

GWYNEDD MERCY ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL

Student Handbook

Academic Year: 2023-2024

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The Student Handbook provides students and parents with important information about school policies and procedures. It also delineates school regulations which are contracted between the school and its students and parents/guardians.

It is the responsibility of students and their parents/guardians to be aware of the information contained in this Student Handbook.

The Administration of Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School retains the right to revise or expand upon these policies, procedures, and regulations whenever the administration deems necessary.

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Mission and History

MISSION STATEMENT

Rooted in the Catholic faith and charism of Mercy, Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School educates, inspires, and empowers young women to be merciful in spirit, innovative in thought, and courageous in leadership.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

We believe in the spirit of Mercy

- Acknowledging God as our core of existence, we model our lives on Jesus Christ.
- Positive moral and Catholic values are fundamental to personal growth, social responsibility and global competency.
- Gwynedd's foundation is built on the core values of compassion, justice, service, and respect for the dignity of all persons. These values are the charism of Catherine McAuley, the foundress of the Sisters of Mercy.

We believe in the strength of community

- Through ongoing service, the Gwynedd community fosters respect for the dignity of all persons.
- Students become competent, compassionate women in an enriched, balanced environment cultivated by positive role models.
- Faculty, in collaboration with parents, motivate and challenge each young woman to achieve her highest potential.

We believe in the value of education

- Participation in the Mercy Education System of the Americas (MESA) spans six countries and offers a global perspective to our students.
- Gwynedd develops and nurtures the whole person: intellectually, spiritually, morally, physically, emotionally, and socially.
- Educators inspire a fundamental love of life-long learning that requires reflection and action.

We believe in the power of women

- Each student succeeds in a supportive environment that encourages development of her distinct abilities, talents, and interests.
- Gwynedd women are **educated, inspired, and empowered** by Mercy to effect change for the greater good.

Through the global network of Mercy sisterhood, Gwynedd Alumnae advance Mercy charism and offer opportunities for mentoring and paths to success in careers for all women.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School, founded in 1861, an independent Catholic college preparatory school for young women, is part of a long and rich history of education. While it is a member of a global network of schools, Mercy Education System of the Americas, the school's roots are steeped in the educational ministry of Catherine McAuley, the founder of the Sisters of Mercy. A visionary leader, Catherine McAuley was keenly aware that education is the key to empowering women to make a difference in the world and affect social change. This belief continues to inspire the core mission of Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School as it nurtures highly competent and deeply compassionate leaders ready to serve the needs of a twenty-first century world.

Preparing students for this important role necessitates the promotion of academic excellence in an environment that fosters the development of the whole person; spiritually, intellectually, physically and emotionally. A complex, ever-changing and diverse world requires educational programs at various levels (co-curricular and extra-curricular) which educate, inspire and empower each young woman to think critically, to act with compassion, and to recognize, affirm and respect both her unique abilities and talents as well as the talents and abilities of each and every person.

VISION STATEMENT

We seek to educate, inspire and empower the next generation of women leaders, so that they may light a path for a better world.

CORE VALUES

Leadership

Excellence

Service

Global Vision

Faith

Community

Integrity

Compassion

BRIEF HISTORY OF GWYNEDD MERCY ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School, known until 1964 as The Academy of the Sisters of Mercy, is a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Mercy, Mercy Education Systems of the Americas.

Mother Catherine McAuley founded the community of the Religious Sisters of Mercy in Dublin, Ireland, on December 12, 1831. She lived only ten years after establishing her Institute and sending Sisters to all parts of Ireland and England. The Sisters dedicated themselves to the “service of the poor, the sick, and the ignorant.”

Mother M. Patricia Joseph Waldron brought the Sisters of Mercy to Philadelphia in 1861. On the first Monday of September 1861, the Academy of the Sisters of Mercy was formally opened on Spring Garden Street in the parish of the Assumption. In August 1863, the school was moved to a private home at Broad Street and Columbia Avenue. At that time there were 28 pupils who followed a “Course of Instruction in English, French, Spanish and Italian Languages, Belles-Letters, Ancient and Modern History, Geography, Arithmetic, Rhetoric, Astronomy, Use of the Globes, Natural Philosophy, Botany, Chemistry, Mythology, Music, Drawing, Needlework, and all the usual requisite accomplishments of female education.” Adjacent homes were purchased along Broad Street over the years to provide for the needs of the growing school.

In 1947, the Sisters of Mercy purchased the Taylor Estate in Gwynedd Valley, ten miles north of Philadelphia. The academy moved into various buildings of the Taylor Estate; the stables were converted into a school building, containing a gymnasium, library, cafeteria, classrooms, and business offices. A Science building was erected in 1948. These buildings served the Academy, as well as the newly founded Gwynedd Mercy College (1948), until 1954.

Ground was broken for the new Academy building in 1954 to house both the elementary and secondary schools; construction was completed in April 1955. As the Gwynedd Valley area grew, so did the school’s enrollment and additional spaces have been added as needed. The Springhouse Public School was purchased in 1982 to house the elementary division of the Academy.

Two new wings have been constructed to accommodate the tremendous growth of the Gwynedd Mercy family. In the fall of 1999, a new Fine Arts wing was opened to house students studying art and music. Private practice rooms also enhanced the Music Department. Student writing and research was enhanced with the addition of a new Writing Lab and 25 new computers. A bright and spacious Library was added for research and study. The wing also housed a Lecture Hall and one new classroom.

In 2004, the Academy built a new Performing Arts Center which is the hub for many shows, concerts, lectures and celebrations. In addition, a beautiful new Chapel was added for faculty, staff, and student prayer and reflection.

In 2015, the Library was converted into a Learning Commons. This area is a learner-centered, technology-rich space that was designed to promote student inquiry, intellectual curiosity, and collaborative learning in a comfortable setting.

In 2017, the science lab was updated to a state-of-the-art Chemistry lab, offering interactive workspace for experiments and learning.

With a multi-phase plan to improve athletic offerings for all students, GMAHS began Phase One of our Athletic Enhancement with the installation of a multi-sport Stadium Synthetic Turf Field and Enhanced Natural Grass Field in 2017.

The completion of the STEM Center in 2018, offers high level science and technology education to students.

In 2019, our community honored Maria Lutz McHugh '46 by dedicating our gymnasium in her honor. Maria promoted women and sports at Gwynedd for more than three decades. She taught health and physical education; coached basketball, field hockey and tennis; and provided visionary leadership as the Academy's first athletic director.

In all its endeavors, Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School strives to continue the tradition of excellence begun so confidently in 1861.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Introduction

In order to create an atmosphere for learning, it is essential for students to be cooperative and responsible members of the school community. All students are responsible for acting inside or outside of school in a manner which reflects the philosophy and mission of Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School. Any action which would cause shame or embarrassment to the school may result in suspension or, if grave, dismissal.

Regulations are an attempt to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number of people in our school community. The underlying basis of all regulations is that we comprise a community dedicated to the pursuit of a common goal. Faculty and students alike seek the development of the whole person in her relationship with herself, with others, and with God. Those within this community must realize that freedom to seek this development is both guaranteed and limited by the conditions of an academic society. We hope that every member of this community is motivated by the spirit of courtesy, sensitivity, and concern in all dealings with others.

Academic Integrity

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School is a community committed to nurturing and developing competent and compassionate women of faith who choose to live their lives rooted in Gospel

values. Believing that these values are fundamental to personal growth, we aspire to mold women of integrity who demonstrate respect for self and others, make wise choices, accept responsibility for their actions and promote justice for all persons

The GMAHS tradition of academic excellence can continue only when achievements are fulfilled in an atmosphere where all members conduct themselves in a truthful and trustworthy manner.

Therefore, the intent of the Honor System is not to punish, but to perpetuate a climate of principled scholarship that encourages and rewards the development of each student's unique talents and abilities.

The policies, rules, and regulations included in this *Student Handbook* are not all- encompassing. Situations will arise that will require sanctions as determined by the school's administration. The Principal, therefore, reserves the right to amend any directive, guideline, or procedure at any time. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

Student

Responsibilities

- To understand the content of the Honor Code and its purpose as a guide to promote honesty in all scholastic efforts
- To uphold the academic integrity of the GMAHS community by choosing not to engage in cheating or plagiarism
- To address with the teacher any questions or uncertainties about assigned work or citation practices
- To utilize *Turnitin.com* as a technological resource for plagiarism prevention
- To practice responsible habits when taking assessments, including, silencing and putting away smart watches and cell phones, clearing one's workspace, and focusing on one's own work.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

- To preserve the academic integrity of the GMAHS community by becoming familiar with the Honor Code and encouraging their daughter(s) to abide by its guidelines and responsibilities
- To support the enforcement of consequences if the Honor Code is violated

Student Strategies

Strategies to assist students with their commitment to academic integrity:

- Ensure that your academic goals are realistic and achievable by writing them down, evaluating them periodically, and consulting with your parents, teachers, and counselor.
- Create an academic plan that is both challenging and reasonable, recognizing your unique talents and abilities.
- Be mindful of your time as you strive to balance academic endeavors with involvement in extracurricular activities. Use your Outlook calendar as an effective tool to assist with time management.
- Be sure you cite all ideas, writing, research or theories when you first use the material to avoid accidental plagiarism.

In response to these recommendations and responsibilities, GMAHS expects that no student will engage in the following behaviors:

Cheating

To cheat is “to deal with dishonestly for one’s own gain.” (*Webster’s New World Dictionary*) Examples of cheating may include but are not limited to:

- Copying and/or offering homework verbally, in written form, or by electronic means
- Copying and/or offering answers to tests or quizzes verbally, in written form, or by electronic means
- Discussing or obtaining unauthorized knowledge about an exam, test, or quiz before, during, or after the assessment
- Bringing in and using unauthorized information during class or test time, including information stored in a calculator, cell phone, smart watch, handheld computer or any such device
- Having anyone, including parents or tutors, complete assignments for submission as one’s own
- Presenting collaborative work as individual work
- Fabricating data, information, or sources
- Forging signatures or tampering with official records
- Pressuring other students to violate the Honor Code

Plagiarism

To plagiarize is “to take (ideas, writings, etc.) from (another) and pass them off as one’s own.” (*Webster’s New World Dictionary*) A student can plagiarize using the uncited ideas, writing, or theories of another person, an external source, or generative AI, such as Chat GPT, Bard, etc.

Teachers will use Turnitin.com to check for originality in quotes, paraphrases, and summaries. Turnitin.com seeks to “identify unoriginal content [and]...manage potential academic misconduct by highlighting summaries to the world’s largest collection of internet, academic, and student paper content.” Turnitin.com also checks for the use of generative AI.

Examples of plagiarism may include but are not limited to:

- Attempting to pass off an external source’s work, words, images, data or technology as your own without acknowledging/citing the source
- Incorporating portions of another’s writing within the context of your own work without proper acknowledgement/citation
- Using generative AI such as Chat GPT, Open AI Codex or Dall-E at any stage of the process without the teacher’s permission for use of that particular generative AI at that particular stage of the process. (Ex. Using Chat GPT beyond the scope of a teacher’s guidelines).

Honor Code Pledge

Students will be asked to sign an acknowledgment of the Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School Honor Code Pledge at the start of the school year. Signing off on the Honor Code Pledge means the student agrees to and will abide by the statement in all academic endeavors. In addition, the Honor Code Pledge will be prominently displayed in all classrooms.

“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in completing this assignment.”

Honor Code Violation Process

When a teacher suspects a student or students of violating the established Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School Honor Code, he/she collects evidence to support the suspicion. This evidence is presented to the Dean of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments and Dean of Student Affairs. If it is determined the evidence of cheating is sufficient, the Dean of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment and/or the Dean of

Student Affairs meets with the student(s) and parents/guardians (if deemed necessary) and issues consequences to the student(s) as outlined below.

Level of Consequences

First Offense:

- The student(s) will initially receive a grade of ZERO or an INCOMPLETE for the assignment in question. The student(s) **may** have the opportunity to earn some credit for this assignment in conjunction with the Dean of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment and Dean of Student Affairs.
- In addition to the academic consequence, if students are found to be guilty of cheating, they must attend 3 detention sessions beginning with the next scheduled detention after the decision is rendered.
- Any verified first offense will be documented in the student's file.

Second and/or Subsequent Offense during a student's time at Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School:

- A 2nd offender will receive a grade of ZERO for the assignment in question, with no opportunity to earn credit for the assignment.
- 2nd offenders of the Honor Code will receive suspension. If the offense is deemed particularly grave, the student may be dismissed.
- If it is determined, through due process, that a student has violated the Honor Code for a third time, she will be dismissed.

NOTE: Consequences will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The Dean of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments, the Dean of Student Affairs and Principal have final determination on all Honor Code matters.

Computer and Systems Usage Policy

All persons using the School's computers, the School's computer systems, or personal computers on School property or over the School's systems are required to abide by the following rules. This policy also applies to the use of any personal electronic devices (computers, cameras, iPhones, iPads, smart watches, smart/cellular phones, video cameras, etc.) on School property or at a School-related event or used at or away from School for school work on a regular or intermittent basis. Failure to abide by these rules will result in appropriate disciplinary action determined by the School administration. All computers and devices should be used in a responsible, ethical and legal manner. Violations of the following guidelines may result in the revocation of access privileges and possible disciplinary responses, including expulsion for serious offenses.

Purpose

The purpose of providing access to the Internet and the School's computer systems is to support research and provide unique educational opportunities. The use of such resources should be limited to those activities that support the School's educational objectives.

Privilege

The use of the School's systems is a privilege and not a right. Inappropriate or illegal use of the School's systems or of the Internet will result in loss of the privilege and disciplinary action.

Internet Access

The School community--students, faculty, administrators and staff-- have the privilege of full access to the Internet. The School encourages students and teachers to use the Internet to expand their knowledge. The Internet allows users to send and receive e-mail, to log onto remote computers, and to browse databases of information. It also lets users send and receive files and programs contained on other computers. Files may be downloaded only to personal disks. Files are not to be downloaded to the Schools local or network hard drives.

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School receives E-Rate Funding therefore the school is required to filter certain sites in accordance with CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act, However, no filtering system is foolproof. Therefore, we expect users to act responsibly in their searches and to immediately disengage from any materials that are inappropriate and to report the situation to the faculty member or the Technology Department in charge of the activity. Although Gwynedd Mercy Academy cannot effectively restrict the content of information obtained by students via the Internet, obtaining material that is explicitly labeled, as not intended for minors will be considered a violation of school rules. Furthermore, making public or passing on any material that is pornographic, violent in nature, or otherwise harassing is totally unacceptable and will be dealt with immediately by the appropriate administrator.

Internet Safety

Students should never give out personal information (address, telephone number, name of School, address of School, date of birth, Social Security Number, credit card number, etc.) over the Internet. Students also should not meet with someone that they have contacted on-line without prior parental approval. Safety is the responsibility of the parent and student. Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School is not liable in any way for irresponsible acts on the part of the student.

Pirated Software

The term "pirated software" refers to the use and transfer of stolen software. Commercial software is copyrighted, and each purchaser must abide by the licensing agreement published with the software. There is no justification for the use of illegally obtained software. Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School will not, in any

way, be held responsible for a student's own software brought to School for personal use.

Network Access/Passwords

Accessing the accounts and files of others is prohibited. Attempting to impair the GMAHS network, to bypass restrictions set by the network administrator, or to create links to Gwynedd's web page is prohibited. Obtaining another's password or rights to another's directory or e-mail on the GMAHS network is a violation of school rules as well as a form of theft. Taking advantage of a student who inadvertently leaves a computer without logging out is not appropriate. Using someone else's password or posting a message using another's log-in name is a form of dishonesty, just as is plagiarism or lying, and will be treated as a violation. **Guard your password. You will be responsible for any activity done on the GMAHS system under your password.**

School's Right To Inspect

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School reserves the right to inspect user directories for inappropriate files and to remove them if found and to take other appropriate action if deemed necessary, including notification of parents. Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School also reserves the right to inspect any personal electronic devices brought onto campus to a School-related event or used at or away from school for school work on a regular or intermittent basis. In such case, Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School reserves the right to inspect the device, including all contents. Students must provide any and all passwords to inspect the device and its contents upon request by a school administrator. Students and their parents consent to the Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School logging into the device and its contents and applications, as well as accessing all communications, including, without limitation, stored communications. Do not assume that any messages or materials on your computer/electronic device or GMAHS systems are private.

Electronic Communication: Students are expected to use their school provided email for all school related work and communication. Students are expected to check their email daily. Electronic communication, such as e-mail and text messaging, may not be used to harass or threaten others. Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School reserves the right to randomly check electronic communication. Electronic communication must not include personal attacks and should follow the normal rules of appropriate public language. They should not contain any language or content, which the author would not be willing to share from the podium at a school meeting. Students should be made aware that deleted e-mails can be retrieved.

Any person who believes that they have been harassed or threatened by any electronic communication should immediately report the concern in accordance with the school Bullying Policy (p 18).

Viruses

Every effort is made by the School to keep our system virus-free. Even with the best techniques, however, computer viruses can be transmitted to and from any computer, including those in the computer center. Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School is not responsible for the transmission of any virus or for damage suffered from a virus.

Care of School Computers

Members of the School community will not abuse, tamper with, or willfully damage any computer or other technology-related equipment, use the computer or other technology-related equipment for other than appropriate work, or bring food or drink into any computer area. Any intentional acts of vandalism will result in discipline and students will be held responsible for replacement or repairs.

Reporting Requirements/Discipline

Any student who accesses inappropriate material on the Internet, receives harassing, threatening, or inappropriate materials via e-mail, text, or on the Internet, must immediately report the concern to the teacher who is supervising the activity or to the Director of Technology so that the situation can be investigated and addressed appropriately. Students who violate any aspect of this Computer and Systems Usage Policy will be subject to appropriate discipline and loss of computer or Internet privileges.

Online Learning Management Systems and COPPA Information

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School is committed to high quality teaching and learning. We realize that part of 21st century learning is adapting to the changing methods of communication and providing rich and varied contents and experiences for our students. The importance of teachers and students engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing in digital environments is a part of 21st century learning and provides students the opportunity to develop as literate and technologically competent individuals. Educational standards are now requiring the use of online education tools and Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School uses several computer software applications and web-based/cloud-based education technology services operated not by Gwynedd, but by third parties. These applications include, but may not be limited to, Microsoft Office 365, Zoom, Padlet, Kahoot!, Quizlet, Code.org, Adobe Creative Suite, online databases and other similar educational programs. Please note, our software lists are continuously being updated. If you have any questions about certain software products, please contact the Director of Technology.

In order for our students to use these programs and services, certain personal identifying information—generally the student’s name and school email address—must be provided to the website operator. Please note that any personal information provided by the Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School is for educational purposes only and is used by the school solely to communicate with the service provider. Students will receive a school email address to participate in certain of these computer software applications and web-based/cloud-based services. Under federal law entitled the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), certain website providers must provide parental notification and obtain parental consent before collecting personal information from children under the age of 13. For more information on COPPA, please visit <https://www.ftc.gov/tips-advice/businesscenter/guidance/complying-coppa-frequently-asked-questions>.

COPPA permits schools such as ours to consent to the collection of personal information on behalf of its students, thereby eliminating the need for individual parental consent to be given directly to the website operator. ***Your signature on this Handbook will reflect and constitute your consent for Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School to provide personally identifying information for your child consisting of first name, last name, an email address, username, and school-related information, such as school name, class, and teacher name. Your signature will also reflect and constitute your consent for your child to participate in video conferencing, podcasts, and live chats, which means that their identity will be revealed, their voice will be heard, and their image displayed to others and both may be recorded. If you do not want your student to participate in these programs, please notify the Director of Technology.***

Admissions

To determine the appropriateness of the school/student match, the Admissions Office carefully evaluates each applicant's individual strengths and talents. Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School favors candidates for admission who demonstrate a positive attitude and willingness to work.

Admission procedures consist of a completed application, a Scholarship-Entrance Exam, a recommendation from a teacher, guidance counselor or Principal, and transcripts from grades six and seven.

In admission policies, personnel and general practices, Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School acts without regard to race, religion, national or ethnic origin, or physical handicap.

Mass, Seminar Period, & Community Period

The entire school community comes together monthly, as well as other special occasions during the year, to celebrate the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Coming together as a school community at Liturgy is essential to participating fully in the life of the school. For the 2023-2024 school year the majority of Liturgies will take place during the designated Community Period on the schedule.

If there is not a Liturgy or other schoolwide assembly scheduled during the Community Period on a given day, students are free to attend club meetings or meet with teachers who are available during that time. Students are expected to use their community time as a way to engage with the larger community and immerse themselves in the life of the school. While students are allowed to use the school facility during Community Period, they are not allowed to lay on the floor, block walkways, or gather in very large groups. If a student uses the cafeteria at Community Period, they must clean up after themselves, so the cafeteria is ready for the lunch periods later in the day. If a student violates behavior expectations during Community Period, that period will become a study hall for that student or result in detention, as determined by the Dean of Student Affairs

In addition to being an integral part of the instructional program, seminar periods and special assemblies are a means of providing for the student body and faculty a positive identification with the program of Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School. The seminar periods allow for various departments in the building to engage students without taking away from their academic time. Each student will have a seminar period built into their schedule every other letter day. Students will use the time to engage in activities with the following departments: School Counseling, College Counseling, LEAD, Alumnae Engagement, Campus Ministry, & DEIJ as coordinated through the Dean of Student Affairs Office. Additionally, other educational programs will be drawn from professional and community resources. During one quarter of the year, each grade level will participate in an educational health course as part of the wellness curriculum. There will be times when students will be able to use the seminar period to catch up on academic work.

Since Masses, Seminar period, and Community periods are held during the school day, all students are required to participate. Good manners, consideration of others, respectful and appreciative attention are expected to prevail.

Skipping mass, seminar period or other special assembly without an excused absence will result in automatic detention. Disruptions during mass or an assembly will be taken very seriously and will result in demerits at the discretion of the teacher/Dean of Student Affairs.

Lunch & WIN/Cafeteria Use

During the Lunch/WIN periods, students spend one half of the time eating lunch and the other half in their homeroom. All students must report to homeroom at the start of WIN period for a homeroom meeting. After homeroom meeting, students are to use homeroom as their main location unless they sign out for a specific appointment with a counselor or teacher. If they need to sign out to the Academic Success Center, they must sign in upon

arrival. *It is senior privilege to sign out to locations other than scheduled meetings at WIN.* From time to time, class meetings will be held during WIN.

In the cafeteria, good manners and consideration for each other must be evident at all times. The tables must be cleaned before students leave the cafeteria. Students are assigned to take turns to ensure the dining area is left clean. **Food is only permitted in areas specifically designated for lunch which includes the cafeteria, the gym, and the Quad.** Freshmen must eat in the cafeteria during all lunches. Other grades may choose to eat in the Gym or the Quad. There will be tables and chairs set up in the Gym and the red chairs may be used in the Quad. Carrying a water/beverage bottle outside the classroom is a privilege and any student abusing this right will be reprimanded. Students need to stay in their locations during lunch. Students cannot go to other parts of the building as the other half of the student body is in their WIN period at the same time. Red chairs must be put away at the end of second lunch. Use of the Baggot Street room and Warde Seminar room during lunch periods is prohibited.

Food may be purchased during the Community Period but must be eaten in specifically designated areas. Purchasing food in the cafeteria during a class period or a study is prohibited. Students may purchase breakfast food before the start of first period and eat breakfast in the cafeteria. The Cafeteria closes at 1:00 pm.

Catholic/Non-Catholic Policy

We are a Catholic High School sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy. Therefore, we are responsible for ensuring that our school consistently follows the teachings of the Catholic Church, especially in the areas of faith formation and religious education. The Sacramental life of our community and monthly Liturgical celebrations foster our core Catholic and Mercy identity.

At the same time, we try to instill an appreciation of other faith traditions within our students. This is done within the classroom as well as through many clubs and service opportunities. However, given our identity as a Catholic institution, we require our students, faculty and staff to attend and participate in our Catholic services to stay true to our own history. This includes standing during prayers in the classroom and participation in all school Masses. While non-Catholic students are not required to recite these prayers, we ask them to join in all religious activities in quiet reflection.

Bullying

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School creates a loving and caring environment, where students should have a safe and positive learning experience. GMAHS is committed to providing an educational atmosphere free from harassment, intimidation and bullying for all students and staff. GMAHS promotes mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance of all members of the school community. GMAHS will not tolerate any behavior that infringes on the safety of any student.

Bullying is defined as the act of one or more individuals intimidating one or more persons through verbal, physical, psychological, cyber or written interactions. Bullying can take many forms and occur in virtually any setting. Examples of bullying include but are not limited to:

- Any act that is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the person (i.e. slurs, innuendos, taunting, spreading rumors, etc.)
- Intimidation, either physical or psychological
- Threats of any kind, stated or implied
- Assaults on any member of the community, including those that are verbal, physical, psychological, or emotional
- Attacks on property
- Written intimidating/threatening and/or demeaning letters, notes, messages, texts, or emails
- Social isolation or manipulation of a person
- Engaging in implicit or explicit coercive behavior to control, influence or affect the health and well-being of a person
- Any other behavior or acts which have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education, creating an intimidating or threatening educational environment, or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Cyber bullying (via the internet, cell phones or other technological means) including but not limited to comments on social networking sites, text messages, instant messages or emails, is strictly forbidden under this policy.

False reports or retaliation for harassment, intimidation, or bullying also constitute violations of this policy.

GMAHS expects students and staff to immediately report any incidents of bullying to the Principal or designee. Staff is expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur.

Bullying of any type has no place in a school setting. Any reported bullying incidents or complaints will be promptly investigated by the Principal and Dean of Student Affairs, with assistance from the Counseling Staff regarding conflict resolution. This policy applies to students on school grounds, while traveling to and from school or a school-sponsored activity, and during a school-sponsored activity (or activity hosted by another school) whether on or off campus.

GMAHS will take action against any person who engages in bullying. Any person found to be participating in bullying behavior may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Responses to confirmed bullying include:

- Verbal warning
- Removal from class
- Verbal or written apology to the victim

- A parent-teacher conference
- Conference with the Principal
- Counseling
- Detention
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Consequences to bullying behavior will depend upon the frequency and severity of the conduct. By working with families and students, GMAHS strives to educate the school community about bullying and eliminate types of bullying behaviors.

Violence

The Administration will take immediate action against a student who poses a threat or a danger to any member of the school community. Physical assaults are forbidden. A weapon is any implement which can be used to threaten, endanger, or injure oneself or another person. If a student is found with a weapon, a parent and the police department will be contacted. Suspension or expulsion may result.

Classroom Duties

All students are expected to share in the responsibility of keeping classrooms in order. At the end of the day, windows are to be closed, shades are to be drawn to the mid bar, and lights are to be turned off.

Dress Code

General

By choosing to attend Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School, each student has agreed to wear the school uniform as described below. The uniform builds a sense of community and minimizes distractions. Parents are asked to support their daughter in complying with the uniform code.

The uniform should be clean and neat at all times. The blazer must be worn for all formal occasions, such as assemblies, and skirts are to be of an appropriate length (no shorter than 3" above the knee). If a student chooses to wear shorts under her uniform skirt, they must be solid black or dark blue.

No excessive jewelry such as chains and the like are permitted. With the exception of ear piercing, body piercing is forbidden, this includes any nose or lip piercings. Extreme hairstyles or hair dyes (brown, black, blonde, or red allowed; no half and half color) are not permitted.

Parents should send an explanatory note if a student is unable to wear her uniform on a given day. An excuse pass will then be issued by the Dean of Student Affairs. A

doctor's certificate is required for the extended use (more than one day) of anything other than the regulation shoe. If given permission, the replacement shoe must be dark in color.

On occasions such as field trips, when the uniform is not worn, the moderator will determine student dress norms.

Note: Effective since the 2017-2018 school year, Student ID's must be in your possession at all times during the school day. The replacement cost for a lost ID is \$10.00.

Uniform Infractions

Starting in the 2022-2023 school year, the process for enforcing uniform moved to a uniform infraction process outlined below:

RED, YELLOW, GREEN – The “traffic light” approach

Each school day will be assigned a color that will indicate to students the uniform description that applies for a given day. The color days will be noted on the school calendar on the website as well as on the daily Student Council Instagram posts informing students of the daily events.

Students who receive an initial uniform infraction will be issued a demerit. Further uniform infractions will result in both demerits and serving morning detention.

RED = Formal Uniform: *all Liturgy days as well as for special guests or events*

YELLOW = Standard Dress: *for all regular school days*

GREEN = Dress Down: *for special theme days*

<u>FORMAL UNIFORM DAY (RED)</u>	<u>STANDARD UNIFORM DAY (YELLOW)</u>	<u>DRESS DOWN DAY (GREEN)</u>
Loafers Navy knee high or navy tights (no leggings or crew socks) Skirt (appropriate length) or uniform pants Banded polo OR button-down Oxford shirt Blazer w/wo sweater To be worn ALL day	Loafers Navy crew socks, navy knee highs, navy tights, or navy leggings Skirt (appropriate length) or uniform pants Banded polo, long or short sleeves Pullover sweater, cardigan, sweater vest, or blazer	<u>Rules:</u> No slippers No PJs If there is a designated theme for a dress down day, the theme must be followed. Otherwise, the uniform is to be worn.

The uniform process includes a clear uniform infraction policy coupled with an incentive called “Green Days” Special Green Days will be hosted by the GMAHS Administration periodically as a reward for uniform code enforcement.

Please note, that if a student continually receives uniform infractions beyond these steps, the administration will meet with the student and parents/guardians to discuss further disciplinary actions.

Fall/Spring Uniform

The fall/spring uniform consists of a white banded bottom polo shirt with emblem (long or short sleeve), light blue kilt or grey pants, navy socks (navy crew socks allowed on yellow days) or tights and traditional loafers in burgundy or black (see Bass® or Eastland®).

Ripped stockings, sweatshirts, and long sleeve shirts worn under the short-sleeved polo are not permitted.

Uniform is to be worn for the entire school day. Athletes may change during lunch only on days when there is an away game. Only the team uniform will be permitted. Sneakers must be worn for the remainder of the school day; no slippers, flip-flops, or slides.

This uniform should be worn prior to November 1st and after April 15th.

Winter Uniform

The winter uniform consists of a navy blazer with emblem **and/or** navy sweater (v-neck or cardigan) or sweater vest, white button-down shirt or white banded bottom polo shirt, plaid kilt or grey pants, navy socks (navy crew socks allowed on yellow days) or tights and traditional loafers in burgundy or black (see Bass® or Eastland®). **The sweater is part of the daily uniform unless replaced with the blazer.** The blazer must be worn to all formal events including liturgy and assemblies.

Ripped stockings and sweatshirts are not permitted. Seniors may wear their school approved ¾ zip sweatshirt.

Uniform is to be worn for the entire school day. Athletes may change during lunch only on days when there is an away game. Only the team uniform will be permitted. Sneakers must be worn for the remainder of the school day; no slippers, flip-flops, or slides.

This uniform should be worn between November 1st and April 15th.

Drug, Alcohol, & Vaping Policy

This policy, including its rules, regulations, and guidelines, is an effort by Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School to openly and effectively respond to the potential and current uses and abuses of drugs, alcohol, vaping, and mood-altering substances by students.

Definitions

Distribution: To deliver, sell, pass, share, or give to another person, or to assist in distribution of any alcohol, drug, vaping, or mood-altering illegal substance.

Drug/Mood Altering Substance: Alcohol, drugs, vaping products, narcotics and/or other health-endangering compounds which include but are not limited to alcohol, alcoholic beverages, vape pods, tranquilizers, amphetamines, synthetic opiates, marijuana, LSD and other hallucinogens, glue solvent-containing substances, prescription drugs, “look-alike” drugs and includes all controlled substances identified in the following laws: Public Law 91-513 and P.L. 233, No. 64.

Look-Alike Drugs: Substances manufactured or designed to resemble drugs, mood altering substances, narcotics, and other health endangering compounds.

Drug Paraphernalia: All equipment, products, and materials of any kind which are used, intended for use or designed for use in planting, propagating, cultivating, growing, harvesting, manufacturing, compounding, converting, producing, processing, preparing, testing, analyzing, packaging, repackaging, storing, containing, concealing, injecting, ingesting, inhaling or introducing into the human body a controlled substance in violation of the previously mentioned laws.

Possession, Active: To possess or hold, without attempt to distribute, any alcohol, drug, vape, or mood altering illegal substance.

Possession, Constructive: Knowledge of sources or means of access to any alcohol, drug, vape, or mood-altering illegal substance.

School Jurisdiction: School premises, any school-sponsored activity or any other cooperating school activity, or traveling to and from school or school-related activities. Any occurrence at any time, including weekends, that can be substantiated through a police report falls within school jurisdiction.

Suspicion: A present, observable student behavior and/or appearance that warrants the suspicion. Rumors (unsubstantiated information from any source) are not classified as suspicion.

Policy Violation

The Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School Policy is violated when any student, visitor, guest, or any other person is suspected of unlawfully manufacturing, using, abusing, possessing, constructively possessing, distributing, or attempting to distribute drugs, alcohol, vaping products, or any mood altering substances, or drug

paraphernalia, or is suspected of conspiring, aiding or abetting the use, abuse, active possession, constructive possession, or distribution of drugs, alcohol, vaping products, or any mood altering substances.

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School administration will notify the parents, counselor, and other authorities as deemed necessary when a student has violated GMAHS's drug, alcohol, & vaping policy.

GMAHS students rumored to be involved in any way with drugs, alcohol, or vaping will be investigated and parents will be notified. Any other person who has violated the school's Drug, Alcohol, & Vaping Policy will be reported to the proper authorities and the school will cooperate in the prosecution of that person.

A student suspected of violating GMAHS's drug/alcohol/vaping policy will be investigated. The investigation may include but is not limited to a meeting with the student, counselor, Principal, and Dean of Student Affairs, and a drug/alcohol/vaping test administered by an agency recommended by the school. If the suspicion is confirmed, at the discretion of the Principal, the student may be subject to:

- Indefinite Detention
- Suspension
- Dismissal
- Drug/Alcohol/Vaping Assessment
- Drug/Alcohol/Vaping Classes
- Loss of privilege to participate in all school activities and sports for up to a year

A student may not return to school until a meeting with the student's parents has occurred. In the meeting, the student will be strongly encouraged to disclose where she obtained the drugs, alcohol and/or vaping products.

A student found in the act of distributing (see definition) alcohol, drugs, and/or vaping products within the area of the school's jurisdiction will immediately be expelled from school.

A student will be expelled if it is determined that she has violated the school's Drug, Alcohol, & Vaping Policy a second time.

Search Procedures

School authorities may search a student's locker and seize any illegal and/or inappropriate materials. Such materials may be used as evidence against the student in disciplinary proceedings. Lockers are subject to inspection and search. Assignment of lockers does not imply an expectation of privacy. Prior to a locker search, the student shall be notified and given an opportunity to be present. However, where school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the locker contains materials

which pose a threat to the health, welfare, and safety of students in the school, student lockers may be searched without prior warning.

Emergency Drug Situations

The first person on the scene of an emergency drug/alcohol/vaping situation should render immediate first aid to the student and notify the Principal and school nurse as soon as possible. Care should be taken to safeguard the student and to prevent escalation of the problem within the school.

Self-Referral or Referral by a Concerned Party

Any student who is self-referred to the administration, a counselor, or faculty member, or who is referred by anyone else, and who seeks help with a chemical use/abuse and/or dependency, and who is not under the immediate influence of a chemical substance, is not subject to this policy's provisions as outlined for a first violation.

It should be noted that all teachers and staff (everyone employed by GMAHS or working at GMAHS) must report to the Administration and Counseling Department all students seeking assistance or help with chemical use/abuse and/or dependency.

In the event that a student fulfills the above qualifications for self-referral, or referral by a concerned party, the following procedures will be followed:

- Together the school counselor and student will create a plan for contacting parents.
- The student must have an assessment and agree to release this assessment information to the school, and to follow the recommendations of the assessing agency.
- Disciplinary action will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- If the student and/or parents refuse to cooperate after she has approached the school official, next steps are left to the discretion of the school.

Aftercare

The Administration and the Counseling Department will assist in carrying out procedures recommended by the crisis intervention personnel in providing a smooth transition from treatment to the classroom environment. Every effort will be extended to help the student realize the goals she has established for herself.

Smoking

Smoking and all other forms of smokeless liquid and powder are forbidden everywhere in school or on school property, on school buses and at all school-sponsored events. Violation

of this policy will result in an automatic detention as well as other disciplinary follow up as needed. (see Drug, Alcohol, & Vaping Policy above)

Electronic Devices

Cell phones are not permitted to be visible in classrooms unless it is at the instruction of the teacher. Phones must not be visible as students are traveling in the hallways between class. In addition, students must not use laptops or other personal devices as they are traveling the hallways. Cell phone and personal device use in class is left to teacher discretion if it is relevant to the work being done in class. This rule is intended to protect the learning environment of the classroom and study areas and increase safety in the hallways.

Cell phone and personal device use in the cafeteria is permitted but limited to email and/or text or basic research. Students are not permitted to take photos/videos or access social media sites. While students are permitted to use laptops or other personal devices during lunch, they do so at their own risk as others are eating and drinking at the table. It is highly encouraged to limit technology use as much as possible during lunch periods so that students can interact with one another.

If cell phone/personal device use in the hallway, classrooms or cafeteria is violated, the device may be taken and given to the Dean of Student Affairs until the end of the school day. No personal device of any kind should be brought to Mass or Assemblies.

For the first offense, the device will be powered down by the student and she will receive three demerits. A second violation will result in additional demerits and an automatic detention. A second violation will also result in a call home from the Dean of Student Affairs.

In the case of an emergency, a student should report to the front desk to use a school phone. Parents are asked not to contact students via phone or text during the school day as it is very distracting to the educational environment. In case of an emergency, please call the main phone number (215-646-8815) and your message will be delivered to your daughter. All correspondence – dropping off a package; a student going home sick etc., must go through the front office. Any student using the sports door during the school day will receive an automatic detention.

Fundraising

Fundraising of any kind must first be cleared with the Principal.

Lockers

Students may go to their lockers whenever they can do so without being late for class. Lockers must be locked when not in use. No student has permission to use another student's locker. Lockers are to be kept in good order. The Administration reserves the right to conduct periodic inspection of lockers.

Lost or damaged locker keys must be replaced by the student for \$10.00. A student who continually forgets their locker key will be asked to purchase a new key for \$10.00.

Bathrooms

Students must follow teacher policies on the use of the bathroom during class periods. One student is allowed at a time to use the bathroom during class periods, study, and WIN. Students are not to use the bathroom as a gathering space at any time.

Lost and Found

The Lost and Found is operated by the Student Council, and is open each day during lunch. The school assumes no responsibility for the personal property of students.

Study Halls

Students with study hall on their schedule are to report to the location on their roster. Seniors are allowed to sign out of a study period but must report to study hall first. If a 9th, 10th, or 11th grade student wishes to do research or needs to print work the student should have a pass and/or the study period moderator will decide if signing out to the study hall is appropriate during that period based on volume. Either way, students must report to the study hall moderator first. At times students will have a study hall during their scheduled Seminar Period and the above rules apply. An atmosphere of quiet should prevail in study rooms. No food or beverages are permitted in the classrooms, Learning Commons, or the PAC.

Quadrangles

The use of the first quadrangle (across from the Gym) during study time is a senior privilege. The quadrangle is used for study or group work. Students using the quadrangle must be seated on the chairs provided. They must be in full uniform at all times. Food is allowed in the front Quad. Students must clean up all garbage.

The second quadrangle (by the Learning Commons) is available to all students as a place for study. Students must be seated on the chairs provided. They must be in full uniform at all times. **No food is permitted in this area.**

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Attendance

General

Regular attendance is essential for success in school. Frequent absence from regular classroom learning experiences disrupts the continuity of the learning process.

Students are expected to be present for the entire school day. Students who arrive at school after 11:30 a.m. or who leave before 12:00 p.m. will be marked absent for a half-day.

Absences are classified as EXCUSED or UNEXCUSED according to the reason for the absence. An EXCUSED absence is an absence due to illness, family emergency, death of a family member or legal concerns. An UNEXCUSED absence is any absence that is not considered EXCUSED as described above. Examples of UNEXCUSED absences include vacations or any trip not expressly sponsored by Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School.

It is highly discouraged to arrange routine visits to the doctor, dentist, taking a driver's test, etc. during school time as a sufficient number of holidays are already present in the school calendar. Parents are strongly advised not to plan vacations during the academic year when school is in session. School days missed to extend an existing holiday or create a new one are detrimental to a student's academic success. When non-medical absences are unavoidable, adherence to certain procedures minimizes, as much as possible, the negative effects on a student's academic standing. The procedure for reporting an anticipated, non-medical absence (including a vacation, non-GMA athletic events, etc.) is as follows:

- A written request (electronic or handwritten) must be submitted to the Dean of Student Affairs stating the timing and reason for the absence. This must be submitted at least one week prior to the absence. Submission of this written request guarantees only that the request will be considered, not that it will be automatically granted.
- The request will be shared with the Dean of Academics. The student's teachers will be contacted to evaluate how an absence will impact progress in the course.
- Once approval for the non-medical absence has been granted, the student will be expected to contact all of her teachers for assignments and she is responsible for any work that has been missed. Students should expect to take a make-up test on the day they return unless arrangements have been made in advance with the teacher.

Academic work missed due to school functions such as Field Trips, GMA Athletic Events, Admissions visits to elementary schools etc. may require students to miss classes. In all cases parents will be notified in advance and a permission slip must be signed. The Dean of Academics may deny an individual student the privilege of attending such activities if the student is in danger of failing a particular class. Students are required to contact teachers in advance. Students are accountable for all material missed

For college visits please see page 29.

Any student who cuts school or leaves campus without permission will receive an automatic detention and appropriate disciplinary follow-up by the Dean of Student Affairs.

Procedures for Student Absence

- On the day of the absence, a parent/guardian calls the attendance office (215-646-8815, Ext. #330) before 8:00 a.m. each day of the absence.
- Parents/Guardians must submit a written explanation within three (3) calendar days of the absence. This should be done on a 3x5 index card with the student's name, dates of absence, and reason for absence. The School Code of Pennsylvania requires a reason for absence. A parent or guardian must sign the card. *Demerits will be given when written explanation is not submitted within three (3) calendar days of the absence.*
- Students absent for three or more consecutive days must submit a doctor's certificate.
- Students are expected to make arrangements to complete any missed work on the first day after returning from an absence.
- For planned absences, parents must communicate a student's absence in advance of the starting date of the absence to the Dean of Student Affairs (see procedure above). The student is responsible for obtaining assignments from her teachers.

Procedures for Student Lateness

- A student is late if she is not in first period prior to 8:15am.
- Late students must report to the Front Office to sign in and receive a Late Pass which is to be given to their teacher.
- Lateness is excused only for
 - doctor/dental appointments accompanied by a signed note from a doctor
 - When the school bus fails to arrive at school on time
 - Family emergency accompanied by a note signed by a parent/guardian.
- All other latenesses are UNEXCUSED and will result in a demerit. When a student reaches 5 demerits, they must serve detention according to the stated detention policy. Demerits do not go on school transcripts. They simply serve as a reminder of school policies.
- If a student is late 10 times, she has established a pattern of lateness and therefore will serve another detention and will lose the privilege of driving to school for a period of time as determined by the Administration.
- Students will be given a warning by the Dean of Student Affairs if the number of latenesses begins to accumulate.
- Students are reminded that traffic is an inevitable part of driving to school and must plan accordingly by leaving enough time to travel safely to and from school.

Extended Absence Policy

One to 10 days absent and the student works with a Guidance Counselor for make-up work.

For absences that span between 11 – 40 days, an Educational Support Plan is written based on current documentation and need for academic support. Students will have equivalent time of absences to make-up missed work.

At 40+ days Gwynedd is unable to meet the student's educational needs and the student must withdraw from school.

All extended absences require a note from a medical specialist. Students are scheduled during Community Time, free periods, and/or WIN to complete make-up work and tutoring.

Accommodations

Gwynedd provides reasonable accommodations to all students that have current supporting documentation such as a school or private evaluation. Accommodations offered include:

- Extended time on assessments (up to 50%)
- Use of Assessment Room
- Study guides and outlines if available
- Preferential Seating
- Assistive Technology (approved by Director)
- Study skills support (only applies for students in CLP)

Please contact Mrs. Lisa Spleen at lspleen@gmahs.org regarding any questions.

Procedures for Early Dismissal

- All students must sign out at the Front Office.
- Early dismissals are appropriate for urgent or unavoidable situations. A student needing to leave school early must bring a note to the Front Office PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE SCHOOL DAY. The note should be on a 3x5 index card signed by a parent or guardian.
- Seniors have the privilege of signing out during the last period of the day if they have a study hall without special permission. On a regular bell schedule, seniors may sign out if they have study hall during last period or if there is no planned activity during a seminar period. Regardless of the day's schedule, all seniors MUST sign out with the Front Office. Students who do not sign out with the Front Office will receive a demerit and may lose the privilege of leaving early.
- There is to be no sign out before the start of the last period at 2:00 pm.
- If a student unexpectedly has to leave campus during the day, her parent/guardian must call the Front Office. Parents/Guardians must directly

contact the school. A text message to a student is not sufficient. A note should be brought with the parent picking up the student, or if the student is driving herself, a note should be returned the next day.

Procedures for Weather-Related or Emergency Dismissals

- The school administration will determine the necessity for early dismissal and will notify parents via the RUVNA messaging system.
- If the school is notified that a bus district will arrive early to pick up its students, the students for that district will be dismissed in time to meet the bus.
- No student may call a parent and ask to be dismissed early.
- A determination will be made by the school's administration about the departure of student drivers.

School Closure or Modifications Due to Force Majeure Event

Should events beyond the control of Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School, including, but not limited to, any fire, act of God, hurricane, tornado, flood, extreme inclement weather, explosion, war (including armed conflict), governmental action, act of terrorism, risk of infectious illness, epidemic, pandemic, shortage or disruption of necessary utilities (water, electricity, etc.), or any other event beyond Gwynedd's control, occur, Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School has the discretion to close the school and/or modify its operations, curriculum, schedules length of school day, length of school year, and/or means of learning and teaching methods. The family's contractual financial obligations for tuition and fees remain in full force and effect. Should Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School close, the school's duties and obligations shall be suspended immediately without notice until such time as Gwynedd, in its sole and reasonable discretion, may safely reopen. If the school cannot reopen due to a force majeure event, Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School is under no obligation to refund any portion of tuition paid.

Procedures for College Visits/Interviews

- Our calendar allows for several days off which are ideal for college visits. All attempts should be made to schedule college visits during this time.
- Seniors will be allowed 2 school-excused college visitation days. These days are not counted against a student's attendance record.
- Documentation of a college visit is available from the college admissions office and must be included with the required absence note. A student who fails to follow these procedures will be marked absent.
- A student must inform her teachers beforehand of her absence and is responsible for all academic work missed.
- The student may participate in athletic or extracurricular activities.

Discipline Code

Since one of our goals as an educational institution is the development of mature, responsible young women, we consider the maintenance of a good discipline record of the utmost importance. Students are warned that a poor discipline record may result in exclusion from student activities and field trips, educational tours, senior-junior prom, competition for salutatorian and valedictorian.

Certain sanctions have been established for the violation of school rules. Serious breaches of discipline, such as any harmful threats to faculty, staff, or other students, may warrant in-school suspension. A pattern of misbehavior may amount to a serious breach of discipline.

Demerit System

Ordinary day-to-day discipline matters are governed by a demerit system. The accumulation of 5 demerits leads to an after-school detention.

First and second detentions will be held on Wednesday mornings from 7:30 - 8:15 am and Friday afternoons from 3:00 to 3:45 with the Dean of Student Affairs. Once a fifth demerit is received, students have a ten-day window to coordinate with the Dean of Student Affairs to serve their detention on a Wednesday or a Friday. If the detention is not served in that window, it will result in a demerit for each day not served. During detention students will work on an appropriate activity as decided by the Dean of Student Affairs. *Students should report to detention in full uniform.*

Third detentions will last 60 minutes and will be served after school on Friday. A third detention will also result in a meeting between the parent(s) and Dean of Student Affairs.

Common Infractions

The following is a list of the most common infractions of school regulations for which students may receive from 1 to 4 demerits. Given the variety of human ingenuity, it is not an attempt to be an exhaustive list:

Class disruptions	Missing absence notes (3 day grace period)
Disturbance at assemblies	Neglect of cafeteria duties
Lateness for school	Being on corridors during classes
Lateness for class	Locker violations
Lack of cooperation	Food/beverage outside of cafeteria
Chewing gum	Unauthorized use of technology
Uniform Violation	

Automatic/Multiple Detentions

The following infractions incur automatic and sometimes multiple detentions:

Leaving campus without permission	Smoking
Defacing school property	Disrespect to faculty, staff
Speeding on school property	Honor Code Violations
Stealing	
Cutting classes, assemblies, or other scheduled events	
Compromising school security by propping doors and using unauthorized exits	
Other breaches of behavior stipulated by the school	

If a problem should arise concerning a student's conduct, influence, attitude or performance, we hope that consultation between parents and teachers will resolve the difficulties. If irreconcilable differences should occur, the Academy reserves the right to dismiss a student.

NOTE: The Principal has the final determination on all discipline matters.

Fire Drills/Armed Intruder Drills

When the fire alarm sounds, the students are to leave the building immediately by the route designated -- **in absolute silence** -- quickly and in an orderly manner. Windows and doors are to be closed. At a signal, the teacher returns with his/her class in silence.

Armed Intruder drills are also held during the school year. These drills are done in conjunction with the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety. Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School follows the MCDPS protocol of run, hide, fight. Notification about these drills will be sent to parents and guardians prior to the start of the drill. During these drills, students practice being aware of the exits in the building and whether or not to run, hide, or fight based on the circumstances of the drill.

Learning Commons

General

The Learning Commons is a learner-centered, technology-rich space that was designed to promote student inquiry, intellectual curiosity, and collaborative learning in a comfortable setting. In order to ensure that all who use the Learning Commons treat it as an academic environment, the following guidelines have been established.

Hours of Operation and Student Access

The Learning Commons is open Monday and Wednesday from 7:45 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday from 7:45 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., and Friday from 7:45 a.m. until 3:30 p. m. ALL students are welcome in the Learning Commons during the following times:

- Before and after school
- During study periods for seniors or with special permission for underclasswomen.
- During WIN if signed out with homeroom teacher

Access to the Learning Commons will not always be granted depending on the high volume during certain periods of the day. All students must sign out of homeroom during WIN before going to the Learning Commons.

Use of Other Spaces

The Mac lab is designated for use by the Graphic Design, Digital Publications, and Tech Resources classes, while the lounge, and quiet area may be used by students on a first come, first served basis.

Use of the Technology

Because the Learning Commons is an academic environment, the use of all technology while in the Learning Commons, including the use of personal electronic devices, is intended for academic purposes only. Some examples of unacceptable use of personal technology while in the Learning Commons include the following activities:

- Texting
- Shopping online
- Accessing unapproved social media sites during school hours including but not limited to facebook, twitter, instagram, snapchat, tumblr, vsco, tiktok, etc.
- Viewing personal photos
- Watching videos or playing music for entertainment purposes
- Playing video games

Guidelines for Use of School Computers

- All use of technology must be for educational or research purposes, and consistent with the mission and goals of the school.
- The Internet will be used to support the school curriculum, projects between schools, communication, and research for students, faculty and administration.
- Viewing of the following types of material is not permitted at school: offensive materials, hate mail, discriminatory remarks or obscene or pornographic material.
- Users of computer equipment must be polite and respectful of the rights of others. This means no writing or sending of abusive messages, no use of inappropriate language, no threats, harassments or bullying.

- The network may not be used for illegal activity, for purposes of profit, non-school-related activities, lobbying, advertising, transmission of offensive materials, hate mail, discriminatory remarks or obscene or pornographic material.
- The computer should not be changed or tampered with. This includes but is not limited to computer configuration, alert noises, screensavers, backgrounds, recording sounds, etc.
- Installation or setup of any type of software, games, or any other unauthorized software is forbidden on school computers.
- Any work done on a school computer should be saved to your OneDrive account.
- Students must log off the network when they are finished.

Use of Furniture

The furniture in the Learning Commons was chosen for its comfort, flexibility, and mobility. It has the capacity to be rearranged very easily so that students may form the unique configurations they need in order to meet in teams, complete a project, or work individually. All furniture in the Learning Commons should be used appropriately. Inappropriate use includes the following:

- Putting feet up on the furniture
- Reclining or sleeping on the furniture
- Standing on the furniture.
- Sitting on the tables.
- Moving the rolling chairs away from the computer workstations.
- Leaning back when sitting on the stools at the high top tables.
- Rolling around when using the rolling chairs.
- Playing with the lever that allows height adjustment on the rolling chairs.
- Defacing the furniture in any manner.

Food and Beverages

No food or beverages are permitted in the Learning Commons, except for water in containers.

Social Media and Social Networking Policies and Procedures

Social media encompasses a broad array of online activity including social networks/media such as Twitter, Flickr, Instagram, Facebook, GroupMe, and Snapchat, blogs, and other similar online or Internet communications. Because this form of communication is vast and growing, we feel it is important to communicate to you the School's position regarding a student's use of social media or networking.

Use at School or a School-Related Event

We do not permit students to access social media and/or social networking sites while on School property or at a School-related event, unless such use is on a School social media platform or School sanctioned site **and** the use is for school related work. We have taken steps to block many of the social media/networking sites on our network, but technology will undoubtedly work faster than our IT Department. Therefore, even if you are able to access such sites on School property or at a School-related event, you should understand that your activities are in violation of School policy and may result in disciplinary action.

Use Away from School Property

It is not our goal to regulate a student's personal online activities when not on school property or at a school-related event. Please understand, however, that certain activities might impact a student's relationships with other students or school employees or school rights that we do reserve the right to regulate. All students should ensure that they are familiar with Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School's conduct policies to avoid any online communications that might violate those policies.

Guidelines

You should ensure that your online activities do not violate a school policy regarding bullying or harassment, or other similar policies pertaining to how students interact with each other. If you post or say something online that makes another student feel uncomfortable, your activity may result in an investigation and possible discipline.

Students should also be aware that teachers and administrators periodically check such sites and may determine that off campus behavior violates the school conduct code by making disparaging or negative comments about the School, administration, or faculty members in a manner that is disruptive to the Gwynedd Mercy Academy's educational mission or activities.

Students should not "follow" or be "friends" with any faculty member or other adult member of our community (other than the student's parent) on any of these social networking sites. Any violation of this prohibition must be reported to the Administration immediately.

In addition, postings on social networking or other Internet sites of students engaging in inappropriate behavior (such as drinking, smoking, vaping, sexual actions, etc.) is prohibited.

Students are not permitted to use the Gwynedd Mercy Academy's name, logo, trademark, or service mark in online activities. Students are not permitted to post photographs of the School, its locations, activities, students, parents, or employee-related activities online. Students are not permitted to create websites or social networking profiles to rate teachers, discuss aspects of the Gwynedd Mercy Academy, or otherwise disclose information online that the school would find offensive or inappropriate if posted in the school's newspaper. Finally, students are not permitted

to disclose any confidential information of the Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School, employees, students, parents, or activities online.

Your Identity Online

You are responsible for any of your online activity conducted with a GMAHS email address, and/or which can be traced back to the GMAHS domain, and/or which uses School assets.

What you publish on such personal online sites should never be attributed to the Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School and should not appear to be endorsed by or originated from the Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School.

School's Right to Inspect

The School reserves the right to inspect all electronic data and usage occurring over the GMAHS network or on school property without prior notice. We also reserve the right to assess information in the public domain on the Internet and to discipline students for any violation of these guidelines

Transportation

Bus

Every student is expected to comply with the regulations of her school district concerning conduct on school buses. Every student will be held responsible to GMAHS for her conduct on the bus. A student who continually violates these rules will be deprived of bus transportation.

Drop-off/Pick-up of Students

Parents must pick up and drop off students on the side of the building facing the college in the "Circle of Mercy". Parents are not permitted to drop students off at the Sports Door or at the Front Entrance at any point in the day.

Student Drivers

Parking permits are free of charge. A student can only obtain a parking pass if they already have received their license. All car details must be completed in order to secure a pass. In September **Juniors and Seniors only** will receive information about registering their car. Spots are limited; seniors will be allowed to sign -up first. Remaining passes will be given out in a lottery system to the juniors. Those from areas with no busing will have access to passes first. Please see the Dean of Student Affairs to obtain a parking permit.

Students receiving their license during the school year may see the Dean of Student Affairs. Sophomores are not allowed to drive at any point in the school year.

Cars without a parking pass are not allowed to park on campus.

Directions for Student Drivers:

1. Students are to park in the assigned student section. *Anyone parking outside of the assigned student parking area will be fined \$5.*
2. Parking tags must be displayed where they are easily seen. *Any student found parking on school grounds without a permit will be fined \$5.*
3. Students may lose parking privileges for violating the 15 MPH speed limit, repeated permit violations or accumulated unexcused lateness to school.
4. No student is to be in the parking lot for any reason during the school day unless an emergency arises and permission has been received from the Front Office.
5. Please report any changes in cars or license plates on the car driven to school to the Dean of Student Affairs immediately.
6. If for some reason a student does not have a permit on a car she is driving, *even for one day*, she should report that fact to the Dean of Student Affairs.
7. Only Juniors and Seniors may drive to school. No Sophomore or Freshmen may purchase a parking pass or drive to school.
8. The number of parking passes available is limited and not guaranteed to all Juniors and Seniors. Passes will be given on a first come, first served basis by students who have already obtained their driver's license.

Visitors

All visitors must report to the Front Office.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Graduation Requirements

In accordance with Pennsylvania State requirements and our own philosophy, each student is expected to complete a minimum of 24 credits in grades 9 through 12 in order to graduate. (A full year of instruction equals one credit; 1/2 credit is given for semester courses.) Each year, students are required to enroll in a minimum of six academic courses.

Required Credits

Theology	4 credits
English	4 credits
Social Studies	3 credits; 4 recommended
Mathematics	3 credits; 4 recommended
Foreign Language	2 credits; 3-4 recommended

A student will choose academic elective courses for credit to complete 24 in total. The Health/Physical Education requirement will be completed over the course of four years.

Course Selection

Before making selections, the student is urged to discuss her academic interests and educational plans with her parents, teachers, counselor, and others qualified to help her. She should look at the course offerings carefully and consider her abilities, preferences, needs, and eligibility for courses. With this information in mind, the student will meet with her counselor to determine an appropriate course load for the upcoming school year. Department approval is required prior to the student’s meeting with her counselor. Changes will not be made by the Dean of Academics in the approved final roster except in extraordinary cases. The school reserves the right to cancel courses for which there is inadequate enrollment. Requests for a change in roster will not be honored after the first week of school.

Course Levels

Level 1 – AP*: Qualifying marks and department approval are pre-requisites for Advanced Placement courses.

Level 2- Honors Courses: Qualifying marks and department approval are pre-requisites for Honors courses.

Level 3 - Standard college preparatory courses: Department approval is sometimes required.

**Students who enroll in AP Courses MUST take the AP exam in May. The cost of the exam will be paid by individual students.*

Grade Point Average

A student’s Grade Point Average is based on a 100 point scale as follows:

<i>Un-weighted Grade</i>	<i>LEVEL 3 College Prep- weighted</i>	<i>LEVEL 2 Honors -weighted</i>	<i>LEVEL 1 AP – weighted</i>
100	100	106	108
99	99	105	107
98	98	104	106
97	97	103	105
96	96	102	104
95	95	101	103
94	94	100	102
93	93	99	101
92	92	98	100
91	91	97	99
90	90	96	98
89	89	95	97
88	88	94	96
87	87	93	95
86	86	92	94
85	85	91	93

84	84	90	92
83	83	89	91
82	82	88	90
81	81	87	89
80	80	86	88

** Conversion table only shown through un-weighted grade of 80*

A student's Grade Point Average can be calculated at any time by using the conversion table above to determine the "weighted grade" for each course, adding these "weighted grades" together and then dividing by the total number of courses.

Class Rank

Because of the small and selective nature of the student body, Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School does not assign a specific rank to its students.

Honor Roll

The Honor Roll reflects the performance of a student within a given level of courses. Honors are computed for major courses at the end of the first semester and the end of the year.

First Honors

Un-weighted semester average of 93

No grade lower than 88

Second Honors

Un-weighted semester average of 90

No grade lower than 85

Salutarian/Valedictorian

The salutarian and valedictorian are selected by a panel of faculty and students from the top twenty (20) girls in the class.

Academic Policy Regarding Student Participation in Activities

Student participation in activities is highly encouraged. As many students as possible should make an effort to involve themselves in school affairs. However, such participation must not be a detriment to academic performance. To ensure a balance between academics and activities, the following regulations will be applied at progress reports and each semester marking period:

1. Students who fail one academic subject are placed on probation, but they are permitted to continue in school activities.

2. Students who fail two academic subjects are not permitted to participate in any way in any activity until at least one of the teachers whose course she has failed will agree, after a reasonable time*, that the student has sufficiently improved in her subject area to allow her to continue school activities. At such time the teacher will inform the Dean of Academics, in writing, of such a decision.
**The student must pass successfully at least one class-administered test after the time of her report card distribution.*
3. Students who fail three or more academic subjects will not be permitted to participate in any way in any activity for the remainder of the semester.

Moderators of activities and the Athletic Director may devise their own system for verifying academic eligibility. They may consult the Dean of Academics' list of failures which are recorded at the time progress reports are issued or they may require that students report to them with report cards.

Academic Failures

If a student fails more than two major courses, she may not return to Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School. If she fails one or two major courses, she must remove the failures before her return to school. She will then be on academic probation.

If a senior fails more than one major course, she may not participate in graduation exercises. If a senior fails one course, she may participate in graduation exercises, but will not receive her diploma until after she satisfies the course requirements.

COUNSELING AND HEALTH ISSUES

Mission of the School Counseling Department

The School Counseling program at Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School seeks to foster each student's personal growth and development. We collaborate with each student in becoming fully emerged in the Gwynedd community and all that it has to offer. Our goal is to help each student find success in high school and in the future. Counselors work with students and families to provide academic coaching, emotional support, goal setting, and problem-solving strategies. Counselors meet regularly with students individually, through small group settings, and in consultation with faculty and parents. The School Counseling Department provides programming to students in alignment with the health awareness themes per month.

School Counseling Events:

- Connections Camp
- Individual Meetings
- Small Group Meetings
- Seminar Periods
- PAL (Peer Advisory League)

- Parent Meetings
- Mental Wellness presentations for parents

Mission of the College Counseling Department

The College Counseling office at Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School is here to guide students through the college application process from *start to finish*. Advising and programming will meet students at each step of the college process.

Our students are extraordinary Christian women and our goal is to find a college environment where they will continue to flourish academically, spiritually and emotionally after graduating from GMAHS.

College Counseling Events:

- Junior college kick off night
- Individual college planning meeting
- Standardized Testing parent program
- Practice ACT
- College Fair
- Mock interview with college representative
- Senior college presentation

Policy for Students with Accommodations

Every student at Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School who has received psycho-educational testing and has been identified as having a learning disability or barrier that requires accommodations will receive an Education Plan based on the recommendations that come from the testing. The accommodations included in the Education Plan allow a student to maximize her ability to demonstrate learning and are not intended to minimize student responsibility.

Process

1. A student who comes to GMAHS with documentation that indicates a need for accommodations will receive an Education Support Plan based on what has been effective at the previous school. The counselor will discuss with the parents of the student the accommodations that are available at GMAHS. Teachers may not be able to accommodate every recommendation in the report.
2. A student who during the course of high school is suspected of having a learning difference will be recommended for psycho-educational evaluation. If the testing indicates that the student does in fact have a learning disability or difference that requires accommodations, the School Counselor will develop an Education Plan for the student based on the results and recommendations of the school

- psychologist who prepared the report. The student's counselor will communicate the plan to the student and to the parent.
3. The student's Counselor will prepare the Education Plan and disseminate this information to the student's teachers in writing in a confidential manner, and only to those teachers who currently teach the student. The Dean of Academics will also receive a copy of the student's Education Plan. At the beginning of each year, the Counselor will contact the parents to review the Education Plan which will be updated as needed and receive permission to disclose this information to the student's new teachers (i.e. through a meeting with the new teachers or a written copy of the plan, or both). At the conclusion of the first marking period, the Counselor will ask for teacher feedback regarding the student's academic achievement in the form of a progress report. During the remaining three quarters the Counselor will use progress reports and deficiency notices to determine how the needs of the student can be better met and how the Teacher and Counselor can support the student in her academic efforts.
 4. Students are encouraged to make contact with their teachers informing them of any accommodations they may need. It is imperative that the student understands the type of accommodations she needs and how she can benefit from them. It is also suggested that the student and/or her parents talk to her Counselor for any further clarification.
 5. The student and each of her teachers will work together to make sure that the student receives the necessary accommodations. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure that she is requesting these accommodations from her teachers.
 6. A student with an Education Plan that allows for extended time on tests and quizzes needs to communicate with their counselor and teachers about needed accommodations. Students with extended time will take their tests in the Testing Center.
 7. If the student or parents feel that the student is not receiving the proper accommodations, the student and/or parents are to discuss this with the teacher. A meeting with the parents and teachers, as well as the Counselor can be scheduled to clarify accommodations if necessary.
 8. During the individual meetings, the Counselor will discuss with the student the effectiveness of the plan and her academic progress.
 9. Some students may choose to participate in the Catherine Learning Program for additional academic support (see description below).

Psycho-educational reports and recommendations are valid for a period of five years. When a student's testing approaches this five year mark, new testing should be initiated. An Education Plan cannot be developed for a student whose testing is more than five years old.

If a student is in attendance at Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School and her testing needs to be updated, the family can choose to have new testing completed by the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit or by an outside agency or private professional with testing certification.

Accommodations for Standardized Testing (PSAT/SAT/ACT)

In order for a student to receive accommodations on College Board (PSAT, SAT, or AP Exams) or ACT assessments, a student must first have an Education Support Plan and determining documentation in place at Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School for a period of four months. Once this condition has been fulfilled and consent has been provided to the school counselor, a Student Eligibility Form can be submitted by the school to the testing agency requesting accommodations. Once a student has been approved for accommodations with College Board, she will be eligible for accommodations on any of the College Board tests. ACT requires that an updated testing accommodation form be submitted for any subsequent testing after an initial approval. Students should see their school counselor for instructions on the process.

NOTE: Having a valid Education Support Plan does not guarantee accommodations with a testing agency (i.e. SAT or ACT).

The Catherine Learning Program

The Gwynedd community recognizes and respects individual learning needs and preferences of each student. The CLP is a learning support service for college-bound students with documented mild learning differences. Those enrolled in CLP come from many different backgrounds, elementary schools, and have varied academic histories, learning styles, and educational needs. This individualized and fluid program is designed to support students with learning differences achieve academic success by recognizing students' strengths and weaknesses and by equipping these students with the tools and strategies needed to meet the academic expectations of school, families, and themselves. The CLP Learning Specialists supports students academically through multifaceted small group and individual learning. The program is named after Catherine McCauley and incorporates key strategies to assist a student in reaching her full potential.

CLP students are rostered into a single class period that meets daily throughout the entire academic year. Students work on individually identified goals based on their own specific learning profile; however, the group setting allows the students to work collaboratively on similar assignments or learn different strategies from peers. Initial emphasis is on developing strategies for tracking assignments, time management, willingness to ask for and accept help, and metacognition. Once these skills are mastered, higher order study skills are introduced. Rather than a separate study skills curriculum, students are learning to apply these skills to their coursework from their content area classes. While CLP Learning Specialists can help support students in their content area classes, the class does not provide basic skill remediation, and Learning Specialists are not necessarily content area specialists across subjects.

The CLP Director provides important support for all constituents involved in your daughter's education. The educational team led by the CLP Director is comprised of the student, her parent(s), teachers, and can include the Dean of Academics, Student Dean, Counselor, and auxiliary tutors. Furthermore, the CLP Director facilitates the education of families and teachers on how they can be partners in the academic support efforts of your daughter. The Director interprets psycho-ed evaluation for teachers who may not be familiar with the language and helps them implement educational supports. Additionally, the CLP Director is a resource for families in understanding academic evaluations (types of evaluations, interpretations, and timelines) current student's academic needs, outside academic resources, and future academic planning.

Assisted by the Learning Specialist and individualized for each student, focus will support the following:

- interventions and strategies taught or reinforced on individualized need
- metacognition (awareness of how one thinks)
- life-long study skills
- academic achievement
- self-advocacy
- personal reflection in the context of the student's curriculum
- clear and frequent coordination and communication with the student's learning team
- family, teacher and team support regarding student's learning needs

Ms. Lisa Spleen is the Director of the Catherine Learning program and is available to the Gwynedd community in the Learning Commons classroom and welcomes questions.

Health Services

Health Care

The services of a registered nurse are available through Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School and the Wissahickon School District.

The functions of the Health Services include medical examinations and providing first aid. All students are weighed, measured and have an annual vision test. All eleventh grade students also receive a hearing screening and are required by PA law to have a physical.

If a student becomes ill, she must receive permission from her teacher and use the classroom nurse pass before reporting to the infirmary to sign in. If the nurse is not in her office the student must report to the Front Office and sign in. If a student is unable to return to class after one period, the nurse will call a parent to take her home. Students must sign out before leaving school.

The school nurse is responsible only for emergency care of injuries and sudden illnesses which occur while the student is in school. When at all possible, the parents are responsible for transporting the ill or injured student to her home, doctor or hospital.

The cooperation of parents is especially requested for Pennsylvania State mandated programs such as the 11th grade physicals.

Medication

With signed consent from parent/guardian, the school nurse or principal designee, when necessary, will give Tylenol or Ibuprofen. Consent forms are sent home at the beginning of each school year. When any other medication must be given during school hours, certain procedures must be followed. Please contact the school nurse for guidelines.

At no time is medication of any kind to be carried by a student, unless a signed doctor's order is on record in the nurse's office.

Confidentiality

Administrators and teachers will keep confidential information entrusted to them so long as no one's life, health, or safety is at stake. A teacher must report to an administrator any instance when a student's life, health, or safety is in jeopardy. In cases of suspected child abuse, all school personnel will follow Pennsylvania law. A parent will be promptly notified of an administrator's or teacher's concern for a student's life, safety, or health.

Student Illness and Communicable Diseases

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for employees, parents, students, and visitors. In the case of global or local threats of a communicable disease, the School will take all reasonable measures that may be necessary to protect the safety and health of members of the School community. These may include implementing infection control guidelines designed to stop or slow the spread of infectious diseases. Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School will apply guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and its affiliate, NIOSH, state and local health departments, and World Health Organization (WHO), and other agencies and resources as appropriate. Each communicable disease is unique. Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School's response depends on public health guidance for the specific communicable disease, the nature and stage of the disease, whether mitigation methods are or can be used, and public health guidance on the risk and exposure. Response may include, without limitation, a determination that no risk exists or that no action is required, immunization programs may be put into place, mandatory health screening may be implemented, mitigation steps may be needed such as a student refraining from some activities, utilizing bandages or other barriers, enhanced housekeeping, cancellation of field trips, a medical exam and release, and

being sent home from school. Depending on the event, Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School may require parents to disclose upcoming travel plans and to self-quarantine their child upon return. School closure may be necessary or Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School may need to modify its curriculum, schedules, length of the school year, and/or means of learning and teaching methods. During certain communicable disease events, threat levels may change rapidly and Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School may need to modify various measures as additional information becomes available.

Examples of communicable diseases include seasonal influenza; tuberculosis; measles; chicken pox; mumps, scarlet fever, hepatitis A, C, and D; meningitis; antibiotic-resistant staph; Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS); H1N1 Flu; Swine Flu; Avian Flu; Ebola; and novel coronavirus - COVID-19. Lice, ringworm, pinworms, impetigo, pink eye, strep infection, hand, foot and mouth disease, mononucleosis, and other similar childhood illnesses are covered by this policy. We recognize that some diseases may not be infectious under certain circumstances.

We rely on our parents as the first step in preventing infection in the school environment. We count on them to use good judgment in protecting our school community. A sick child should not be in school but should remain at home in an environment where proper care may be given. The School Nurse is available to students daily. If a student is not feeling well, he/she should inform the classroom teacher and ask to be excused to go to the nurse's office. If a student asks to go home, the student will be released only with permission from the parent/guardian or from the person designated on the student's emergency card. A student who presents at school with symptoms of an illness and/or is unable to participate in the day's activities will be removed from the classroom and the parents, or an emergency contact if the parents cannot be reached, will be contacted. Students must be picked up within the hour of the school's request that the child be sent home due to illness. The student should be signed out by the clinic. Teachers will be informed of the student's dismissal for illness. To prevent the spread of infection through direct contamination (coughing, sneezing, talking, sharing articles, etc.) students must be asymptomatic without the aid of medications before returning to School. In other words, students must have no fever, vomiting, etc. for 24 hours prior to their return to School.

Parents/students who know or have a reasonable basis for believing that a student has a communicable disease that may pose a threat to other students, parents, school employees, visitors, or the public should immediately contact their health provider. Parents/students have a "reasonable basis" for believing that a student has a communicable disease when they show or feel signs or illness, such as coughing, sneezing, fever, joint aches, have an overall ill feeling, or when they know that they have been exposed to someone with a known communicable disease or suspected communicable disease. For the health and safety of the Gwynedd community, parents should report to the School Nurse if their child has a confirmed communicable disease that poses a risk to others in the school community. The School Nurse will communicate with the Principal and contact the local health department. The Pennsylvania Department of Health shall be notified when a student is sent home because of a communicable disease. In case of student absence due to the reportable communicable disease, a release card from the Department of Health or a letter from the

family physician indicating that the Department of Health regulations have been fulfilled must be presented when the student returns to school (indicating that the student is no longer infectious).

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School will generally not identify an infected student to school employees or other students or their parents, although public health guidance will guide Gwynedd's communications. It may be necessary to alert others in the community who were in certain areas or at certain times that exposure could have occurred. Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School will disclose sensitive medical information of students no further than is necessary to ensure the health and safety of our employees, students, parents, and visitors in a manner consistent with applicable law. Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School will comply with all federal and state laws in regard to confidentiality and privacy requirements.

School Vaccination Requirements for Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School

Students who attend GMAHS are required to receive all vaccines that are identified in the immunization policy stated by the Philadelphia Archdiocese (#S 305), the Center for Disease Control and Pennsylvania Department of Health.

Below is a chart for required Immunizations for school age children through 12th grade.

IMMUNIZE

Prevent Disease – Get Immunized! Pennsylvania School Vaccination Requirements

VACCINES	KINDERGARTEN & GRADES 1-6	GRADES 7-11	GRADE 12
Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Acellular Pertussis (Usually given as DTaP, DTP, DT, or Td) 1 dose on or after 4th birthday	4 doses	4 doses	4 doses
Polio 4th dose on or after 4th birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose given	4 doses A 4th dose is not necessary if the 3rd dose was administered at age 4 years or older and at least 6 months after the previous dose	4 doses A 4th dose is not necessary if the 3rd dose was administered at age 4 years or older and at least 6 months after the previous dose	4 doses A 4th dose is not necessary if the 3rd dose was administered at age 4 years or older and at least 6 months after the previous dose
Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (Usually given as MMR)	2 doses	2 doses	2 doses
Hepatitis B	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses
Varicella (Chickenpox)	2 doses or evidence of immunity	2 doses or evidence of immunity	2 doses or evidence of immunity
Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis (Tdap)	Not applicable	1 dose	1 dose
Meningococcal Conjugate (MenACWY)	Not applicable	1 dose	2 doses A 2nd dose of MenACWY is not necessary if the 1st dose was given at age 16 years of age or older

For more information on the vaccines your child needs to attend school, talk to your healthcare provider, school nurse, or visit www.montcopa.org/immunizations

*If the need arises for a student to be exempt from receiving Immunizations due to health-related issues such as being Immunocompromised proper documentation from the student’s physician is required and MUST be kept on file in the school nurse’s office.

To keep our faculty, staff, and students healthy during the school year Immunizations are required prior to the beginning of the school year. Any incoming freshman or transfer student to GMAHS proper updated Immunizations and health records are requested by the beginning of the school year.

For any student interested in playing sports at GMAHS a required PIAA physical is needed yearly and must be updated after June 1st of each year for the next school year to participate. Family ID online registration must be completed for each sport. The link to Family ID can be found on the athletics page of the website. All sport physicals must be uploaded to the athlete's registration.

Policy Regarding Student Pregnancy

If a student becomes pregnant, a letter from her physician should be on file indicating the length of time she may remain in school. The student may not remain in school longer than the time specified by her physician. All academic and attendance policies apply to the student. Each case must be evaluated individually.

The student's school counselor will advise the student on school policies regarding pregnancy and her expected levels of academic achievement while away from school.

Before the student leaves school, the Principal or the Director of Counseling will meet with the parents or guardian to explain clearly the support services of the school, the desire of the school to have the student continue on roll, the method of completing assignments, and the expected levels of achievement. At this time the student will also be encouraged to return to school after the birth of her child.

When the student leaves school, the virtual learning policy will apply. During this time, she will continue to be carried on the roster of the school. In all cases, the principal shall determine, in consultation with the Dean of Academics, whether the student has completed the work required for re-admission and credit towards graduation.

Policy Regarding Abortion

Upon receipt of information that a student has procured an abortion or assisted another in procuring an abortion, the school principal will arrange to meet with the student and her parents.

If the school principal determines that the student procured or assisted another in procuring an abortion, the student shall be referred for counseling to an appropriate support service.

The principal will handle each matter in a spirit of Christian compassion and mercy. When public scandal, the student's refusal to participate in counseling or other circumstances warrant, the principal may dismiss or take other appropriate action.

The principal and other individuals who learn of any such matter will handle such information in a confidential manner.

Policy Regarding Physical and Sexual Abuse

The Child Protective Services Law of 1975 requires, under penalty of law, the reporting of actual and suspected cases of child abuse to civil authorities. An abused child, under the CPS Act, is an individual of school age who has suffered serious physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, or serious physical neglect, caused by acts or omissions of the child's parents or person responsible for the child's welfare.

Procedure

1. Mandated reporters (all school employees) must make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine either electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis or by calling 1-800-932-0313
2. If an oral report was made to ChildLine a report of suspected child abuse (CY 47) must also be completed and forwarded to the county children and youth agency within 48 hours after making the report.
3. After making the report to ChildLine school employees are required to notify the Principal and or Director of School Counseling of the report.
4. If needed, the school nurse will be consulted as determined by the Principal and the Director of Counseling if a student needs medical care.
5. If the student indicates that she is afraid to return home, the Director of Counseling, Principal, and the Child Protective Service worker will determine an appropriate course of action.
6. Determining how the parents will be informed of any action taken will be made on a case-by-case basis. The Director of Counseling and the Principal will make this decision after consultation with CPS.

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School will not tolerate physical or sexual abuse of any of its students, administrators, teachers or staff members. It is the duty of each student, administrator, teacher or staff member to promptly report any actual knowledge of physical or sexual abuse, and it is the duty of every student, administrator, teacher or staff member to report any suspected physical or sexual abuse.

Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment by Employees and Students

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School does not condone nor will it tolerate any form of harassment of a person or persons by another person or persons. Any accusation of harassment (sexual, ethnic, racial, physically impaired) will be vigorously investigated and appropriate sanctions will be levied if the accusations are proved to be factual. This will be coordinated with the school lawyer.

Sexual Harassment Defined

For purposes of this policy, the term "sexual harassment" refers to any unwelcome sexual attention, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, visual

or physical conduct of a sexual nature when such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment. It also includes any contact or conversation which leaves the recipient feeling threatened or uncomfortable.

Sexual Harassment Prohibited

Sexual harassment is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated. All employees and students are responsible for ensuring that this school is free from all forms of sexual harassment.

Persons Covered

This policy prohibits sexual harassment of any employee or student by any other employee, student, vendor or visitor.

Enforcement of the Policy

The Principal shall answer questions about this policy, investigate complaints and take appropriate corrective action. Any person who feels that he or she has been a victim of sexual harassment shall bring the problem to the immediate attention of the Principal.

The school will investigate all allegations of sexual harassment in as prompt and confidential manner as possible and will take appropriate corrective action when warranted. Any employee or student who is determined, as a result of such an investigation, to have engaged in sexual harassment in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment in the case of an employee and dismissal in the case of a student.

Retaliation in any form against an employee or student who exercises his or her right to make a complaint under this policy is strictly prohibited and will itself be cause for appropriate disciplinary action.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Student Activities

The school recognizes that activities are an important part of the educational experience. A student in good academic standing may participate in activities provided she has met attendance requirements as published by the Dean of Student Affairs.

All activities must be coordinated through the Director of Activities. The times and places of all meetings should be published in advance to avoid confusion. A complete listing of

Student Activities is available on the website. A monthly calendar will be posted regarding meeting times and places.

Field Trips

School field trips are a privilege. A student is expected to participate in a field trip designated for her entire class. A student may be denied participation in a field trip for academic, disciplinary, or financial reasons. The Principal may deny a student's field trip participation for other causes. A parent may ask for a student to remain in school during the time of the field trip. Trips of educational value should be planned for students of all ability levels.

Student Guidelines for Field Trips

- Each student must give the supervising teacher a signed parental consent form at least three days prior to the trip, or earlier, if requested.
- Dress should always be in good taste and appropriate to the nature and the destination of the trip.
- Students are responsible for all work missed due to a field trip.
- A student on a field trip is expected to conform to all school policies, guidelines, and procedures, especially those dealing with safety.

School Dances

School dances sponsored fill the social calendar and provide many evenings of enjoyment. School sponsored dances are strictly chaperoned and carefully regulated.

Student Guidelines for Dances

- Ticket sales will not exceed 500 tickets. Once that number is sold, sales will be closed.
- Dances start at 7:00 p.m. and end at 10:00 p.m. Please have parents/rides ready to pick students up promptly at 10:00 p.m.
- All students attending the dance must present his/her I.D. card at the door when entering the dance.
- Doors close one hour after the dance begins. Students must remain at the dance and will not be permitted to leave early unless the parents of the student notify the Principal in writing, prior to the dance, that their son/daughter has their permission to do so.
- Anyone who does not conduct himself/herself appropriately will be asked to leave the dance. Parents will be notified immediately.
- Anyone suspected of substance abuse or alcohol use will not be admitted and subject to the terms of GMAHS's Drug/Alcohol/Vaping Policy.
- Dress should always be in good taste and appropriateness will be determined by attending GMAHS staff and administration.

STUDENT ATHLETICS

Participation

The athletic program is available to the entire student body. All eligible students may try out for membership on sports teams. The school is committed to providing everyone a fair chance to participate. Unfortunately, not everyone who tries out can be accepted. Tryouts for each team are held during the 1st full week of each respective sports season. The decision of the coach, in conjunction with the athletic director, is final. Parents are encouraged to help their children understand that not everyone will be selected.

Every team member is entitled to participate unless she does not follow team rules and regulations found in the Player/Parent/Coaches Contract.

Sports Teams

The following sports teams are available throughout the year.

Fall

Cross Country(V,JV)
Field Hockey(V,JV)
Tennis(V,JV)
Volleyball(V,JV)
Soccer(V,JV)
Golf(V,JV)
Crew

Winter

Basketball(V,JV)
Swimming(V,JV)
Indoor Track(V,JV)

Spring

Softball(V,JV)
Track&Field(V,JV)
Lacrosse(V,JV)

Participation Policies for Athletics

In order to be fair to each participant on a team, the following attendance policy will be in effect:

1. If a player has three unexcused absences from a sport, she will be dropped from the team.
2. If a player misses a practice before a game for a reason unacceptable to the Athletic Department, she will not start the game and could forfeit her position.
3. These policies are in effect during school vacations, holidays, Christmas and spring break.
4. No student may compete in two sports that take place in the same season.

- Athletes participating in a sport which requires overnight accommodations must remain in rooms assigned by the Coach and be present at all team "Gatherings" for the duration of the competition. **No exceptions will be made.**

Transportation Policies for Athletics

When school transportation is provided, all athletes must go to and from the sports contest on the school's transportation. If a special circumstance arises that would require permission for a student athlete to be transported to an away contest by means other than school provided transportation, a Travel Consent Form, signed by parent/guardian must be presented to the Athletic Director 24 hours prior to the request. If a parent is present at the game, the athlete may leave with the parent. If an athlete intends to leave a game with any other person, a written note must be presented to the coach.

Uniform Policy for Game Days

Student-Athletes are permitted to change into their complete Away Team Uniform (as required for each sport) during their respective lunch period. Sneakers are to accompany the Team Uniform and no other footwear is acceptable. Any deviation from the required team uniform will constitute a "Uniform Violation" and will result in the issuing of demerits.

Physical Education Classes

Gym attire: Students must wear sneakers and socks. T-shirt, sweatshirt, shorts and gym pants must be worn and of the following colors: red, yellow, black, grey or white (or Gwynedd gear). Gym attire must be appropriate.

The following activities are available in physical education classes:

Aerobic Activities	Scooter Soccer	Tennis
Badminton	Basketball	Lacrosse
Court Hockey	Mercy Mile	Volleyball
Fitness/Weight	Pilates	Wii Fit
Training	Yoga	Wii Sports

Link to complete STUDENT ATHLETICS HANDBOOK

<file:///C:/Users/ecarty/OneDrive%20-%20Gwynedd%20Mercy%20Academy%20High%20School/Dean%20of%20Students/STUDENT%20ATHLETICS%20HANDBOOK%202018-19.pdf>

SCHOOL TRADITIONS/HOMEROOM ACTIVITIES

School Traditions

Participation in the traditional events of the school year is an integral part of Mercy life. The more important of these traditions have special significance.

Mercy Day, the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, and Patroness of the school, occurs on September 24. This Feast Day celebrates our rich history and tradition; it is a special time for rejoicing and festivities.

In the fall, Senior Class officially welcomes the freshmen and installs them as "Mercy girls."

School dances fill the social calendar and provide many evenings of enjoyment.

Ring Day generally occurs in December. The Junior Class is receive their class rings at a special liturgy.

The Candlelight Service and procession is Mercy's formal celebration of the Christmas feast. The public is invited. The Music Department performs a selection of Christmas music and members of the Senior Class present a tableau.

The May Liturgy and procession is a spring function in honor of Our Lady, in which all students participate. A May Queen is selected by the Senior Class and crowns the Blessed Mother during the celebration.

In May, the seniors are celebrated by the underclassmen through a special "Senior Appreciation Day."

A Senior Mother-Daughter Liturgy and brunch to follow in May, and is sponsored by The Mother's Club.

Class Day is held on the last day of school. At the Closing Exercises, held in the morning, students are recognized for outstanding achievement in academic subjects.

Graduation culminates the school year. A Baccalaureate Liturgy is celebrated on an evening before Commencement. Wearing long white gowns and carrying red roses for the Commencement Ceremony remains a tradition. Eligible seniors are invited to represent their class as Salutatorian and Valedictorian. Each senior individually receives a gold Mercy medal and her diploma. Graduation ends with the crowning of the Blessed Mother.

Class Year Activities

Grade Twelve

Senior-Freshmen Picnic (September-October)

Purpose: To welcome freshmen to the Academy.

Activity: A picnic and entertainment.

Responsibility: Prepare picnic and entertainment.

If necessary, raise money to cover the expense.

Grade Eleven

Ring Day (November-December)

Responsibility: Juniors prepare liturgy.

Farewell to Seniors (May)

Responsibility: Plan some activity as a farewell for Senior Appreciation Day.

Grade Ten

Participate in Senior Appreciation Day

Responsibility: Plan appropriate activity of farewell to Seniors for Senior Appreciation Day.

Grade Nine

Farewell to Seniors (May)

Responsibility: Plan a suitable farewell celebration in conjunction with Senior Appreciation Day and prepare a song for the Seniors.

ALMA MATER

GWYNEDD MERCY ACADEMY HIGH SCHOOL Alma Mater

Hail to thee our Alma Mater! School of
Schools all hail to thee!
We, thy children, here assembled dedicate our
Hearts to thee.
Come girls your school now calls for you
To honor the red and the Gold.
Give her your vow to go forth now, her standards
To uphold.

Refrain

***Dear Alma Mater, Mercy, we your children stand
To pledge our lasting loyalty in ever faithful
Band.***

Let all in ardent chorus her merits to uphold.
Strong and high her colors fly as Mercy's Red and Gold.
So rise and cheer unto the sky
To honor the school you hold so dear.
Revere her name of widespread fame
And sing year after year.

CONSENT AND RELEASE

We, the undersigned as parent or legal guardian of _____, do hereby authorize Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School to use the name, picture or likeness of the above-named child, or any material based upon or derived there from, in whole or in part, in any manner or media whatsoever, for the following purposes:

1. Instructional purposes
2. Classroom teacher training
3. Parent/Teacher Associations
4. Annual reports/brochures describing School programs
5. Admissions Materials
6. GMAHS Social Media

All students and their parents must sign off on having read this handbook by visiting the Forms section of PlusPortals and selecting the Student Handbook & Consent and Release Signoff forms.

DAILY SCHEDULE

	Day A	Day B	Day C	Day D	Day E	Day F	Day G	Day H	Day I	
60-minute periods →	8:15 – 9:15	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	8:20 – 9:00 A
55-minute Community Period (activities, assemblies, etc.) →	9:20 – 10:15	Community Time							9:00 – 9:40 B	9:40 – 10:20 C
Lunch/WIN Periods →	10:20 – 11:20	C	D	E	F	G	H	A	B	10:20 – 11:00 D
	11:20 – 12:05	Lunch 1 WIN 1	Lunch 1 WIN 1	Lunch 1 WIN 1	Lunch 1 WIN 1	Lunch 1 WIN 1	Lunch 1 WIN 1	Lunch 1 WIN 1	Lunch 1 WIN 1	11:00 – 11:40 Lunch 1 WIN 1
	12:05 – 12:50	Lunch 2 WIN 2	Lunch 2 WIN 2	Lunch 2 WIN 2	Lunch 2 WIN 2	Lunch 2 WIN 2	Lunch 2 WIN 2	Lunch 2 WIN 2	Lunch 2 WIN 2	11:40 – 12:20 Lunch 2 WIN 2
Rotating Periods →	12:55 – 1:55	E	F	G	H	A	B	C	D	12:20 – 1:00 E
	2:00 – 3:00	G	H	A	B	C	D	E	F	1:00 – 1:40 F
										1:40 – 2:20 G
										2:20 – 3:00 H

Days with 40-minute periods reserved for special circumstances

LUNCH 1/WIN 2
11th & 12th Grades

WIN 1/LUNCH 2
9th & 10th Grades

Covid Health & Safety Addend

As we enter the 2023-2024 school year, there are currently no masking or social distancing requirements. We will continue to stay vigilant about the cleanliness of our spaces and provide hand sanitizer throughout the building. Continue to communicate with Gwynedd if a student and/or household member test positive for COVID-19. Mrs. Christine Ledwith, our School Nurse, will advise if any masking or quarantining is required.