving the Library. It is expected that the materials are returned in a timely manner and in good condition. There is a replacement fee for books and textbooks that are damaged while on loan to students. Examples of damage include broken bindings, and wet, stained or missing pages or covers.

Links to the Library's online resources, such as research databases and the Library's online catalog, can be found on the *Student/Parent Portal* on Mercy's website (www.mercyhs.com). You can also access Tech Resources directly at <http://tech.mercyhs.com/>. The main desk of the can be reached at 288-7120, ext. 333.

Lockers. Each student is assigned a hall locker at the start of each school year. Locker assignments may not be changed without the permission of administration. Students may decorate only the inside of their locker; writing on or decorating the outside of a locker is prohibited. The combination lock that is to be used on the locker is assigned at orientation or the start of school. Students must use Mercy locks on hallway lockers. The student is responsible for safeguarding the combination and keeping her locker closed and locked at all times. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

A member of the Physical Education staff assigns students 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 school property and are subject to inspection without notice by the administration. Lockers must be kept clean inside and out and should not be defaced in any way. Defacing includes, but is not limited to, writing, drawing, and use of stickers.

Parking Lot. The parking lot is off limits to students during school hours unless under the supervision of a faculty or staff member or with administrative permission/pass.

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.

Before School. Students are not permitted in halls, classrooms, or at their lockers before the 7:30 a.m. bell. They may gather in the cafeteria, gallery space, or Library Media Center. Students must be in their homeroom by 7:45am.

After School. When a student is on campus after school ends, or following the end of her supervised, after-school activity, she is to abide by the following rules:

- Remain in the designated supervised area (e.g. gallery or the Library Media Center, which is open until 5:00 p.m.)
- Middle School students must be in the Media Center or with a teacher supervising her after school.
- Students who are found in an unsupervised area are subject to disciplinary action.

8.00 FINANCIAL

8.01 Tuition Payment Schedule

Families may elect any one of the following three tuition payment arrangements: (1) full payment – due July 15; (2) two payments – first half due by July 15, second half due December 15; or(3) ten monthly payments beginning in July.

8.02 Financial Obligations

Report cards, progress reports, and transcripts will not be released if tuition is not current to the school. In addition, neither graduation tickets nor a diploma will be issued to any student who has an outstanding balance due to the school.

9.00 TECHNOLOGY

Internet/Computer Use

Parents and students must sign the Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women *Technology Acceptable Use Policy* and other forms posted on [MercyLINK \(https://mercy.myschoolapp.com\)](https://mercy.myschoolapp.com) in order to have the privileges of internet/computer use in school.

9.01 Computer Network Acceptable Use Policy

The use of the Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women (OLM) Computer and Electronic Communications Network is a privilege. All members of the OLM community have access to the Internet and the ability to access computers. In addition to the Internet, OLM users have access to library resources and approved software. This privilege brings with it responsibilities. The Internet, by its nature, provides access to unlimited amounts and types of information. The student, by using the OLM Computer Network, or accessing outside information using the OLM Computer Network, accepts responsibility for appropriate behavior and use. OLM communication systems are not to be used in ways that are unlawful, disruptive or offensive to others. Under no circumstances may any transmission, communication, voicemail or email be used in a way that violates the letter or the spirit of OLM's anti-harassment policy. Any action performed or initiated through the network or via cell network while on school grounds is expected to reflect the integrity and honesty of the Circle of Mercy.

This policy applies to all computers, devices and network connections (including connections to the network through private computers or remote connections). Violations of these rules will result in loss of access privileges and may result in disciplinary action as determined by administration, up to and including immediate dismissal.

- Interfering with the normal operation of the network is prohibited.
- Use of another person's access code without permission is prohibited.
- Removal of OLM provided/approved protective case is prohibited.
- Users must respect the need of others for access. School use has priority over personal use.
- Using the network to harass others is prohibited. Students accessing the network are representatives of OLM and are expected to behave accordingly as stated in this Handbook.
- OLM network resources are considered property of OLM and may be inspected at any time. Accounts will be investigated when suspicious activities occur on the school network or originate from the network.
- Using the network for commercial purposes or in an attempt to penetrate computer or network security of any company or other system, or to gain unauthorized access (or attempted access) to any other person's computer, email accounts or equipment is prohibited.
- Transferring files, downloading and/or distributing offensive or explicit material are prohibited.

- All members of the school community will respect the equipment and physical environment related to the network.
- Using the network to access pornographic materials is prohibited.
- Using the network to carry any defamatory, derogatory, discriminatory, sexually explicit, harassing, offensive or obscene material is prohibited.
- Using the network in connection with any infringement of another person's intellectual property rights (e.g., copyrights) is prohibited.
- Using the network in connection with the violation or attempted violation of any other law is prohibited.

Guidelines for use and general care of OLM-owned or leased devices

- Devices will only be used for school-related activities, projects, and assignments.
- Device cases provided by OLM MUST be kept on the device at all times. OLM Leased Surface Insurance Policy will only be honored if the device has an OLM protective case. Parents will be responsible for all costs associated with damaged devices not in the OLM protective case.
- Student devices used in the classroom are to be at the direction of the teacher.
- Devices are student-specific, the student will only use that device assigned to her and will be responsible for its care, not allowing other persons (including but not limited to parents, guardians, family members, and/or other students) to use the device.
- OLM and manufacturer's identification tags will not be tampered with or removed. No other stickers, ink, or any decorative items may be added to a student's assigned equipment (such as, but not limited to, the device, batteries, cords, and chargers).
- OLM assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges made by students included but not limited to credit card charges, long distance phone charges, equipment and line costs, or for any illegal use such as copyright violations.

Reporting damaged/lost devices, viruses, and other issues:

- Students and their parents/guardians are personally responsible for the proper care, use, and handling of the assigned device and for knowing where the assigned device is at all times. Students are responsible for promptly taking damaged, broken, or non-working devices to the designated school personnel for repair. The parent/guardian of a student who is found responsible for the loss, destruction, breakage, or damage of school equipment (such as, but not limited to, the device, batteries, cords, and chargers) may be required to pay for the replacement equipment.
- If a student's device is lost or stolen, the student and/or their parent/guardian are responsible for obtaining a police report within 24 hours of discovery of the loss/theft, immediately providing the school with documentation of the report, and cooperating fully with any subsequent investigation.
- Students are requested to report any weaknesses/compromises in OLM's computer security, any incidents of possible misuse or violation of this agreement to the administration.
- Students and parents/guardians shall address all concerns regarding the use of the technology to the supervising teacher(s) and/or the administration.

Device and network security:

- Students shall not download, install or run security programs or utilities which reveal weaknesses in and/or bypass the security of a system. Students will not attempt to circumvent or uninstall monitoring software from OLM-owned or leased devices.
- Students will not intentionally develop programs or engage in activities that disrupt other users or infiltrate computer/network security and computing systems. Students are forbidden from using techniques designed to cause damage to, deny access by legitimate users of computers or network components connected to the Internet or result in the loss of the recipient's work.
- Students shall not attempt to hack or otherwise breach security of any OLM-owned or leased digital devices, OLM server, or any other person's account.

9.02 1:1 Privacy Statement

In an effort to provide the best classroom experience while also ensuring a safe and reliable environment, OLM has employed the following services for each school-provided device (ChromeBook or SurfacePro).

Policy Enforcement and Location Tracking

OLM will be enforcing strict policies on all devices that will prevent actions such as installing or uninstalling applications. These policies are primarily for the purposes of antivirus/anti-malware protection. In addition, these policies will enforce location tracking of the device. This policy is set purely for the purposes of assisting parents with any lost or stolen device. The location of each device is only accessible by Mercy IT Support Services.

9.03 OLM Leased Surface Pro Insurance Policy

Mercy issues students in Grades 9-12 Microsoft Surface Pros which are leased and covered under the Mercy Insurance Policy provided by Worth Ave. Group. The term length of the policy is for the current school year and will be renewed annually contingent up re-enrollment status. This policy provides the following:

- Surface Pros that require normal or routine fixes for software failures will be fixed in-house. No additional fee or co-pay.
- Surface Pros that require any fixes covered by the manufacturer's warranty will be fixed. No additional fee or co-pay.
- Surface Pros in need of physical repair will be covered by Worth Ave. Group, Electronic Device Insurance Company and are subject to a \$50 copay per reported incident. [Worth Ave Device Protection Policy](#).
- Mercy Reserves the right to determine when a Surface Pro must be sent out for repair.
- In the event of any intentional or willful damage to their device or another student's device, that student will be responsible for the full replacement or repair cost.

- Students will be held to the same level of responsibility for a loaner device as for their original device.

Please contact Mercy IT Support Services if you have any questions or concerns regarding the insurance policy.

9.04 Chromebook Loan Agreement

Mercy issues students in grades 6-8 Chromebooks at the start of the school year. These devices are the property of Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women. The use of this device is a privilege that we are able to provide to students and expect students to use caution and exercise responsibility in caring for the device.

- Mercy will do all software and hardware repairs for Chromebooks in-house. Any costs associated with excessive damage to the device will be the responsibility of the parent.
- Chromebook cases provided by Mercy MUST be kept on the device at all times.
- In the event of any intentional or willful damage to their device or another student's device, that student will be responsible for the full replacement or repair cost.
- In the event of loss or theft of their device, the student will be responsible for the full replacement cost. Mercy will provide as much assistance as is within its power to help locate the missing device, but ultimately cannot be held responsible.

9.05 Mercy Logo Usage Policy

The Mercy logos are one of the most recognizable expressions of Mercy's brand and are the intellectual property of Mercy. This policy is intended to protect these important assets. It provides requirements regarding use of the Mercy logos and logotypes (this includes but is not limited to the two main Mercy logos and crest/shield, their variants, and all Mercy sub-brands, event logos, etc.). The Mercy logos, sub-brands, and variants are the sole and exclusive property of Mercy.

As a general rule, third parties may not use the Mercy logos. However, there are limited circumstances under which third parties may use the Mercy logos and only with the approval of the Vice President for External Affairs. Any use that falls outside of the approved scope is strictly prohibited and may constitute trademark infringement under federal and state laws. Mercy reserves the right in its sole discretion to terminate or modify permission to display the logos and may request that third parties modify or delete any use of the logo that, in Mercy's sole judgment, does not comply with its guidelines or might otherwise impair Mercy's rights in the logo. Mercy further reserves the right to object to unfair uses or misuses of its trademarks or other violations of applicable law.

We understand and appreciate that Mercy parents, vendors, and other outside parties may want to show affiliation with Mercy. However, use of the Mercy logos to imply affiliation with or endorsement by Mercy without express written permission by Mercy is

strictly prohibited. Affiliation with Mercy or Mercy programs does not imply the right to use the Mercy logos.

10.00 PARENT INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

10.01 Communication Guidelines for Parents and Students

Clear, civil, and timely written and verbal communications between all Mercy stakeholders helps to ensure that students' needs are addressed, parent/guardian questions and concerns are heard and answered, and faculty, staff, and administration are valued. Mercy follows the principle of subsidiarity, which calls for matters to be handled at the lowest possible level of an organization that can competently handle them. Therefore, the following sequential steps are to be taken for any concern in a course, sport, or classroom:

1. Students should contact the teacher, school counselor, or Athletic coach.
2. If no resolution is reached, the parent should contact the teacher, school counselor, or Athletic coach.
3. If no resolution is reached, parents should generally contact school personnel in the following order: (1) Department Chair or Athletic Director; (2) Dean of Academics, Dean of Student Life or Dean of the Middle School; and (3) the Principal. (A more detailed Communication Flow Chart is provided below.)
4. If the student and/or parent feels the problem has not been addressed by the above personnel, they should contact the President.

Email is usually the most efficient means of contacting school personnel, but phone calls or direct conversations allow for nuance and tone to be communicated and are preferred if there is any suspicion that one's thoughts may be misinterpreted.

Teachers, School Counselors and athletic coaches are expected to contact parents/guardians when they see emerging patterns of concern or individual episodes that might be alarming, whether academic or behavioral.

Communication Flow Chart

When faced with a question or concern, use the following table to determine with whom to communicate.

Question or Concern	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Instruction and Curriculum	Classroom Teacher	Subject Curriculum Leader	Dean of Academics/Dean of Middle School	Principal	President
Attendance	Attendance Office	School Counselor	Dean of Student Life/Dean of Middle School	Principal	President
Schedules/Placement	Current Teacher	HS/MS School Counselor	Dean of Academics/Dean of Middle School	Principal	President

Athletics	Coach	Athletic Director	Principal	President	
Student Behavior	Teacher/ School Counselor	Dean of Student Life/Dean of MS	Principal	President	
Safety/Educational Climate	Classroom Teacher	School Counselor	Dean of Student Life/Dean of MS	Principal	President
Budget/Financial	Vice President of Finance	Principal	President	Board of Trustees	
Co-Curriculars/Clubs	Club Moderator	School Counselor	Dean of Student Life	Principal	President
Health Issues	Attendance Office	School Counselor	Nurse	Principal	President
Transportation	Bus Driver	Transportation District Office	Dean of Student Life	Principal	President
Building Use	Main Office	Principal	President		
Buildings/Grounds	Main Office	Dean of Student Life	Principal	President	
Safety & Security	Dean of Student Life	Principal	President		
Food Service/Lunch Account	Cafeteria Manager	Vice President of Finance	Principal	President	
Public Relations, Social Media, Web Site	Vice President for External Affairs	President			
Technology	IT Helpdesk (support@mercyhs.com)	Director of Technology	Principal	President	
Faith/Religion	Theology Teacher	Director of Campus Ministry	Principal	President	

10.02 Messages Between Parent and Daughter

Students are not permitted to use their cell phones during the school day and are required to keep them “off and away.” All emergency phone messages from a parent or guardian are handled promptly and should be made to the main office (585-288-7120 X300). Please make every effort to communicate routine messages to your daughter before school. Do not contact your daughter on her cell phone or via email.

10.03 Parents Association

Preamble. Our Lady of Mercy Parents Association is composed 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.

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 and the religious and the social activities sponsored by the Parents Association or the school.

Parent Association Meetings. Meetings are published on the School’s Academic Calendar in Google.

Ways to Get Involved

- **Spirit Day.** The Parents Association provides and serves pizza lunch on the last day of Spirit Week as well as helps deliver the canned goods that students collect (October).
- **Open House.** Help welcome prospective students and their families and share a parent’s perspective of the value of a Mercy education (October).
- **Faculty and Staff Appreciation Luncheon.** Provide a luncheon for Mercy’s staff during their annual retreat day. Parents provide food and/or help serve during this celebration of our staff (Spring).
- **Accepted Students Picnic.** Help serve food and beverages to the incoming students (Spring).
- **Parents Association Award Committee.** The Parents Association annually awards a total of \$2,000 in recognition to five outstanding seniors. These awards are based on the embodiment of the character and spirit of our foundress, Catherine McAuley. Committee members work with the staff to select award recipients based on an application process (April/May).
- **Senior/Parent Breakfast.** Help us celebrate Mercy’s senior class and their parents. Volunteers are needed to plan, prepare, set up, and serve breakfast (just prior to Graduation).
- **Various School Events.** Assist in planning and executing events.