

Information
You Need
to Start the
School Year

BACK TO SCHOOL



2024-2025





July 9, 2024

RE: New Grading Policies - Implementation beginning 2024-2025 School Year

Dear McAuley Community,

The purpose of the Back-to-School packet is to share information to help our young women get ready for a new academic year, but more importantly to start each student on the right path towards success. There is a great deal of useful information in this packet; however, I want to start by highlighting **an important change to our grading policies (grading scale and grading weights)**, which will take effect at the beginning of the upcoming school year.

Historical Perspective

Over the years, most Catholic high schools in the Chicagoland area used a traditional (seven-point) college prep grading system for a multitude of decades even though public schools existed on a ten-point grading scale. In the 2018-2019 academic year, local Catholic high schools slowly began moving from the traditional college prep grading scale to the ten-point grading scale. Following the lead of many other local Catholic high schools, Mother McAuley changed to the ten-point grading scale in January of 2021. When McAuley changed to the ten-point grading scale, there was a lack of data about how changing the grading scale alone would inevitably change the grading weights of a student's GPA. As a result, the grading weights for GPA remained the same as did distinctions between grades.

When I started at McAuley in the fall of 2022, [our current grading scale](#) had been in place for three semesters. Over the course of my first year (2022-2023), many parents reached out to share their frustrations with our grading policies as it related to distinction between grades, grading weights and GPA. A specific discrepancy woven into every conversation related to disadvantages associated with the college admittance process and post-secondary scholarship awards. Because of these multiple conversations and other learnings, in the spring of 2023 we embarked on a year-long study to review and analyze our grading policies.

2023-2024 Research and Focus Groups

We started this process by engaging in a detailed research study examining grading policies of both Catholic and public secondary schools in the Chicagoland area. As we analyzed grading practices, first we discovered almost all schools utilized the ten-point grading scale with most schools having both plus and minus grades within their scale. Secondly, we identified variation existed within the grading weights used to calculate GPA. A more in depth study of grading weights allowed us to uncover two commonalities: (1) an 'A' grade was weighted in the 4.0 range, and (2) there were two primary grading weight value options moving across and down a grading scale. These two facts held true for all schools except one or two whose grading weights were clear outliers. There is not a universal grading weight policy for secondary schools. Schools can determine their own grading weights; however, our focus groups recognized inflating an 'A' grade beyond the 4.0 range was not in the best interest of our students as almost all Catholic, private and public schools fall in this range. Our research also confirmed that keeping our grading weights consistent with the majority of other secondary schools will best prepare our young women for their futures; they will have experienced the rigor necessary for college success.

After much research, numerous consultations and careful consideration which included various and numerous focus groups - teachers, counselors, college counselors, division leads, administration, students, college admission representatives, board members, public school educators - it was evident that we needed to address the inequities in our grading policies in order to better reflect our students' understanding and mastery of the material as well as to align our grading policies with other schools.

From our focus groups, we concluded our grading policies needed: (1) to provide useful information to families, students, teachers and post-secondary institutions; (2) to ensure grades consistently reflect student mastery of content to help students gauge their progress; (3) to provide balance and equitable grades that do not put our young women at a disadvantage during the college admittance process including scholarship competition; and (4) to motivate our young women to higher levels of learning while challenging them in valuable ways. The [new grading policies](#) replaces [our previous scale and weights](#) and aims to align more closely with current educational standards and practices as well as other local and national secondary schools.

New Grading Policies: Updated Grade Scale and New Grading Weights

Letter Grade	Grading Scale Percentage	Advanced/Academic	Honors (H)	Advanced Placement (AP)
A+	98 - 100	4.67	5.00	5.33
A	93 - 97.99	4.33	4.67	5.00
A-	90 - 92.99	4.00	4.33	4.67
B+	88 - 89.99	3.67	4.00	4.33
B	83 - 87.99	3.33	3.67	4.00
B-	80 - 82.99	3.00	3.33	3.67
C+	78 - 79.99	2.67	3.00	3.33
C	73 - 77.99	2.33	2.67	3.00
C-	70 - 72.99	2.00	2.33	2.67
D+	68 - 69.99	1.67	1.67	1.67
D	63 - 67.99	1.33	1.33	1.33
D-	60 - 62.99	1.00	1.00	1.00
F	0 - 59.99	0	0	0

Key Points of the Change

- **Consistency:** The new grading policies align with widely accepted grading standards, making it easier to compare our students' performance with those from other schools. It will dismantle numerical barriers and provide our students greater access to post-secondary opportunities associated with admittance and scholarships.
- **Fairness, Balance and Motivation:** Our new grading policies will create rigorous universal grading expectations across our school as well as across other schools. We want grades to be mathematically accurate, to be motivational, and to mitigate any bias. Having an equitable grading system will ensure grades demonstrate each student's mastery of content.
- **Clarity:** The new grading system provides clearer distinctions between different levels of performance, helping students and parents better understand areas of strength and areas needing improvement.

Other Parts of New Grading System

- **Grade Point Averages (GPAs):** As we begin this year, all students' GPAs will be calculated using this new scale. Previous grades and grade weights will not be altered as we make this transition.
- **Semester Exam Weight:** Semester exams are meant to be a culminating experience, where students demonstrate knowledge and tie together all they have learned in the previous semester. To honor the integrity of semester exams, each exam will carry a weighted value of 15% of the final semester grade rather than our past 10% value. This means the semester grade prior to the exam will carry a weighted value of 85%.
- **Academic Honors:** In examining our past honor roll data as well as other data from other schools, we decided there was a need to reimagine and realign our honor roll to enhance the value associated with it. Our goal is to recognize student learning appropriately and provide accolades in meaningful ways. The chart below outlines the range and parameters for our three levels of academic honors.

Categories	Weighted GPA Range	Parameters
Honors with Distinction	4.67 or higher	No individual grade below a 63% (D)
First Honors	4.00 - 4.669	No individual grade below a 63% (D)
Second Honors	3.33 - 3.999	No individual grade below a 63% (D)

We understand that changes to a grading scale and grading weights can be significant and may raise questions or concerns. As we begin the year, we encourage you to reach out to your daughter's counselor, college counselor or specific teachers if you have any concerns or questions. Our goal is to ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed and that the transition to the new grading system is as smooth and stress-free as possible. Should you have questions that need immediate attention, please feel free to contact our Assistant Principal of Academics, Ms. Sandra Smycz at ssmycz@mothermcauley.org or Mrs. Sarah Kolkmeier, our Assistant Principal of Student Support who oversees the Counseling Department at skolkmeier@mothermcauley.org.

As always, our teachers are excited to work alongside your daughter to help her attain success in her classes. Teachers will receive additional training and resources to effectively implement the new grading scale and provide the necessary support to students during this transition. Furthermore, we are confident that our new grading policies will allow this to happen in meaningful ways. We appreciate your support and understanding as we make this important change to better serve the educational needs of our young women.

Sincerely,



Kathryn M. Baal, Ph.D.
Principal



**MOTHER
MCAULEY**
Liberal Arts High School

Welcome to our Back-to-School information, your source for the most important information you'll need to start the 2024-2025 academic year! From new school year and health information to schedules and textbooks, make sure to review this document in its entirety.

For the Class of 2028, don't miss additional and important information available just for you at the end of the all-school information.

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New Academic Developments for 2024-2025

New Start and End Time for School Day

With the start of the 2024-2025 school year, **we will be modifying our bell schedule**. This decision was made to ensure continuity in learning for students who travel between Mother McAuley and Brother Rice for class. Our goal is to protect instructional time in order to maximize learning, but also to provide our schools the opportunity to partner together on larger programmatic needs that could benefit both campuses and all students.

McAuley's classes will remain 42 minutes, but **our day will start and end at different times. Daily classes will start at 7:50 a.m. and end at 2:45 p.m. except on condensed Thursdays, when we will end the day at 1:42 p.m.** The bell schedules for next year can be found by clicking [here](#).

Please be advised, we are working in conjunction with Brother Rice and the various municipal police departments on how to manage traffic differently in order to ensure a smooth transition. The school leadership at both schools strongly believe we will be able to make this transition but we know it will take some retraining of students, parents, faculty, staff and vendors to work out the traffic kinks. Please allow extra time at the start of the school year to get used to new traffic patterns.

Information About Class Schedules

Accessing Class Schedules

Student schedules will be **released on Wednesday, July 10 at 8am**. Schedules will be placed in students' eLockers in Plus Portals. If you experience difficulty logging on, please contact McAuley's Technology Department at tech@mothermcauley.org. Incoming student schedules will be mailed home on July 10. Please contact schedules@mothermcauley.org if you do not receive your schedule.

Procedures for Dropping and/or Adding a Course

Summer Drop/Adds will be accepted from **Monday, July 15 through Wednesday, July 17**. Summer Drop/Add Request Forms can be downloaded from Plus Portals at **8:00 a.m. on July 10**. Once complete, they should be sent to schedules@mothermcauley.org.

Adding a course is dependent upon seat availability. All classes have a maximum seating capacity; therefore, in order to be placed into a different course a seat must be available. Additionally, all courses have a minimum seating capacity; therefore, you may not be able to drop a course if your drop will cause the capacity to go below the minimum seating capacity. Your request will be reviewed by Ms. Smycz, the Assistant Principal of Academics. If changes are approved they will be denoted on your schedule within five working days and no other action is necessary. However, if changes are denied, you will receive an email to your Mother McAuley email address.

Dropping an Eighth Academic Course

Any students who are enrolled in an eighth academic course in lieu of a study hall have the option of dropping their eighth course. All students are required to take seven credits each year. Please note that this option pertains **ONLY** to dropping an eighth course.

If you choose to drop an eighth course, please complete the Eighth Course Drop Form available on Plus Portals at **8:00 a.m. on July 10**. Completed forms must be submitted to schedules@mothermcauley.org between **Monday, July 15 through Wednesday, July 17**. The parameters listed above apply for dropping an eighth class as well.

Fall Drop/Add Period

The Fall 2024 drop/add period takes place on **Wednesday, August 21; Thursday, August, 22; and Friday, August 23.** The Fall 2024 drop/add forms will be available to students on Blackbaud by **8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, August 21.** Fall drop/add forms must be submitted to the Principal's Office no later than **3:00 p.m. on Friday, August 23.** If the request is approved, the change will appear on the student's schedule within three days. If the drop is denied, the student will be notified via email.

Other scheduling concerns or questions? Send a message to schedules@mothermcauley.org.

2024-2025 Textbooks

Important information about our eCampus Bookstore

All textbooks for the 2024-2025 school year are now available on our eCampus bookstore website, <https://mothermcauley.ecampus.com>. Students will use their schedules to look up classes and course numbers. The website has a "shop by course" section, where you will find the required texts/materials/fees for each individual class. Specific directions on how to purchase textbooks using the website can be downloaded [here](#). If you have issues purchasing textbooks, please send an email to books@mothermcauley.org.

Uniform Requirements

Important information about McAuley's uniform

We have a dress code because we believe it promotes values that are central to our Mercy mission. As an institution, we aim to be countercultural and encourage modesty and equity among our students. A dress code contributes to a sense of structure, along with a sense of respect for others and for oneself. It establishes an atmosphere that is conducive to learning, and it helps project a positive image of the school. We ask that all students report to school each day well-groomed and in the uniform of McAuley's dress code. **Our uniform dress code will be enforced starting Wednesday, August 21.**

Over the years, McAuley's dress code has included a variety of clothing styles specifically with tops, sweatshirts and pants under skirts. The wide range of apparel choices has made it difficult for our teachers to enforce McAuley's dress code, challenging for our security team to vet students and has often led to inappropriate attire that does not reflect McAuley's longstanding tradition of excellence.

First Year Students and Juniors

The First Year Students (Class of 2028) and Juniors (Class of 2026) are receiving new plaid skirts for the 2024-2025 academic year. Additionally, they will be required to wear red or white polo shirts with the McAuley crest. There are red sweaters (v-neck and cardigan) and navy zip-ups being sold as outerwear.

Sophomore and Senior Uniforms

The Sophomores (Class of 2027) and Seniors (Class of 2025) will wear their skirts from last year - red plaid for sophomores and blue-white plaid for seniors. Seniors only will be allowed to wear the past gray shirts with the **embroidered** McAuley crest on them. Additionally, these classes may purchase and wear any of the other apparel with their class skirt.

Uniform Dress Code Policy

The information below outlines the acceptable dress code policy for McAuley students and you can find visuals on our [webpage](#).

- **Skirt:** Each class has a specific skirt that they wear for two years. New plaid patterns were selected this year for incoming freshmen and juniors.
- **Golf/Polo Shirts:** McAuley golf/polo shirts are available in short-sleeved styles and may be purchased in red or white. Only the Class of 2025 can wear gray shirts.
- **Cardigan or V-Neck Sweaters:** Students are permitted to wear V-neck sweaters or cardigans bearing the McAuley crest. These wardrobe items are available in red only.
- **Stretch Half-Zip Pull-Over:** Students may also wear a navy zipper-front fleece quarter-zip bearing the school logo (multi-color NOT white).
- **Navy Knit Pants:** If a student would prefer to wear pants instead of the skirt, students are allowed to purchase navy knit pants through Macs Ltd. Bookstore. The navy pants stocked in our bookstore are the only pants students are allowed to wear.
- **Navy Shorts:** The bookstore will carry school-approved navy shorts. We will be allowing all students to wear navy shorts on the warmer days in the Fall and Spring, if they choose to do so. In the fall, students can wear these navy shorts from August 21 through October 1. We will set spring dates during the second semester.
- **Shoes:** Students may wear Doc Marten Mary Janes, or any solid black gym shoes with a white or black sole. All logos on gym shoes should be black or white. NO colored logos will be permitted.

Questions? Contact Macs Ltd. Bookstore Manager Mrs. Maria Wantuck at mwantuck@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6503.

Macs Ltd. Bookstore

Have you purchased and/or updated your daughter's uniform yet?

If you have not yet purchased your daughter's uniform you will need to do so prior to August 21. Our Macs Ltd. bookstore is stocked with uniform apparel including skirts, polos, sweaters, etc as well as other McAuley gear. The bookstore will be open over the next month on the dates and times listed below.

Wednesdays

10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

June 26 July 31
July 10 August 7
July 17 August 14
July 24

Saturdays

9:00 a.m. -12:00 p.m.

June 29
July 6
July 20
August 3

Please visit our website for more detailed information about the uniform/dress code policy as well as store hours. Macs Ltd. bookstore will accept returns and exchanges for uniform merchandise in original condition at any point through September 29.

Questions? Contact Macs Ltd. Bookstore Manager, Mrs. Maria Wantuck at mwantuck@mothermcauley.org.

School Physical and Immunization Requirements

Please note the following school physical and immunization requirements:

- **All freshmen and transfer students** are required to submit a completed physical with all state-required immunizations prior to the first day of school.
- **Athletes** are annually required to have a recent/up to date physical on file before they participate in sports. Students cannot practice without a current physical is not on file.
- **Seniors** are required to provide proof of meningitis immunization booster (see below) prior to the first day of school,
- **Sophomores, juniors and seniors** who are not participating in sports are not required to submit physicals.
- **Transfer students** are required to submit proof of eye exam (see below).

All student medical forms can be found on our website by clicking [here](#). For more information, please contact our school nurse Mrs. Ann Gruber at agruber@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6524.

Meningitis Booster Requirement for Senior Students

Illinois State Law (410 ILCS 315/1.10) requires all students entering 12th grade in any public, private or parochial school to show proof of having received either two doses of the meningococcal conjugate vaccine or one dose after age 16.

Seniors must submit proof of immunization compliance by hard copy to the Health Office no later than the first day of school, **August 21, 2024**. By law, if no proof is provided to the school by this date, your child will be excluded from classes until they are able to receive the vaccine and present the required documentation. Many local health departments, private healthcare providers and clinics offer this vaccine. Please contact your doctor's office for specific instructions regarding your child. For more information about meningococcal disease and immunization, please visit [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website](#).

Vision Exams for Transfer Students

Illinois State law requires any student enrolling for the first time in an Illinois school to have an eye examination before October 15, 2024. [The State of Illinois Vision Exam Form](#) or equivalent forms from other states are acceptable. For more information, please contact the school nurse Mrs. Ann Gruber at agruber@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6524.

Mighty Mac Athletes

Mac athletics will return to action for the 2024-2025 school year beginning August 12th. Registration for the Fall athletics seasons will begin on July 15 and can be found on our [athletics website](#) and by clicking "registration" in the top right corner. **Please register by July 31** in order to ensure your student athlete(s) receive proper communication. The registration process will require all student-athletes to turn in the following documents in order to participate. Note that physical exams must be dated within 13 months of planned participation.

[IHSA Pre-Participation Physical Exam](#)

[IHSA Sports Medicine Acknowledgment and Consent](#)

The tryout schedule for the fall seasons can be found below. Athletes are expected to attend and fully participate in tryouts and practices beginning August 12. Practices will be held daily following tryout dates, and there is a \$180 athletic fee for all students who participate in a sport. Registrants will be contacted closer to the start of the season with all pertinent details including practice times, expectations, and more.

The most up to date competition schedules can be found on our [athletics website](#), however, these dates are subject to potential changes. Any other questions as it pertains to Mighty Mac athletics can be directed toward Athletic Director, Laura Gill.

Cross Country

Head Coach: Kelly Andrasco
All Levels: August 12-14 from 3:30-5:15 pm
• Athletic Center

Diving

Head Coach: Vinnie Arias
All Levels: August 12th 3:15-4:15 pm
• Brother Rice Pool

Flag Football - *NEW IHSA SPORT THIS YEAR!*

Head Coach: Christina Ukachukwu
All Levels: August 12 -13 from 3:30-5:30 pm
• Turf Field

Golf

Head Coach: Caitlin Carney
All Levels: August 12-14 at 8:00am
• The Meadows Golf Course

Tennis

Head Coach: Lisa LeBold
Freshman and Sophomores: August 12-14 from 12:00-1:30 pm
Juniors and Seniors: August 12-14 from 10:30 - 12:00 pm
• TBD

Swimming

Head Coach: Joel Staszewki
All Levels: August 12 from 4:00-6:00 pm
• Brother Rice Pool

Volleyball

Head Coach: Jen DeJarld
Freshmen: August 12 from 12:00-2:30 pm
Freshmen: August 13 from 11:00-1:00 pm
JV/Varsity: August 12 from 2:30-5:00 pm
JV/Varsity: August 13 from 1:00-3:30pm
• Main Gym

Class Blackbaud Orientation Meetings

Mandatory Sophomore, Junior & Senior Class Orientation Sessions

As you know from the letter you received on June 27, our school is moving to a new Learning Management and School Information System. To ensure students are logged in, can access their classes, and see Blackbaud's capabilities, each class will have orientation sessions on assigned dates and times depending on their last name.

Students are expected to report to the Dining Hall where they will learn and practice using this new technology for the year. **Students should bring their iPads to these sessions in order to access their Blackbaud accounts.**

Any questions, please contact the assistant to the Principal's Office, Mrs. Nora McLaughlin at nmclaughlin@mothermcauley.org or 773-881-6561.

Seniors, Class of 2025 - LAST NAME A - L Monday, August 19 from 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Seniors, Class of 2025 - LAST NAME M - Z Tuesday, August 20 from 10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

Juniors, Class of 2026 - LAST NAME A - L Monday, August 19 from 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Juniors, Class of 2026 - LAST NAME M - Z Tuesday, August 20 from 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Sophomores, Class of 2027 - LAST NAME A - L Monday, August 19 from 10:15 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.

Sophomores, Class of 2027 - LAST NAME M - Z Tuesday, August 20 from 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Key Dates for the 2024-2025 School Year

First Semester

August 18 – August 20, 2024 — Class of 2028 First Year Experience: EMPOWER Together

August 21, 2024 — First Day of Classes for ALL students

September 2, 2024 — Labor Day Holiday, No Classes

September 5, 2024 — Back-to-School Parent Night

September 21, 2024— Homecoming Dance

September 24, 2024 — Mercy Day, Early Dismissal (12:00p.m.)

October 17, 2024 - Sophomore and Junior National Testing Day

October 17, 2024 - Seniors No Class Day

October 24, 2024 — Parent Teacher Conferences, No Classes

October 25, 2024 — No Classes

November 7, 2024 — Open House

November 8, 2024 — eLearning Day

November 25 to November 29, 2024 — Thanksgiving Break, No Classes

December 18 to December 20, 2024 — Semester Exams

December 23, 2024 to January 3, 2025 — Christmas Break, No Classes

Second Semester

January 6, 2025 — Classes Resume

January 20, 2025 — Martin Luther King Day Holiday, No Classes

February 10, 2025 — No Classes

February 27 to March 3, 2025 — Winter Holiday, No Classes

March 24, 2025 — eLearning Day

April 8, 2025 - National Testing for 9th, 10th and 11th Grade; No Classes for Seniors

April 11, 2025 — Senior Prom, No Classes for Seniors Only

April 17 to April 25, 2025 — Easter Break, No Classes

May 5, 2025 — Time and Eternity Mass

May 12 to May 14, 2025 — Senior Semester Exams

May 15, 2025 — Graduation Practice, Senior Picnic, Olympics & Academy Awards

May 15, 2025 — Baccalaureate Mass and Reception

May 18, 2025 — Commencement Exercises for the Class of 2025

May 26, 2025 — Memorial Day Holiday, No Classes

May 27 to May 29, 2025 — Semester Exams

Student Yearbook and Photo Days

Monday, August 26 – Juniors

Tuesday, August 27 – Sophomores

Wednesday, August 28 – Freshmen

Student yearbook and photo ID portraits are taken during the first week of school. Students must have their photos taken at the scheduled times. Families may not submit photos taken by outside photographers for yearbook or student ID use.

Freshman ID photos will be taken on **Sunday, August 18** during the First Year Experience event.

Sophomore and junior yearbook and ID photos will be taken on **Monday, August 26 and Tuesday, August 27**. Students will go with their Theology classes to take photos in the Community Room. Order forms will be distributed to all underclassmen on their photo days.

For any student missing the assigned photo days, make-up photos will be taken on a **different date** in the fall. Any questions can be addressed to Ms. Maryrose Sheridan, Student Life Coordinator at msheridan@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6534.

Parent Back-to-School Night

Thursday, September 5 from 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Don't miss this opportunity to follow your Mighty Mac's class schedule on Thursday, September 5 from 6:00-8:30 p.m. You can meet your daughter's teachers, who will present their courses and expectations for student performance. We will also have a space designated for parents to come during their students' lunch or study period to get help with logging in and navigating Blackbaud, our new Learning Management System. More detailed information about our Back-to-School Night will be emailed home and posted to our website.

Homecoming Dance

Saturday, September 21 from 7:00–10:00 p.m. in the Gym

The Homecoming Dance is a dance for all students. This semi formal dance hosted by Student Council culminates our Homecoming Week activities. Tickets for the dance will be available for purchase in advance. Tickets will not be sold at the door. Students must enter the dance by 8:00 p.m. and are not permitted to leave until the end of the dance at 10:00 p.m. More information regarding the Homecoming Dance will be forthcoming in early September. Questions? Please contact the Director of Student Life Mr. Mike Leveissaur at mleveissaur@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6525, or Ms. Maryrose Sheridan at msheridan@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6534.

Spirit Dress Down Days for 2024-2025

Show your Mighty Mac Spirit!

All students, faculty and staff are invited to show Mighty Mac spirit on Fridays throughout the year by wearing a McAuley top or sweatshirt with uniform approved skirts or pants. Then in addition we have some special Spirit Dress Down Days throughout the year. Students may wear red and gold on top with jeans, khakis, or loose sweatpants or dress in the noted theme. The dates for these Dress Down Days are listed below. Mark your calendar and wear your Mighty Mac colors!

- **September 16 - 20: Homecoming Spirit Week**
- **November 14: Fall Pep Rally**
- **March 6: Winter Pep Rally**
- **March 10 - 14: Spring Spirit Week**
- **May 15: Spring Pep Rally**

College Counseling Department Events

Senior College Parent Night - Wednesday, September 11

Parents and guardians of seniors are invited to join our annual college presentation at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 11. McAuley's college counselor, Ms. Eileen Lynch, will be on hand to share important information about upcoming deadlines and college programs. Some included topics are: application deadlines, FAFSA changes, and maximizing scholarship money.

College Fair - Wednesday, September 18

All students along with their parents and guardians are invited to attend the annual Mother McAuley-Brother Rice College Fair on Wednesday, September 18 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Join us for this invaluable opportunity to meet with college representatives from myriad colleges and universities across the country. Seniors should use this time to meet face-to-face with college representatives one last time, and all other Mighty Mac students, especially juniors, can spend the evening beginning their college search and learning more about those schools of interest.

School Hours

Throughout the school year, Mother McAuley will open at 6:30 a.m. **Students who arrive after 6:30 a.m. will be required to remain in the Student Lounge until 7:15 a.m. when the entire school opens.** While dismissal is at 2:45 p.m. on regular school days, and 1:42 p.m. on Thursday condensed school days, the school will remain open until 5:00 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Students who are not participating in a supervised activity or sport and are awaiting a ride may use the Student Lounge as a social learning space until it closes at 5:00 p.m. **Please be aware that all students must be picked up by the close of school (5:00 p.m.).**

Student Handbook

The annual school calendar and handbook helps keep students organized.

All students will receive a Mother McAuley Student Handbook/Daily Calendar. The handbooks will be distributed to students on the first days of school. Besides essential calendar dates, the Student Handbook contains important information about Mother McAuley's policies on student discipline, dress code, academic dishonesty, athletics and academic requirements. Please take the time to review this handbook with your Mighty Mac as the school year gets underway. Parents/guardians and students are expected to sign the handbook, acknowledging receipt and reading of the information included. Additional or replacement student handbooks can be purchased for \$5 in the Main Office. A summary of the school policies can be found on Blackbaud.

Please Help Limit Student Absences

Regular attendance is critical to your student's success at Mother McAuley.

We ask that you plan family vacations, doctor's visits, etc. with attention to our school calendar so that your daughter will be in class each day. Please keep in mind that more than 10 absences from class for any reason in a semester will result in a mandatory parent meeting and can result in your student being withdrawn from the course with an F. This includes absences and illnesses that are excused as well as field trips, college visits and retreats. Exceptions will be granted for verified extended illnesses. **Questions?** Please contact the Dean's Office at 773.881.6501/6503.

Locks and Locker Assignments

All first year students will receive locker assignments and locks at their first year experience on Sunday, August 18. Sophomore, junior and senior students should use their lock issued from previous years. If needed, returning students can purchase a new lock in the Main Office for \$5 at any time. All assigned lockers must have locks on them. **Questions?** Please contact the Dean's Office at 773.881.6501/6503.

School Policy on Electronic Devices

iPad User Agreement for Students and Parents

Please be sure to review the iPad User Agreement for Students and Parents with your daughter as a reminder that the use of iPads at McAuley is strictly for educational purposes. To optimize the educational benefits, McAuley will continue monitoring student usage to ensure appropriate school use. As a best practice, we strongly encourage students to load only school-related apps, content, and media, including pictures, on their device. If you have any questions about iPads or eBooks, please contact our Director of Technology, Mrs. Lauren Dowden, at ldowden@mothermcauley.org.

Student ID Policy

All Mighty Macs are required to wear student IDs on school lanyards.

For the safety and security of everyone, all Mighty Mac students are required to wear lanyards with visible identification when on school property. New identification cards will be distributed to students at the start of the school year. Replacements can always be purchased in the Dean's Office. Students who do not wear their IDs will be assigned detention.

Student Parking Permits

Juniors and seniors are allowed to purchase their Parking Permit in the Main Office **Monday, August 12 or Tuesday, August 13 between 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.** Students will need the following items to claim their permit: driver's license; the make, color and license plate number of the car you will be driving; and cash or check (payable to Mother McAuley) for \$220. Permits not claimed by 12:00 p.m. on August 13 will be offered to the next student on the waiting list.

Ventra Cards

Ventra Cards for the CTA will be available for purchase in the Main Office. The cost is \$2.00. They can be loaded at station vending machines, online, by phone or at more than 1000 retailers and currency exchanges around town. If you have a Ventra Card from last year, please bring that card to the Main Office to have it reactivated for the current year.

Food Service

Country House Kitchen Company

Mother McAuley partners with Country House as its dining services and hospitality management provider for the McAuley dining hall. Our lunch menu includes fresh salads, signature pizza, hot and cold sandwiches, whole grain wraps, daily pasta bar, restaurant quality specials and more. Beyond lunch, our dining hall offers a daily hot breakfast for purchase. There is a rotating breakfast menu with a variety of choices. In addition, every morning at the Kitty Mac's Cafe students can find made to order specialty coffee drinks, muffins, yogurt parfaits, fresh fruit and smoothies.

This year Country House is offering a pre-order option for sandwiches and wraps to all students, faculty and staff. Anyone looking to pre-order a food item can visit the Dining Hall between 7:15-7:45 a.m. to complete the order forms. All pre-orders will be labeled by name and will be ready to go by the designated lunch period.

MyMealtime Cashless System

Continuing this year, Country House will be cashless. As in the past, they will continue to use the Mealtime point of sale program. If students choose to pay for their purchases in cash they will be refunded any change directly onto their Mealtime accounts. Refunds will not be given in cash. Students will be able to fund their Mealtime accounts in three ways: (1) via cash or check in the cafeteria BEFORE school, (2) during lunch periods they can fund their accounts in the Main Office on designated days, and (3) online using a credit card at mymealtime.com. Please note there is a transactional fee incurred when using your credit card.

Country House will be available on Thursday, September 5 at Parent Back-to-School Night to help parents with the Mealtime cashless payment system. Should you have any questions regarding Mighty Mac food services, please contact one of our Deans – Ms. Amanda Sullivan at asullivan@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6548.

Ways for Parents to Get Involved

Connect with the Mother McAuley Mothers' Club

Did you know that all mothers and female legal guardians of McAuley can become members of the Mother McAuley Mothers' Club? Expand your social circle while supporting McAuley's mission. This warm and welcoming parent organization supports our school community through service, social and spiritual events.

Questions? Please visit the [Parents' Club webpage](#) for more information.

Connect with the Mother McAuley Fathers' Club

The Mother McAuley Fathers' Club is a social and volunteer organization that hosts social events and supports the school's students, faculty and administration. All McAuley dads and legal male guardians are welcome to become members. Become an active member this fall and enjoy opportunities to meet other McAuley dads, expand your social circle and partner with us to support the McAuley's time-honored tradition of Mercy education.

Please view the [Parents' Club webpage](#) for more information—and discover the wonderful sense of community that makes Mother McAuley so unique. **Questions about either club?** Please contact Mrs. Ellen Navarrete at enavarrete@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6527.

JUST FOR FIRST YEAR STUDENTS

Information
Specifically
for the
Class of 2028

First Year Experience | EMPOWER Together

Mandatory for all McAuley First Year Students

Sunday, August 18, 4:00 pm – 7:30 pm, Welcome Mass, Picnic and Social

Monday, August 19, 7:50 am – 2:45 pm - My Mighty Orientation

Tuesday, August 20, 7:50 am – 2:45 pm - My Mighty Orientation

All incoming freshmen are required to attend all orientation sessions.

Questions? Please contact our Director of Admissions, Mrs. Colleen White, at cwhite@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6540.



Welcome Mass and Reception

Sunday, August 18 at 4:00 p.m. in the McAuley Auditorium

Celebrate Mass with other new McAuley families in our Auditorium. Following Mass, there will be separate programming for first year students and their parents, concluding with a picnic dinner hosted by the Mother McAuley community. All first year students and their parents or guardians are expected to attend. Students will meet with their companion group for the first time, and receive a lock and locker assignment. Parents will participate in a panel discussion led by administrators, “seasoned” parents, faculty members and upperclasswomen. Dress for the evening in casual. School supplies are not needed for Sunday night.

We look forward to welcoming you to our school community! Additional information will be available in late July along with registration information. **Questions?** Please contact our Director of Admissions, Mrs. Colleen White, at cwhite@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6540.

EMPOWER Together | My Mighty Orientation

Monday, August 19 at 7:50 am – 2:45 pm

Tuesday, August 20 at 7:50 am – 2:45 pm

Mother McAuley is offering an exciting orientation experience for first year students. In addition to Sunday evening's programming, there will be two full days of preparation for our ninth graders. The goal is to ease the transition to high school, build confidence and create a bond among the Class of 2028. For the first two days, students will report no later than 7:45 a.m. to their assigned companion group classroom. Companion groups and room numbers will be assigned on Sunday.

On Monday, August 19, in addition to ice breakers and academic prep, our newest Mighty Macs will walk through their class schedules, meet their teachers during 10-minute class periods, and have time to explore the school. All students are allowed to wear shorts, sweatpants, pants and a McAuley t-shirt.

On Tuesday, August 20, first year students will participate in iPad training and compete in team building exercises. Students should wear comfortable attire (shorts or sweatpants) and their EMPOWER t-shirt. EMPOWER t-shirts will be issued to all ninth graders at the end of school on Monday, August 19.

The only school supplies your daughter will need for Monday and Tuesday is their iPad. Students do not need to bring pens or paper. If students are participating in activities after Orientation Days, it is imperative that they secure the iPad in their locker. **Lunch will be provided both days.** If your student has a food allergy that must be accommodated, please email our Director of Admissions, Mrs. Colleen White, at cwhite@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6540.

Birth Certificate

The State of Illinois requires all first year students to submit a copy of your birth certificate. If you have not sent us a copy of your daughter's birth certificate, please email it to admissions@mothermcauley.org. This needs to be on file prior to the first day of school.

Student Health Forms

All first year students must complete and submit [first year student medical forms](#) prior to the start of school. If you still have yet to complete and submit all required health forms, please do so ASAP. All health information must be submitted to healthforms@mothermcauley.org or they can be dropped off at our Main Office.

Questions? Please contact our School Nurse, Mrs. Ann Gruber, at agruber@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6524.

Summer Reading

Summertime provides a great opportunity for students to continue reading for pleasure and to catch up on reading they did not have time for during the school year. During students' time away from the classroom, it is important they do not lose the literacy skills gained throughout the previous school year. In order to maintain these skills, students are encouraged to read over the summer, but this is not required.

The summer reading information can be found by clicking [here](#). This information provides details and descriptions for summer reading options. **Questions?** Please contact our English Division Lead, Mr. John Kyler, at jkyler@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6520.

iPad Requirements

Purchase, Set-Up and Training

Families are responsible for purchasing their daughter an iPad. Students will have full ownership of their iPads as it is NOT purchased through Mother McAuley. Students may purchase any model iPad that is a minimum of 64 GB. iPads must be wifi capable only, not cellular capable. It is strongly encouraged that students purchase a case, keyboard and Apple pencil or stylus. iPads should be purchased and set up prior to first year student orientation. Information in regards to **how to set-up** will be sent to all incoming first year students by Thursday, August 8.

During first year student orientation there will be a **technology training session** to introduce the students to the programs, apps and tools they will use in their first year. Students will need to bring their iPad to both orientation days - Monday, August 19 and Tuesday, August 20 - and every day moving forward. **Questions?** Please contact our Director of Technology, Ms. Lauren Dowden, at ldowden@mothermcauley.org or 773.881.6577.

Tech Help

Prior to Monday, August 19 students will need to set-up their iPad as they will be using their iPad on August 19 and 20. Information on how to set-up your iPad will be sent electronically to all first year students by Thursday, August 8. The process is student friendly and should not take much time. If students need help setting up their iPads prior to orientation, our technology staff will be on hand on Monday, August 19 from 7:00 - 7:45 a.m. in our Student Lounge.