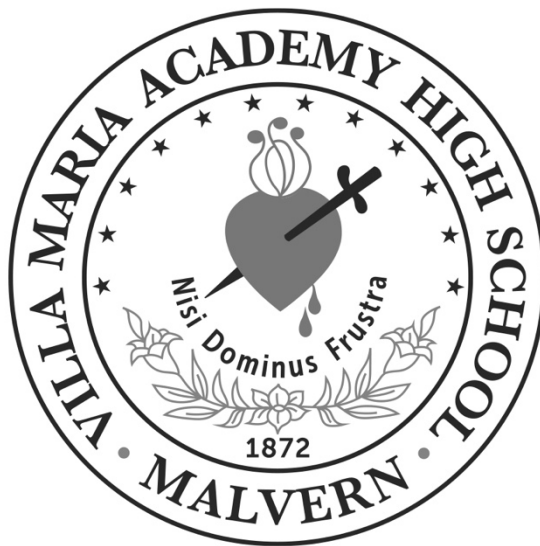


# VILLA MARIA ACADEMY

370 Central Avenue  
Malvern, PA 19355  
(610) 644-2551  
FAX: (610) 644-2866  
<http://www.vmahs.org>

**Empowering Young Women Since 1872**



# 2024-2025

**1872**

**2025**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Huddle: \_\_\_\_\_



Dear Parents and Students,

This handbook contains school information, school regulations and school policies. Each year we update the handbook; please be aware of this year's changes. We ask you to read this handbook carefully and then to complete the form below. This form should be returned to your Huddle moderator on or before September 6th, 2024. Thank you for your cooperation. We look forward to a great year.



Sister Regina J. Ryan, IHM, Ed.D.  
Head of School

We have received a copy of the STUDENT HANDBOOK and we realize our responsibility to support and to follow the policies in this HANDBOOK.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Huddle Moderator)

**\*Please see and initial/sign changes for the 2024-2025 school year on the back.**

**Please initial next to the following policies that you have read and understand the following changes for the 2024-2025 school year.**

**Attendance and Participation in Activities** \_\_\_\_\_

- No student may participate in any school-related activity, including activities sponsored by other schools, unless she has reported to school by the end of the first block. She must produce a medical note if arriving after first block. No student may participate in activities if they have not been present for half the school day, including dismissals. Student attendance the day before or after major school events is expected.

**Capstone** \_\_\_\_\_

- All seniors must attend the Etiquette Conference on February 20, 2025. Failure to attend will result in loss of points and potential failure of the Capstone project.

**Graduation 2025** \_\_\_\_\_

- Graduation takes place each year during the week following Memorial Day. For the 2024-2025 school year it will take place on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025. To participate in graduation, students must fulfill all requirements of the school: academic, financial, and disciplinary.
- **Mandatory** graduation practices will be held the week following Capstone shadowing from May 19<sup>th</sup> – May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2025, and the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> following Memorial Day Weekend. Students must be present at all events to participate in graduation exercises (2024-2025 school year).

**Nurses Office** \_\_\_\_\_

- **No student may call or text her parent to request she go home.** She must report to the Nurse's Office and follow the appropriate procedure. Failure to do so will be reported by the Nurse to the Dean of Students and can incur disciplinary consequences.

**Club/Activity Payments** \_\_\_\_\_

- Families will be billed monthly for events, activities, memberships, and school incidentals via FACTS.

**We have read and acknowledged the above-mentioned policies for the 2024-2025 school year.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student's Signature)

<b>INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOL .....</b>	<b>1</b>
History .....	1
Mission Statement .....	1
Core Values .....	1
Belief Statements .....	2
Goals .....	2
School Seal .....	2
Diversity, Inclusion and Equity Statement .....	3
Administration .....	3
Faculty and Staff.....	3
<b>ACCREDITATION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ACADEMIC POLICY .....</b>	<b>5</b>
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS .....	5
ACADEMIC STANDARDS .....	5
Course Levels .....	5
Entrance and Placement Criteria .....	6
Senior Capstone .....	6
Cumulative Assessments .....	6
Final Grades.....	7
Honor Roll .....	7
Academic Progress and Eligibility .....	7
Quality Point Average .....	8
Quality Points .....	8
Quality Points Equivalents .....	8
Rank in Class .....	8
Instructional Technology .....	8
“Virtual Villa” Policy .....	9
Attendance and Academics.....	9
Chronic Unexcused Absence .....	10
Long Term Absence and Concussion Policy.....	10
Policy for Maintaining Credit in the Case of a Long-Term Absence.....	11
Graduation 2025 .....	11
<b>MISSION AND MINISTRY .....</b>	<b>11</b>
Campus Ministry .....	12
Service and Social Justice.....	12
Service Learning.....	13
Service Hours.....	13
<b>DIVERISTY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>ACTIVITIES.....</b>	<b>16</b>
STUDENT COUNCIL .....	16
HONOR SOCIETIES .....	16
National Honor Society.....	16
French Honor Society .....	17
Latin Honor Society .....	17
International Thespian Society.....	17
Mathematics Honor Society .....	17
Spanish Honor Society .....	18
Student Advisory Board.....	18

Student Integrity Committee.....	18
Tri-M International Music Honor Society .....	18
Quill and Scroll .....	18
National Honor Society for Dance Arts.....	19
<b>ACADEMIC TEAMS.....</b>	<b>19</b>
Mock Trial.....	19
PA Mathematics League.....	19
<b>CLUBS .....</b>	<b>19</b>
Annenberg Symposium.....	19
Art Clubs .....	19
Book Club.....	19
Climbing Club .....	20
Forensics.....	20
World Language Clubs .....	20
Ping Pong.....	20
Photography Club .....	20
St. Hildegard Club .....	20
Technology Club .....	20
<b>MUSIC AND THE ARTS .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Concert Chorus .....	20
Handbell Choir.....	21
Madrigal Singers.....	21
Orchestra.....	21
String Ensemble.....	21
<b>PUBLICATIONS .....</b>	<b>21</b>
Literary Magazine .....	21
Newspaper .....	21
Yearbook.....	21
<b>THEATER GROUPS .....</b>	<b>22</b>
Devon Theater .....	22
The Light and Sound Crew.....	22
The Malvern Theater Society .....	22
Marian Masques.....	22
<b>STUDENT ACTION .....</b>	<b>22</b>
Blue and White Spirit Association.....	22
Respect Life Club .....	22
SpeakUp.....	22
<b>STUDENT LIFE .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Reporting Absence.....	23
Definition of Excused Absences.....	23
Multiday Absences.....	23
Family Vacations .....	23
Parent Travel .....	23
Early Dismissal.....	24
Same Day Request for Early Dismissal.....	24
Late Arrival.....	24
Exemplary Attendance.....	24
Absence Due to Suspension.....	24

Participation in Activities .....	24
ASSEMBLIES .....	25
BOOKS .....	25
BUSES .....	25
CHANGE OF ADDRESS/ TELEPHONE NUMBER .....	25
COLLEGE VISITS .....	25
COMMUNICATION .....	25
DISCIPLINE CODE .....	26
Philosophy.....	26
Detention.....	26
Discipline Issues .....	26
Hazing .....	27
Conduct Grades.....	28
Disciplinary Watch .....	28
Disciplinary Probation .....	28
DRESS CODE .....	28
REGULATION UNIFORM .....	28
Winter Uniform.....	28
Summer uniform .....	29
Sneaker Pass.....	29
Outerwear during School Hours .....	29
Athletic Dress Uniform .....	29
Pep Rally Dress Code .....	29
School-Sponsored Dances.....	29
General Principles .....	30
Uniform Supplier .....	30
FLEX-TIME/ SMART LUNCH PROCEDURES.....	30
DRIVING .....	30
GUM AND SNACKS.....	31
HOMEWORK.....	31
ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT.....	32
TELEPHONES .....	32
SCHOOL SONG.....	32
<b>STUDENT SERVICES .....</b>	<b>32</b>
DINING HALL .....	32
CHAPEL .....	33
COUNSELING SERVICES .....	33
Transcripts.....	33
Safe2Say.....	33
NURSES OFFICE .....	33
HEALTH SERVICES .....	33
HURRICANE HUDDLE.....	35
LIBRARY AND LEARNING COMMONS .....	35

LOCKERS .....	36
LOST AND FOUND .....	36
VMA's WEBSITE .....	36
<b>POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</b> .....	37
ACADEMIC HONESTY .....	37
ALCOHOL/DRUG POLICY .....	39
CAMPUS SAFETY .....	39
COMPUTER USE .....	39
DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS .....	40
EMERGENCY CLOSING .....	40
EMERGENCY DRILLS .....	40
FIELD TRIP POLICY .....	40
FINANCIAL AID.....	40
FUNDRAISING PROCEDURES .....	41
INSURANCE .....	41
LEAVING CAMPUS .....	41
PHOTOGRAPHING AND VIDEOING STUDENTS.....	42
SCHOLARSHIPS.....	42
RFT RULES FOR SOPHOMORES, JUNIORS, & SENIORS .....	41
TUITION POLICY.....	43
VISITORS/ DELIVERIES .....	43
<b>APPENDIX</b> .....	45
ACTIVITY QUEUES .....	45
ACTIVITIES CALENDAR.....	46
COMPUTER NETWORK AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY.....	47
CAMPUS MAPS .....	52
HAZING POLICY .....	57
ATTENDANCE QUICK SHEET.....	59
ABSENCE/LATENESS FORMS .....	60
ANTICIPATED ABSENCE FORM .....	61
MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION FORM.....	62
AUTHORIZATION FOR SELF-CARRY .....	63
CONCUSSION POLICY.....	64
FIELD TRIP MEDICATION FORM.....	66
VIRTUAL VILLA POLICIES.....	67
STUDENT ATHLETE HANDBOOK.....	68



# INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOL

## HISTORY

Villa Maria Academy is an independent, Roman Catholic, college preparatory high school for girls. This school is inspired by the charism of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Christian educators since their foundation in Monroe, Michigan, in 1845. The faculty of religious and lay teachers continues a unique legacy, which is a blend of educational excellence and Christian values. This tradition, begun more than 140 years ago in West Chester, Pennsylvania, flourishes today at the present site in Malvern, PA.

The foundation of the academy dates to July 1872. At that time, the Sisters transferred their motherhouse, novitiate, and boarding school from Reading to West Chester, PA. Occupying the property formerly owned by the Pennsylvania Military Academy, the school flourished in West Chester until 1914, when Villa Maria moved to Immaculata, PA.

In 1924, the Sisters acquired the property of William A. Warner, Jr. in Green Tree, the school's current location. This estate was a replica in name and style of "Sulgrave," the Washington ancestral home in England. The property included 123 acres, the mansion house, and its adjoining buildings. All were adapted to the purpose of the Academy.

Villa Maria Academy opened at Green Tree on May 5, 1925. Good Counsel Hall, completed in 1933, included dormitory, classroom, and library facilities. In 1935, an Activities Building with auditorium and gymnasium was opened.

Regina Mundi Hall, constructed in 1955, housed classrooms, guidance rooms, the Langton Memorial Laboratory, offices, and the cafeteria. An addition to Regina Mundi Hall was necessary in 1959. This new section included classrooms and administrative offices. In 1966, Regina Pacis Hall, which included Regina Pacis Library and the infirmary, was completed. A 1972 expansion added a faculty lounge, biology laboratory, lecture hall, locker room, and more library space.

In 1979, Villa Maria Lower School was moved to a wing of the House of Studies at Immaculata. At this time, the high school acquired St. Joseph Hall, which had been built in 1965. This acquisition gave the high school nine more classrooms, an art studio, and administrative offices.

In 1985, plans were undertaken to build the Marian Center, an Arts/Athletic complex. The Athletic Center, Phase 1 of the total project, opened December 1987. Phase 2 was completed May 1997, and includes an auditorium, music instruction and practice rooms, and an art classroom and studio. New soccer/lacrosse, softball, and hockey fields, an all-weather track, and five tennis courts were also constructed.

In 1999, Maria Hall was renovated and now houses administrative offices and a conference room. In the same year, a second computer lab was added to Regina Mundi to enhance computer usage and instruction. An addition to St. Joseph's Hall was completed in spring 2002. This expansion provided four technologically up-to-date science laboratories and a third student computer lab as well as additional classroom space. During the summer of 2002, the former science labs in Regina Mundi were converted to classrooms and a new, larger chapel and a guidance suite was constructed. The cafeteria was renovated and a new façade to its entrance constructed, a sprinkler system installed, the remaining old windows replaced, and the electrical system updated. Enhancements to Regina Mundi continued during the summers of 2003 and 2014, and a "loop road" was installed to improve the flow of traffic on campus in 2018. In 2022, the Theresa Maxis Student Union was opened and now houses the new Holloway Dining Hall and Hewes Terrace, the Parsons Chapel and Connelly Commons. Administration, counseling, and the nurse have also been moved to this location to provide a central space for student needs.

Certainly, Villa Maria has excellent instructional facilities set in beautiful country surroundings.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Villa Maria Academy, a Catholic college preparatory school in the charism of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, empowers young women to lead lives of spiritual growth, intellectual inquiry and Christian service.

## CORE VALUES

*Guided by Gospel values, the members of the Villa Maria Academy community:*

- Commit to learning
- Reflect on experience
- Embrace the truth

- Act with integrity
- Respect self and others
- Contribute to community
- Lead by example
- Achieve through commitment

## BELIEF STATEMENTS

*Villa Maria Academy seeks to prepare young women to face the challenges of the twenty-first century and believes that:*

- All aspects of the students' lives are guided by Roman Catholic teachings.
- Students have inherent worth and dignity which call them to act with integrity, embrace Gospel values, and grow in respect for themselves and others.
- Education is a shared responsibility between parents and the school community
- Under the guidance of a caring faculty and staff, students should have the opportunity to experience challenges and successes in a nurturing atmosphere.
- Education empowers students to contribute to the community by sharing their gifts and talents through service to others.
- Through extracurricular activities, students explore various interests and develop time management skills which lead to balance in all aspects of life.
- Students are encouraged to develop an appreciation and thirst for life-long learning.

## GOALS

*The measure of any educational institution is the success of its graduates; therefore, Villa Maria Academy empowers her graduates with the ability to be:*

**FAITH-FILLED PERSONS**, through daily prayer, annual retreat, liturgies, service and personal reflection.

**CHRISTIAN LEADERS** developed through leadership opportunities at every level.

**COMPETENT DECISION MAKERS**, firm in their convictions and able to respond when their beliefs and values are challenged.

**WELL-PREPARED CANDIDATES** equipped for rigorous academic programs in colleges and universities.

**CONFIDENT INDIVIDUALS**, embracing integrity in private and public life.

**EXPERIENCED AND RESPONSIBLE USERS** of technology, enhancing education and the quality of life.

**CRITICAL THINKERS**, assessing the credibility of information relative to real life issues.

**COLLABORATIVE LEARNERS**, building a team approach to problem solving through communication and creativity.

**DISCRIMINATING OBSERVERS**, whose world view is heightened by understanding and appreciating the fine arts.

**VIBRANT WOMEN**, acutely aware of the importance of balancing mind, body, and spirit to obtain optimal wellness.

**RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS** of the global community and conscientious stewards of God's creation committed to the service of others.

Villa Maria Academy, with the continued assistance and support of parents, alumnae, faculty, and staff, strives to fulfill this mission in an atmosphere of firm but loving discipline, and within an environment of harmony, beauty and order.

## SCHOOL SEAL



The school seal of Villa Maria Academy is the seal of Mary Immaculate. On the blue and white disk is a representation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary pierced with the seven-fold sword. This symbolizes the role of Mary as Co-Redemptrix of humankind. Below the image of the heart is the motto of Villa Maria Academy:

## **NISI DOMINUS FRUSTRA**

(Without God, all is vain)

Lilies, symbols of purity, complete the circle of the emblem.

### **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement**

- Villa Maria Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to the students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origins in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship program, or athletic and other school-administered programs.
- Villa Maria reviews its nondiscrimination statement applicable to all of its programs and policies, to ensure that it is in full compliance with local, state, and federal law. That said, Villa Maria makes the law the floor - not the ceiling - for establishing itself as a diverse, inclusive, equitable, just, safe, and welcoming school community for all students, faculty, staff, and families.
- Villa Maria commits to diversity, inclusion, and equity in its mission, core values, and any and all statements of philosophy.
- Villa Maria respects, affirms, and protects the dignity and worth of each member of its community.
- Villa Maria works deliberately to ensure that the board of directors, administration, faculty, staff, and student body reflect the diversity that is present in the rapidly changing and increasingly diverse school-age population in the United States of America.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

Sister Regina J. Ryan, IHM, Ed.D.  
Head of School

Sister Stephen Anne Rodriguez, IHM, Ed.D.  
Associate Head of School

Ms. Linda Henderson '84, M.Ed.  
Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Mrs. Melissa Feilke  
Dean of Students, M.S.

Ms. Madeleine Harkins, M.A., M.Ed.  
Director of Activities  
Mrs. Lisa Roberts, '86, M.S., ITS  
Director of Strategic Innovation  
Diana Figueroa, M.A.  
Director of Technology, M.A.  
Mr. Ronald Lance, B.S.  
Director of Finance  
Ms. Kathleen McCartney, M.Ed.  
Director of Advancement  
Mrs. Jennifer G. Rose, B. S.  
Director of Enrollment Management

### **Administrative Council**

Sister Marie Claire, IHM, M.A.  
Director of Campus Ministry  
Mr. Zeke Spillane  
Director of Campus Operations  
Mr. Domenic P. Zampogna, M.S.  
Director of School Counseling  
Ms. Stephanie Taylor, M.A., M.S.  
Director of Athletics

### **Administrative Support Staff**

Mrs. Bernadette Auth, B.S.  
Admin. Asst. in Counseling  
Mrs. Maria Faragalli, M.S., ITS  
Asst. Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Mrs. Mindy King M.Ed.  
Asst. to Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Mrs. Debbie Smith, B.A.  
Admin Asst. in Curriculum and Instruction

## **FACULTY AND STAFF**

### **Theology Department**

Mrs. Catherine Conroy de Paulo\*, S.T.M., M.A.  
Sister Mary Jo Ely, M.A.  
Mrs. Marguerite Paolantonio, M.A.  
Mr. Matthew Poole, M.A.  
Mr. Matthew Riggio, M.A.  
Sister Regina Ryan, Ed.D.  
Ms. Stephanie Taylor, M.A., M.S.  
Mr. Justin Zazyczny, M.Ed.

### **English Department**

Mrs. Jessica Mullen\*, M.Ed.  
Mrs. Kara A. Bielli, M.A., J.D.  
Mr. Brian Borosky, M.A.  
Ms. Jennifer Crawford, M.Ed.  
Mrs. Megan Filipowicz, '95, M. Ed.

Mrs. Claire Millhouse, B.A.  
Ms. Natalie Murray, M.A.  
Mrs. Jennifer Pixley, M. Ed.  
Mr. Matthew Riggio, M.A.

### **Social Studies Department**

Mrs. Jennifer Bowker\*, M.S.  
Mrs. Mary Anastasi, B.A.  
Mr. Matthew Cook, M.A.  
Mr. Peter Decker, M.A, M.Ed.  
Mr. Robert Cucinella, M.A.  
Ms. Madeleine Harkins, M.A.  
Mr. Matthew Poole, M.A.  
Mr. James Yen, M.A.

### **World Language Department**

Mrs. Belen Medina Mendoza\*, M.Ed.  
Mrs. Nicole Gargiulo, M.Ed.  
Mrs. Dianne Goddard, M.A.  
Ms. Holly Schneider, B.S.  
Mr. Anthony Tribit, Ph.D.  
Ms. Katlyn M. Yost, M.A.

### **Mathematics Department**

Mrs. Mary Hadley\*, M.A.  
Mrs. Maria Lubanski, '11, M.A.  
Mr. Erik Magness, M.A.  
Mrs. Angela O'Reilly, M.A.T.M.  
Mrs. Kaitlin Paintsil, M.S.  
Mrs. Shana Rightley, M.A.  
Mrs. Diane Venezia, M.A.

### **Science Department**

Mrs. Jill Alexis\*, M.Ed.  
Mr. Ed Byrnes, M.A.  
Mrs. Nicole Cronin, M.Ed.  
Mrs. Jennifer Horan, M.D.  
Mrs. Amy Keglovits, M.S.  
Mr. Joseph M. Koerner, M.S.  
Ms. Elizabeth Minker, B.S.

### **Fine Arts Department**

Ms. Kyoungwoon "Leah" Kim\*, M.M.  
Mrs. Sarah Bacastow, B.F.A.  
Mrs. Kathleen Brown, M.A.  
Ms. Christie Lawler, M.Ed.  
Mrs. Stephanie McLaughlin, B.F.A.  
Mr. Anthony Mosakowski, Ph.D.  
Sister Dolores Murray, M.A.

### **Health and Physical Education Staff**

Mrs. Michelle Black, B.S.  
Ms. Theresa Giunta, M.S.  
Mrs. Marci Luty, B.S., ATC

### **Senior Capstone Coordinator**

Mrs. Cara Antonello Walsh, '04, B.A.

### **Director of Service and Social Justice**

Mrs. Kara A. Bielli, M.A., J.D.

### **School Counseling Department**

Mr. Domenic P. Zampogna, \* M.S.  
Ms. Margaret Findeison  
Mrs. Cynthia Flores, M.A, LPC.  
Mrs. Lauren Savage- Miller, M.A.  
Mrs. Amanda Nilan, M.Ed., LPC.  
Ms. Alyssa Hamm, M.Ed.

### **Academic Success Support Services**

Mrs. Jennifer Pixley, M.Ed.  
Mrs. Patti Murphy, '81, M.B.A.

### **Academic and Student Information Systems**

Mrs. Maria Faragalli, M.S., ITS  
Mr. Eric Flores  
Mrs. Linda Schweitzer, M.S.

### **Media Services**

Ms. Sonia Nelson, M.S.L.S., Director

### **Office of Enrollment Management**

Mrs. Jennifer G. Rose\*, B.S.  
Mrs. Kelly Broadway, '05, M.A.  
Mrs. Amara Scholz, B.A.

### **Office of Advancement**

Ms. Kathleen McCartney\*, M.Ed.  
Mrs. Karen Barrett  
Mrs. Monica Meilinger, '95, B.A.  
Mrs. Jennifer Oschell, '92, B.S.  
Ms. Aliya Kalman, '17, B.A.

### **Office of Business Operations**

Mr. Ron Lance\*, B.S.,  
Mrs. Charonda DeShazo, M.B.A.

Mrs. Mary Lamb, '91, M.B.S.

Mrs. Josephine Zabat, M.S.

#### **Communications and Marketing Team**

Mrs. Linda Ryan, B.A.

Mr. Darren Polsz

Mrs. Laurie Scaggs, '91, B.A.

#### **Main Office Staff**

Mrs. Suzanne Castelluccio, Admin. Asst. to Head of School

Mrs. Nancy Griffith, Secretary/Attendance Manager

#### **School Nurse**

Mrs. Pierina Antonello\*, B.S., RN, CSN

#### **School Store**

Mrs. Debbie Smith, B.S.

#### **Facilities Staff**

Mr. Zeke Spillane\*

Mr. Joe Gala

Mr. Stephen McLean

Mr. Kyle Jenkins

## **ACCREDITATION**

Villa Maria is duly registered by the Department of Public Instruction of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In 2015, Villa Maria Academy was awarded dual accreditation with the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS) and with Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Villa Maria Academy High School is also a proud member of the National Coalition of Girls' Schools (NCGS).

## **ACADEMIC POLICY GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

All students must accumulate over four years a minimum of 28 credits in order to meet the graduation requirements of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Villa Maria Academy, in adherence to the scope and sequence set forth. Since the academic program is customized to best suit the student and the attainment of her post-high school goals, the typical Villa Maria student's transcript typically exceeds this minimum requirement. In an effort to further support each students' individualized goals, students are required to meet with her school/college counselor each year as part of the course selection process. Student

attendance at a school-sponsored retreat *each year*, completion of required service hours, and successful execution of the Senior Capstone experience are **mandatory for graduation**.

**Please see the Academic Course Catalog for more specific information.**

## **ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

### **COURSE LEVELS**

Courses are leveled according to a student's ability and needs.

**Advanced Placement:** Twenty-four Advanced Placement courses are offered to qualified students who experience college level classes and potentially earn college credits while still in secondary school. Those students wishing to roster for these classes must obtain the specific department approval having demonstrated motivation and previous academic achievement and must be ready to take responsibility for extensive reading and writing assignments as independent study. All students enrolled in an Advanced Placement course are required to pay for and to take the Advanced Placement examination in May. A student enrolled in an AP course must take the AP exam in order to fulfill her graduation requirements.

Nightly independent workload for Advanced Placement courses may vary between subject areas. In general, students should expect significant independent weekly work in each advanced placement course. In order to meet the Advanced Placement timetable, students may be required to complete summer work, although requirements may vary by course.

**Any student scheduled for an Advanced Placement course must commit to that course for its entire duration. There will be no exceptions. Students who are considering a roster of more than three Advanced Placement courses should be very clear on the time necessary to meet the demands of these rigorous courses and must discuss demands of course load with their Counselor.**

**Honors:** Honors level courses are offered for academically competent students who are able to pursue in-depth study and who are willing to spend extra time outside of class working independently. These courses require additional reading and writing assignments. Entrance into these classes requires department approval. The nightly independent workload for Honors courses

may vary among subject areas, but generally there will be a substantial amount of independent work. Students are expected to manage their time to meet nightly and long-term deadlines.

**College Preparatory:** College Prep courses are offered for students whose command of skills enables them to accelerate at the pace required of a college preparatory curriculum. The level of independent work assigned will vary from subject to subject and from course to course. Home study may be a reinforcement of previous learning for mastery attainment. It may also be exposure to new material for the purpose of engaging students in attainment of new information. Independent work is designed to be meaningful in support of content and process goals.

**Dual Enrollment:** Select dual enrollment courses are offered in partnership with Immaculata University onsite at Villa Maria Academy High School. Dual enrollment credit provides high school students access to taking college level courses. Qualified students must currently have a 3.0 GPA or higher. Each course is offered at a price of \$375. Billing is handled separately through Immaculata University.

Attendance for these courses is dictated by the Immaculata University calendar. Specific attendance parameters are set for those classes. Failure to meet the attendance requirements or any other established requirements for these courses will result in removal from the course and a potential credit deficit. Removal from the course will be represented as a “Withdrawal Fail” or “WF” on the VMAHS transcript. Credit attained will be reflected on the student’s transcript with the grade computed into the Villa Maria Academy High School GPA.

**Transfer Credits:** Credits that students wish to transfer to Villa for graduation requirement purposes must be pre-approved by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction. These are approved in rare cases. While the credit transfers to Villa, the student’s earned grade does not.

## ENTRANCE AND PLACEMENT CRITERIA

Villa Maria’s students are selected for admission based on the results of the High School Placement Test (HSPT ©) score, the student’s grade school performance, previous standardized testing, teacher recommendations and individual placement testing as relevant. Additional information with regard to the placement process is posted in the “Academics” link on the Villa Maria homepage.

Villa Maria’s philosophy derives from the spirituality of St. Alphonsus Liguori. Our interpretation of the Alphonsian mission, as it relates to a Villa Maria Academy education, recognizes that students learn differently. The school provides all students the opportunity to fulfill their God-given potential while meeting the requirements of a Villa Maria Academy education. Support services are provided to ensure that students develop the strategies necessary to achieve success in high school and beyond. Designed in conjunction with our philosophy of “placement for success,” students may be assigned to specific programming to support directed instruction of cognitive strategies that empower learning and lead to academic success, as directed by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction in conjunction with the counseling department.

## SENIOR CAPSTONE

This inquiry-based experience, driven by student interest, is *required* for graduation as a graded course. It involves critical thinking, investigative research under the guidance of a research mentor, problem solving, written summaries and application of prior and acquired knowledge through documented field experiences and/or service. All seniors are required to submit written reflections which connect their Capstone experiences to their curricular work. These and other smaller assignments will contribute to the student’s grade for the Capstone experience.

If, at any point during the Capstone process, a student fails to complete the Senior Capstone requirements according to the prescribed schedule or exhibits irresponsibility in other areas, she could be denied the privilege of shadowing; she would also be required to attend school during the designated shadowing weeks, complete 25 hours of service work and earn a passing grade in the semester examinations for all her courses in order to graduate. All students must complete any academic requirements and fulfill any outstanding obligations to the school in order to participate in the shadowing experience.

## CUMULATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Student academic progress is only formally reported on the semester in January and in June. Assessments for semester courses will be given at the end of each semester. Cumulative assessments for students enrolled in yearlong courses take place at the end of each semester.

The grade calculation for the semesters will vary from subject to subject but cross-taught courses are required to have uniformity in grade calculations. See individual course expectations for specific grade calculations.

## FINAL GRADES

The final grade is the average of the two academic term grades. Any student wishing to dispute a final course grade must do so within 30 days of the end of the academic term. A student's grade point average (GPA) and eligibility for Honor Roll are only calculated on the semester grade. The second semester GPA for students in Advanced Placement Courses and those seniors participating in the Capstone project will be the semester work average in their respective classes. Families not in good financial standing with Villa Maria will not receive semester grade reports or transcripts.

## HONOR ROLL

An Honor Roll is computed on the first semester and on the second semester grade. Honors are awarded by fulfilling the following requirements:

**Distinguished Honors:** GPA of at least 4.0 with no grade below 93.

**First Honors:** GPA of at least 3.5 with no grade below 88.

**Second Honors:** GPA of at least 3.0 with no grade below 85.

**NOTE:** A student must have a passing grade in "Conduct", and "Service Learning" to earn honor roll. This would apply to any Pass/Fail course at Villa Maria Academy.

## ACADEMIC PROGRESS AND ELIGIBILITY

Live-time grade reporting available through PowerSchool has eliminated the need for interim progress reports. Internally, the Student Support Team will actively monitor students' academic progress and seek regular feedback from faculty regarding the students' academic performance. At regular intervals through the year, grade checks on all students will be conducted by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction. A student with a below 73% course average will be identified for further intervention. Once a student is identified for intervention, she is advised to:

1. Meet weekly with the subject teacher(s)
2. Follow the recommendations of the subject teacher(s)

3. Report to any assigned tutoring
4. Report regularly to her Counselor.

If initial intervention efforts are not successful in helping the student elevate her grades in the course(s) of concern, she may become ineligible for participation in sports and extracurricular activities or lose her ability to sign out for Flex Time or RFT.

Students are fully responsible for monitoring their academic progress via PowerSchool. Therefore, there should be no surprises if a situation arises rendering a student ineligible for extracurricular activities. If a student is deemed ineligible, her status will be communicated to her by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction in conjunction with the student's Counselor, the Director of Student Activities, and the Athletic Director. Ineligibility will continue until the student has improved the course average in every class to at least 73%. Grade check updates will be conducted by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction on Fridays after the initial grade check.

Formal grade reports are issued in January and June. Positive communication between home and school is always welcome. While students are encouraged to be the chief communicators of their academic status, student progress is continuously updated and available through PowerSchool. A clear chain of command for home and school communication has been established and will be respected at all times. Parents with concerns about their daughter's instructional program are required to approach the teacher first with their daughter as an active agent in the resolution. Administration can only intervene once communication was made by the student with the teacher.

Students who earn a final grade of 69% or below ("F") in any course will need to remediate the grade in order to earn credit (1.0 quality point). This will be done through a summer school program approved by the academic department and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Upon remediation and presentation of required documentation, the final grade for the course on the student's transcript will be changed to a 70% ("D") and the student will return to good academic standing.

Any student who earns a final failing grade in two courses or more will not be permitted to return to Villa Maria Academy. A senior who has a failure will not receive her diploma until all work is satisfactorily completed.

A student whose GPA falls below the college qualifying grade of “C” (2.0) at the end of August will not be permitted to return to Villa Maria Academy.

### QUALITY POINT AVERAGE

The Quality Point Average is determined by finding the average of the quality points accrued in each course

counting toward GPA, taking into consideration the increments earned by the level of the course. This is an adjusted GPA. The final report in June will list the student's cumulative GPA, considering only those classes taken during her time in Villa Maria Academy. All coursework is be computed into the student's GPA. No transfer credit is computed into a student's Villa Maria Academy's GPA.

### QUALITY POINTS

Villa Maria Academy reports grades using an ALPHA GRADING SYSTEM according to the following scale:

#### QUALITY POINT EQUIVALENTS

Numerical Equivalent	Quality Points
100-98	4.1
97-93	4.0
92-91	3.8
90-88	3.5
87-85	3.0
84-83	2.8
82-80	2.5
79-77	2.0
76-75	1.8
74-73	1.5
72-70	1.0
69-	0

**Advanced Placement courses** are weighted by incrementing the quality point equivalent by 0.3 points.

**Honors courses** are weighted by incrementing the quality point equivalent by 0.2 points.

### RANK IN CLASS

Villa Maria Academy does not rank her students. This decision gives recognition to the fact that Villa Maria has a selective admissions policy. For this reason, class rank is not an accurate measure of individual achievement and could be misleading in determining a student's ability to complete college level work successfully.

At the midpoint of the second semester, the top two seniors with the highest cumulative GPA will be identified. Students named **valedictorian and salutatorian** must have spent their entire high school careers at Villa Maria Academy to be considered for this

distinction. A student's academic, disciplinary and attendance records will be considered.

### INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Students are required to bring a fully charged iPad to school daily. The minimum requirement for Villa students is the base iPad model at 64GB. Some students do opt to purchase the iPad Air or iPad Pro, which are also accepted. Many students also buy accessories like a case, keyboard, and Apple pencil.



## **SCHOOLGY (Academic Portal)**

All Students, Staff, and Parents will receive access to Schoology. Schoology is VMA's academic portal where class information and extracurricular activity information is stored. All new students must activate their Schoology accounts at the start of their first academic year, and they will use their VMA email and password to access this resource. Students are encouraged to check Schoology daily for assignments, notes, and calendars.

## **POWERSCHOOL**

Student Rosters, Grades, Emergency contacts/numbers, and demographic information are posted on PowerSchool through the parent or student portal. Parents and students have individual access rights. Contact the PowerSchool Administrator for account help.

**SOFTWARE:** Students have full access to Microsoft 365, Adobe Creative Cloud, and Google Suite applications. There are two computer labs on campus, including an esports gaming lab. All data created is backed up to Microsoft OneDrive/Sharepoint. Cloud storage is available for all users. All students have unlimited Google Drive space for storage of files. Users can also use Microsoft OneDrive as a storage option.

Villa's Student Technology User Agreement is published in the appendix of this Student Handbook. Parents and students are asked each year to sign the form that accompanies this handbook. In so doing, they agree to abide by the Student Technology User Agreement, as well as all other policies of Villa Maria Academy, and are made fully cognizant of the consequences of any violations.

## **VIRTUAL VILLA POLICY**

Villa Maria Academy High School has adopted guidelines for a virtual schedule to ensure that classes stay on schedule even during weather events when the physical school building is closed. With each occurrence the administration makes the decision whether a day will be designated a "Virtual Villa Day" or a "free day" depending on several factors including the severity of the weather event, the accessibility of the school roads and lot, and the schedule for the day. The Head of School reserves the right to suspend this policy due to weather or circumstances beyond the school's control.

Should a student need to be absent for 2 or more letter-day cycles for a planned medical event the school Nurse must be notified. The Director of Curriculum and Instruction then will determine if the student will be permitted to join classes virtually from home during her absence. It will be left to the discretion of the classroom teacher if he/she will require the student to join class virtually during her absence. A student joining class virtually from home will be coded as "virtually present" for attendance purposes. If a teacher is expecting a student to join class virtually and she does not, she will be marked as "absent".

This policy may also be implemented in the case of other emergencies.

**See pg. 67 in the appendix for policies and guidelines.**

## **ATTENDANCE AND ACADEMICS**

Regular attendance in class is expected of all students. All students also are expected to attend the scheduled class retreats, and seniors must attend the mandatory graduation practices.

Families are reminded of Villa Maria's attendance procedures, created in accordance with the requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Education. These can be found on page 23 under "Attendance Procedures".

If a serious reason causes a student to be absent from class, it is her responsibility, immediately upon her return to class, to meet with the teacher to determine the work missed and the manner of completing the assignments. At the direction of the individual teacher and in conjunction with the school counselor, all work must be completed within an agreed-upon time frame, provided the absence was deemed to be excused. Villa Maria's definition of "excused absences" is listed under "Attendance Procedures" (p 23).

Absences from assessments will be tracked by the Student Support Team. A student who has missed an assessment due to absence who does not otherwise have a "return to school" plan or a plan created with an individual teacher, must make up the missed assessment within two letter days of her return to school. Should an assessment be missed during an unexcused absence, the student forfeits the right to make up the assessment.

Homework and other assignments must be completed and returned by the date indicated by the teachers. Any

necessary tutoring will be the family's responsibility; it is not the teacher's responsibility to re-teach lessons or tutor a student who has missed classes.

**Please see pg. 23 under "Attendance Procedures" in the "Student Life" section for further information.**

### **CHRONIC UNEXCUSED ABSENCE**

Whereas regular attendance in class is expected of all students, patterns of excessive unexcused absences will be addressed by the Student Support Team. Academic work missed during an unexcused absence cannot be made up by the student. Therefore, unexcused absences can result in consequences such as but not limited to: ineligibility to participate in extracurricular activities, reduction of course grade, or in severe cases, loss of course credit. If the student does not earn credit for a course, it will need to be remediated over the summer and is the responsibility of the student and her family.

According to the PA Department of Education, a student is considered "truant" if she "has incurred three or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year." (*from PA Department of Education. (2024). Compulsory school attendance, unlawful absences, and school attendance improvement conferences. Retrieved from <https://www.education.pa.gov/Policy-Funding/BECS/Purdons/Pages/CompulsorySchoolAttendance.aspx>*)

Should a student accumulate three unexcused absences, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and the Dean of Students together will notify the student and her family of these unexcused absences. A school attendance improvement goal will be established. If the goals are not met, the student's status at Villa Maria Academy could be in jeopardy.

Whereas regular attendance in class is expected of all students, patterns of excessive excused absences will be addressed by the Student Support Team. While these absences may be "excused", they are still missed time from class and are not expunged from a student's record. When a student reaches 10 excused absences during an academic year, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and the Dean of Students together will notify the student and her family of these accumulated absences. Absences in excess of these may require a physician's note. Should these absences continue to accumulate, the student could lose eligibility to

participate in extracurricular activities or travel as a representative of the school.

Please see the Definition of Excused Absences on pg. 23

### **LONG-TERM ABSENCE AND CONCUSSION POLICY**

Villa Maria Academy acknowledges that unforeseen circumstances may necessitate in a long-term absence from school.

If a long-term absence from school becomes necessary, the following procedures will go into effect:

#### **Physical Injury/Illness Long-Term Absence**

- Parents will be required to submit to the school nurse a written note from the physician that explains the reason for the absence, the projected length of time of the absence, and any specific directives applicable to the school setting

The School Nurse will inform the student's teachers and counselors of the medical condition. Medical accommodations will be relayed to the counselor

- The Student Support Team will interpret and recommend an academic course of action that is best suited to the student, as well as Villa Maria's abilities that best fit the school setting and curriculum.
- The student's counselor in conjunction with the Curriculum office will communicate the plan to the students' teachers. It is imperative that the student adhere to the deadlines and expectations that are established by the academic plan. Failure to do so, can impact matriculation status, GPA, continuity in coursework and graduation.
- Long-term absence accommodations are not open ended. All doctors' communications must have a date for potential re-entry, or re-evaluation. Should an extension of academic accommodations become necessary a new medical note will be required.
- Academic accommodations are based on essential learnings, therefore requests for medical exemptions will not be considered.

#### **Mental Health Long-Term Absence**

If student's absence is for mental health reasons, a written note from her doctor/therapist is to be provided to the school. The Student Support Team

will monitor the student based on the written directives.

- Should it be necessary that the student take a leave of absence for long-term care, the Student Support Team will meet with the student and family to review directives for care and assess the long-term plan and or feasibility of the student's ability to continue to be enrolled in Villa Maria Academy.
- Students who are seeking full-time care and taking a leave of absence from the traditional school day, will also need to provide written directives with a date for potential re-entry, or re-evaluation. Should an extension of academic accommodations become necessary a new medical note will be required. The feasibility of the student to remain enrolled, will be up to the discretion of Villa Maria Academy.

### **Concussion**

In the case of a concussion, the School Concussion Policy will be monitored by the nurse in consultation with the athletic trainer and Student Support Team.

### **Note:**

- Students who are on an academic support plan with outstanding academic requirements **will not** be able to participate in certain school activities (dances, sports, pep-rallies, etc.). This policy extends to students on a concussion protocol until there is documented clearance by a physician, and academic requirements have been fulfilled.
- Should the student's absence need to extend beyond the possibility of continuing successfully in the curricular program, the Student Support Team will request that the parents register the student with their local school district of residence to initiate homebound tutoring.
- When the student is ready to return from such an extended absence, the school will require a written report from the physician/therapist and the school district tutors. A return to school meeting, organized by the counselor with the Student Support Team, the student, and her parents to discuss the procedures and credit requirements/adjustments. For re-entry to occur, the student must bring the necessary medical notes for her absence.

## **POLICY FOR MAINTAINING CREDIT IN THE CASE OF ABSENCE**

Absences from school, for whatever reason, do not excuse a student from the obligation to meet all schoolwork, as defined by the teachers, the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and the prescribed departmental curriculum. Students failing to seek this assistance will be afforded no latitude.

In the event that assignments/assessments are outstanding, a zero for that work will be recorded in the teacher's grade book until the missing work is submitted to the teacher who will then remove the zero and enter the appropriate grade. This grade will be adjusted once all work is up to date.

A student receiving academic accommodations due to long term absence may not be eligible to participate in activities or extracurricular events, nor may she travel as representative of the school, until she receives clearance from the Student Support Team.

## **GRADUATION 2025**

Graduation takes place each year during the week after Memorial Day. For the 2024-2025 school year it will take place on May 30, 2025. To participate in graduation, students must fulfill all requirements of the school: academic, financial, and disciplinary.

Mandatory graduation practices will be held the week following Capstone shadowing from May 20<sup>th</sup>- May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, following Memorial Day Weekend. Students must be present at all events to participate in graduation exercises (2024-2025 school year).

## **MISSION AND MINISTRY**

The mission and ministry of Villa Maria is rooted in her oldest and best loved tradition: The Children of Mary. This tradition calls all students to a *way of life* which is characterized by prayer, devotion to Mary and service. Participation in Campus Ministry, Service Learning, Social Justice Initiatives and Outreach invites students to deepen their identity as daughters of God the Father, sisters of Jesus our Redeemer, and children of Mary, our Mother.

The Mission and Ministry Leadership Team and Representatives meet regularly to coordinate activities. Students are formally inducted into this tradition with the reception of a medal of Our Lady.

**Campus Ministry**, an essential component of Mission and Ministry, fosters an environment of prayer and spirituality for the Villa Maria Community, through Liturgical Celebrations, Eucharistic Ministry, Prayer Experiences and Retreats. Various groups help to serve the needs of Campus Ministry.

- **Peer Ministry** is an opportunity open to seniors who are interested in building upon their Kairos experience by developing and nurturing prayer and spirituality in themselves and in the student body. This group forms a community of Christian leaders who engage in private and shared prayer and who are trained in communication skills. Members help to plan and execute undergraduate retreats by writing and presenting talks and facilitating discussions and activities. Members also plan and assist in seasonal activities and celebrations. Meetings are held at 7:20 A.M. every Wednesday morning.
- **Music Ministry** strives to provide beautiful music for liturgical worship. This group supports the Vatican Council directive that “music is the servant of liturgy.” Students who wish to praise the Lord through music qualify for this service. Rehearsals are scheduled as needed.
- **Altar Servers** assist the presider of the liturgy; prepare the worship space for Eucharistic liturgies; care for the School Chapel. Students who volunteer for this ministry undergo a period of training.
- **Student Charism Team** is an opportunity to collaborate with the Faculty Charism Committee in deepening and living out the IHM Charism by designing and implementing all-school involvement as opportunities arise.
- **Liturgy Planning Committee** Students prepare the readings, write the call to worship and intercessions, and plan the music for school liturgies throughout the year. They also participate in various worship roles at Masses.
- **Student Executive Leadership Team & Huddle Representatives** Students organize outreach for annual projects:
  - Aid for St. Agnes Dorothy Day Room
  - Thanksgiving Food Collection, as well as other food drives as needed
  - Mother of Mercy House Christmas Toy Drive
  - Easter Outfit Collection

- A mission drive to provide financial support for various local, national and international charities
- Camilla Hall projects to benefit the IHM Sisters
- Additional efforts are always considered as the Villa Maria community senses a need.

Outreach is committed to annual projects:

- The Thanksgiving Food Collection as well as other food drives as needed.
- A Mission Drive to provide financial report to one or two of many missions in the United States or outside of the country.
- Camilla Hall Projects to benefit the IHM Sisters.
- A Mission Drive to provide financial support for various local, national and international charities.

Additional efforts are always considered as the Villa Maria community senses a need.

### **Service and Social Justice**

Service is an integral part of our lives as Christians. Scripture tells us, “as each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God’s varied grace,” 1 Peter 4:10. Pope Francis reminds us that we “must open [our] arms to protect all of God’s people and embrace with tender affection the whole of humanity, especially the poorest, the weakest, the least important, those whom Matthew lists in the final judgment on love: the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick . . .” As proud stakeholders of Villa Maria Academy High School, we need only look to our mission statement which proclaims in part that the Villa community, through the charism of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, “empowers young women to lead lives of spiritual growth, intellectual inquiry and Christian service.” Villa Maria invites our students to journey with the two feet of a Christian: service and social justice. Service and social justice should be a journey with our brothers and sisters in need. As one enters into this journey with people whose life experiences differ from our own, the participants are transformed as is society. Service and social justice are internalized and become a mission. Villa Maria encourages our students to undertake this journey joyfully and, in doing so, to reach the following objectives:

- to discover and use their God-given gifts and to share these gifts with others,
- to connect the academic curriculum with an educated, meaningful response to the needs of the community so that they use their academic and social abilities to improve the community,
- to reflect on issues of social justice and respond to

them in accordance with Catholic social teachings

- to develop as leaders, problem solvers, and women of God, and as such, to remember the words of St. Alphonsus Liguori: “He who trusts himself is lost. He who trusts in God can do all things.”
- to serve, as Jesus did, with those who are socially or economically disadvantaged and marginalized including service to the poor, the homeless, the disabled, the sick, the elderly, and the unborn and/or expectant mothers (any non-family member).

## Service Learning

Service Learning is an instructional method that fosters student learning and service to one’s community. Students apply knowledge and skills developed in the classroom to service opportunities in the community. In turn, the service experiences help create conditions for students to succeed in the classroom and in life.

## Service Hours Requirements

The service hour requirements for students are set forth hereafter in two charts, Total Service Hours Based on Grade Level for 2024-2025 and Minimum Service Hours Based on Grade Level.

**Service Hours Charts 2024-2025  
Total Service Hours  
Based on Grade Level for 2024-2025**

<b>Class Year</b>	<b>Total Service Hours due 11/8/24</b>	<b>Total Service Hours due 3/21/25</b>
<b>Class of 2025</b>	60	70 (Graduation requirement)

<b>Class Year</b>	<b>Total Service Hours due 11/11/24</b>	<b>Total Service Hours due 3/28/25</b>
<b>Class of 2026</b>	35	45

<b>Class of 2027</b>	18	25
<b>Class of 2028</b>	5	10

Service Hours are due on or before 7:55 a.m. on the date indicated in the above chart.

**Minimum Service Hours  
Based on Grade Level  
(unless service hours requirements have  
previously been met based on grade level)**

<b>Class Year</b>	<b>Hours Required</b>	<b>Minimum Service Hours due 11/8/24</b>	<b>Minimum Service Hours due 3/21/25</b>
<b>Class of 2025</b>	25	13	12

<b>Class Year</b>	<b>Hours Required</b>	<b>Minimum Service Hours due 11/11/24</b>	<b>Minimum Service Hours due 3/28/25</b>
<b>Class of 2026</b>	20	10	10
<b>Class of 2027</b>	15	8	7
<b>Class of 2028</b>	10	5	5

**\*\*Service Hours are due on or before 7:55 a.m. on the date indicated in the above chart.**

## **Extra-Curricular Ineligibility List for Service Hours**

Students from the Class of 2025 who have NOT completed the required minimum service hours on the dates indicated in the service hours charts will be placed on the Extra-Curricular Ineligibility List.

Students from the Classes of 2026, 2027, and 2028 who have NOT completed the required minimum service hours on the dates indicated in the service hours charts will be placed on the Extra-Curricular Ineligibility List.

**Students may only be removed from the Extra-Curricular Ineligibility Lists when their service hours have been completed, verified, and approved. Removal of a student from the Extra-Curricular Ineligibility List will only occur once a week.**

### **PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL-RELATED**

**ACTIVITIES:** Students will be considered ineligible for extra-curricular participation in any school-related activity, including activities sponsored by other schools, unless they have completed their service hour requirements by the published service hours due dates which include the verification of service hours by the direct service supervisor and the approval of service hours by the Director of Service and Social Justice.

**Activities include -- but are not limited to -- dances; field trips; athletic practices, competitions and tryouts; musical performances; club meetings; and honors convocations.**

For the freshmen, Class of 2028, fulfillment of service hours may begin when the student begins the 2024 – 2025 school year at Villa Maria. For the Classes of 2025, 2026, 2027, fulfillment of service hours may begin for the next school year once the hours for the current school year have been completed and submitted.

### **Service Hours -- Graduation Requirements**

The completion of service hours is a graduation requirement.

### **Service Hours – Grading and Submission**

Each member of the Class of 2025, 2026, 2027, and 2028 will receive a **PASS** or **FAIL** for Service Learning on her final report card and transcript and this will be included in PowerSchool. Each member of the Class of 2025, 2026, 2027, and 2028 will receive a

**PASS, INCOMPLETE, or FAIL** for Service Learning on her semester one report card and this will be included in PowerSchool.

Service hours for transfer students will be prorated upon request by the transfer student to the Director of Service and Social Justice.

Villa Maria is using the Mobile Serve platform for the submission and recording of service opportunities. **Students are responsible for submitting their own service hours to Mobile Serve and ensuring that their service hours are verified by their service contact according to the above-listed due dates. Students must submit service hours to Mobile Serve within one week of the completion of service.**

**Verification of service hours may only be done by the direct supervisor of the service opportunity.**

### **Types of Service Which Fulfill Service Requirements:**

- Service completed during the school day which is in addition to the academic requirements of the school day
- Service opportunities sponsored by Service Learning and Mission and Ministry
- Service to the Villa Maria community which is NOT part of a student's responsibilities or role in a VMA student organization, club, or activity. Any service to the Villa Maria Community must be discussed with the Director of Service and Social Justice by the service supervisor prior to publication of the service
- Service to the Church (local parish or diocese) including ushering, altar serving or teaching religious education classes
- Coaching, mentoring, and tutoring (any non-family member) through a nonprofit organization
- Outside service opportunities which provide an opportunity for students to provide direct assistance to people who are socially or economically disadvantaged and marginalized including service to the poor, the homeless, the disabled, the sick, the elderly, and the unborn and/or expectant mothers (any non-family member). Service must be completed through a nonprofit organization.
- Service at a nonprofit organization which meets the above-stated service hour requirements.

### **Types of Activities Which Do NOT Fulfill Service Requirements:**

- Service completed during the school day which is NOT in addition to the academic requirements of the school day
- Service which is required or in any way part of one's responsibility as a member or leader of a Villa Maria organization, club, or activity. Any service to the Villa Maria Community must be discussed with the Director of Service and Social Justice by the service supervisor prior to publication of the service
- Any work which includes a stipend
- Travel time, unless it is directly connected to the service being performed and approved by the Director of Service and Social Justice in advance
- Service provided to family, friends, neighbors, and/or community members, unless it is facilitated through Villa Maria or a nonprofit organization or entity
- Hours completed during middle school or grade school
- Babysitting, unless it is through a nonprofit organization or entity
- Altar serving at Villa Maria Academy
- Work at a for-profit organization or entity even if the work is for a pro-bono project or a charity event or collection/drive
- A student may only earn 5 hours of service per semester from baking activities which meet the previously stated requirements
- Virtual or online service opportunities and creating cards off-campus that were permitted previously due to Covid-related concerns.
- Fundraising
- Shopping or buying gifts or supplies for individuals, families, or organizations in need
- Facilitating collections or drives for any organization or entity

If a student is unsure that a service opportunity meets the service requirements, she must meet with the Director of Service and Social Justice. Students assume the risk for all service opportunities which are not approved as the hours completed may not be counted toward the service hours requirement.

## **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING**

### **DEIB Statement of Villa Maria Academy High School**

Villa Maria Academy is committed to creating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community which respects and promotes the integration of underrepresented groups into its community. Villa Maria recognizes the many dimensions of diversity and the broad, complex, and dynamic nature of human difference and similarity. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are essential in an educational environment, including preparing students for citizenship in a global society, the sharing of cultural knowledge and wisdom, and promoting collective well-being. A policy of diversity, equity, and inclusion will facilitate Villa Maria Academy's mission as a Catholic and IHM Congregational school.

### **Student DEIB Committee**

The Student DEIB Committee is a student-led organization which strives to increase awareness of issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to promote positive change both within and beyond the Villa Maria community. The Student DEIB Committee organizes and facilitates DEIB presentations and programs for the Villa Maria community throughout the school year.

### **Student DEI Leadership Team**

The Student DEIB Leadership Team consists of a small group of dedicated students who lead and facilitate DEIB events, presentations, and programs for the Villa Maria community.

### **Faculty/Staff DEIB Committee**

The faculty/staff DEIB Committee meets monthly to discuss and make recommendations for DEIB policies and programs which will enhance student learning and the student experience as well as the experience of the entire Villa Maria community.

### **Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice**

Students and faculty/staff have the option to participate in the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice in Washington, D.C. which is the largest annual Catholic social justice conference in the U.S. for high schools, universities, and parishes.

# ACTIVITIES

## EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extra-curricular activities are a vital part of VMA's program. Activities include special interest organizations and seasonal athletic teams. All activities are coordinated by the Director of Activities and/or the Athletic Director. Activities meet on a regularly scheduled basis.

**Each activity must have a faculty advisor.**

Villa Maria Academy encourages students to assume leadership positions through involvement in the school's extensive extra-curricular activities program. Some leadership positions are acquired by the vote of the members of the specific organization; other leadership positions are merited by students who have exhibited a history of responsible membership in the activity and appointed by the moderator. A student may hold two leadership positions; however, these positions must be in different queues (see pg. 45). The entire student body is encouraged to become involved in VMA's activities program which fosters responsibility both in its leaders and in its members and encourages personal and social growth.

**NOTE:** To aspire to a leadership position or to be considered for a leadership position or membership in an Honor Society, a student must have a conduct grade no lower than Need Improvement (N) for 90 days prior to election/appointment. In addition, The Dean of Students will notify the Director of Activities of the appropriate activity if a member is assigned to detention. The moderator may issue a warning to the student. Failure to improve behavior will result in temporary or permanent suspension from the activity or leadership position.

**Personal integrity violations:** A violation that occurs *on school grounds or at a school sponsored event* (e.g., drinking before or during a school event) will result in the student's losing all leadership positions in all VMA activities. Suspension of membership will be in accordance with school discipline policy and the student will be placed on membership probation for the remainder of the school year. Should another violation occur, the student will be dismissed from the activity/team/ensemble.

A violation that occurs *outside of school* (that the school is made aware of) will result in the student's being suspended from the activity/team/ensemble in accordance

with the school discipline policy. The student will be on probation for the remainder of the school year and any further violations will result in the student being dismissed from the organization.

- Clubs and activities listed here are those which have been in existence for at least one school year. This listing is not exhaustive of the opportunities offered and is subject to change. Students are encouraged to reference materials from the Activities Fair, including the club explanations presentation and semester meeting calendar.

## STUDENT COUNCIL

The purpose of **Student Council** is to encourage the development of leadership and responsibility in the students. Elected to office by their peers, members must promote school activities, influence others for good, and cooperate responsibly with school regulations. Representatives report on the Student Council meetings to their peers. Members work on committees that carry out the work of the Student Council activities. They support and are involved in school activities such as Open House days, Back-to-School and orientation of new students. The Student Council is directly responsible for many school-sponsored events and activities. Meetings are held every Monday.

**NOTE:** Students may merit dismissal from the Student Council for the following reasons:

- Attendance issues
- Failing a course
- Multiple behavior infractions
- Repeated violation of the personal integrity code
- Suspension from school
- More than two unexcused absences from meetings. "Excused" absences include a meeting with a faculty member or participation in another school activity/game. An absence will be considered "unexcused" if the moderator is not notified prior to the meeting.

## HONOR SOCIETIES

### National Honor Society

Admission into the Blue and White Chapter of the **National Honor Society** (NHS) is an honor bestowed upon *seniors and juniors*. A candidate for membership



must have attended VMA for at least two full semesters, carry the required GPA of 3.8, and have a conduct grade no lower than Passing (P) for 90 days prior to induction. While academic merit is important for membership, a student's evidence of character, leadership and service are of equal importance when determining membership. A detailed description of the prerequisite requirements and application process can be provided by the NHS moderator.

**NHS** members are expected to complete a total of ten (10) additional hours of service beyond the Mission and Ministry requirement each year. Members are expected to participate in the organization's primary service, peer tutoring (at least one hour per semester). Additionally, members are expected to actively support other school activities and complete at least two service hours per semester within Villa Maria Academy. Members must also complete service in their community, outside of Villa Maria Academy (at least two hours per semester). Meetings are mandatory for all. A calendar with meeting dates will be provided at the first meeting of the semester.

\*\*\*Members must maintain the standards that were used as a basis for their selection. *In addition, any violation of the Academic Honesty Policy is grounds for immediate dismissal.*

\*\*\*An NHS member who transfers from another school should inform Villa Maria Academy of previous membership by providing a letter from their former chapter adviser that confirms her membership. Additionally, during the first semester at Villa Maria Academy, the student must meet and maintain the Blue and White Chapter's standards; including the GPA and the conduct requirements. A student's membership will be officially transferred at the end of her first semester at Villa Maria Academy.

\*\*\*The Blue and White Chapter will only induct seniors during the Fall induction.

### **French Honor Society**

Candidates for membership in the **French Honor Society** must have studied French at VMA for at least one year, have maintained a cumulative average of "A-" in French during the five semesters prior to induction with no semester grade below a "B+", be currently enrolled in an honors level class, participate in the society's service activities and have a conduct grade no lower than Needs Improvement (N) for 90 days prior to induction. Members must maintain the standards that were used as a basis for their selection. A member who fails to maintain

an "A-" average at the mid-semester will be issued a written warning and be granted one-half semester to bring her grade to the minimum "A-". *In addition, any violation of the Academic Honesty Policy will result in dismissal.* Candidates and members must intend to study French at the honors level for their four years at VMA. Induction takes place during the second semester of junior year.

### **Latin Honor Society**

Candidates for membership must have studied Latin at VMA for at least one year, have maintained a cumulative average of "A-" in Latin during the five semesters prior to induction with no semester grade below a "B+", be currently enrolled in an honors level class, participate in the society's service activities, and have a conduct grade no lower than Needs Improvement (N) for 90 days prior to induction. Members must maintain the standards that were used as a basis for their selection. A member who fails to maintain an "A-" average at the mid-semester will be issued a written warning and be granted one-half semester to bring her grade to the minimum "A-". *In addition, any violation of the Academic Honesty Policy will result in dismissal.* Candidates and members must intend to study Latin at the honors level for their four years at VMA. Induction takes place during the second semester of junior year.

### **International Thespian Society**

**The International Thespian Society** is the only theatre honor society for high school students in the United States. Affiliation brings credibility and distinction to students, theatre programs, and schools. ITS recognizes, rewards, and encourages student achievement and celebrates the work of students in all aspects of theatre – performance and production. Each student is honored on a national level and gains access to opportunities and resources beyond those of their school. To be a member of Villa's ITS Troupe students must: meet the troupe's performance/production requirements, be in good academic standing, and have a conduct grade no lower than Needs Improvement (N) for 90 days prior to induction. Induction takes place every fall semester.

### **Mathematics Honor Society**

**Mu Alpha Theta**, which is sponsored by the Mathematical Association of America and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, is an organization which strives to promote scholarship, enjoyment and understanding of mathematics among high school and junior or community college students. Candidates for

membership must have studied mathematics at an honors or AP level sophomore and junior year and should intend to study mathematics at the honors or AP level senior year. Candidates must have maintained a cumulative mathematics average of 92 or higher during the five semesters prior to induction with semester grades of 90 or higher in required math courses (Algebra 1, Algebra 2, or Geometry) and 87 or higher in math electives. Candidates must maintain a conduct grade no lower than Needs Improvement (N) for 90 days prior to induction. Members must maintain the standards that were used as a basis for their selection. A member who fails to maintain the grade requirement at the end of each semester will be issued a written warning and granted one-half semester to meet the requirement. A member who does not uphold attendance or conduct will be warned or dismissed depending on the severity. *In addition, any violation of the Academic Honesty Policy will result in dismissal.* Juniors are inducted after the completion of the first semester. Members must participate in meetings and service activities hosted by Mu Alpha Theta throughout the year.

### **Spanish Honor Society**

Candidates for membership in the **Spanish Honor Society** must have studied Spanish at VMA for at least one year, have maintained a cumulative average of “A-” in Spanish during the five semesters prior to induction with no semester grade below “B+”, be currently enrolled in an honors level class, participate in the society’s service activities, and have a conduct grade no lower than “N” for 90 days prior to induction. Members must maintain the standards that were used as a basis for their selection. A member who fails to maintain an “A-” average at the mid-semester will be issued a written warning and be granted one-half semester to bring her grade to the minimum “A-”. *In addition, any violation of the Academic Honesty Policy will result in dismissal.* Candidates and members must intend to study Spanish at the honors level for their four years at VMA. Induction takes place during the second semester of junior year.

### **Student Advisory Board**

The **Student Advisory Board** at Villa Maria Academy’s mission is to act as a voice and conduit for the student body to both the faculty and administration. The goal is to communicate and contribute ideas, questions and concerns of the student body and to help make the students feel empowered while upholding the core values and IHM charism of Villa. The student-centered board acts as a liaison to the Office of the Dean of Students. The

students are responsible for town halls, and also serve on the integrity council- a student run disciplinary board that advises the Dean of Students.

### **Student Integrity Committee**

**The Student Integrity Committee** promotes integrity, honor, and VMA’s core values. This select and diverse group of students is composed of members from all four classes who exhibit the highest level of honor and principle. Members inspire and encourage the student body to act with academic, personal, and social integrity in every aspect of their lives. Interested students must submit an application which includes an essay and finalists are interviewed by current members of the committee.

### **Tri-M International Music Honor Society**

Candidates for the student membership in **Tri-M International Music Honor Society** are selected by fulfilling the following requirements: Only juniors or seniors who have been responsible members of a school-sponsored music ensemble for at least one school calendar year prior to the year of induction are eligible. Students must exhibit exemplary rehearsal conduct and attendance in school ensembles, be present at all concerts, and exhibit a good attitude toward teachers and fellow students. Only students who study music privately on a weekly basis will be considered. Candidates must have maintained a grade of “A” in music (or the equivalent grade from an outside teacher) for the year prior to induction, be in good standing in other academic subjects, participate in the society’s service activities, and have a conduct grade no lower than Needs Improvement (N) for 90 days prior to induction. The Tri-M sponsor will receive recommendations from music ensemble directors, private teachers, the Director Curriculum and Instruction and the Dean of Students to assess the above qualifications. Members must maintain the standards that were used as a basis for their selection. *In addition, any violation of the Academic Honesty Policy will result in dismissal.* Meetings are held each month on the first Friday that school is in session.

### **Quill and Scroll**

Members of the **Quill and Scroll Honor Society** are chosen from *sophomore, junior or senior students*. To qualify to membership into the VMA chapter of the Society, the student must have: earned a GPA of 3.5 or higher in the most recent semester; achieved superior work in some phase of high school journalism; published twice in the current school year; been recommended by

the VMA *Quill and Scroll* committee; and been approved by the Society's executive director. In addition, members are expected to participate in the society's service activities, and have a conduct grade no lower than "N" for 90 days prior to induction. Members must maintain the standards that were used as a basis for their selection.

### **National Honor Society for Dance Arts**

Induction into the NHSDA Secondary Program is earned through the accumulation of at 30 points awarded for dance activities such as dance classes, rehearsals, performances, research, workshops, or community service activities, alongside a minimum GPA of at 3.0. Students track their points and provide the Chapter Sponsor with a record of points earned through worksheets, portfolios, or other agreed-upon methods. In addition, the prospective student's demonstration of collaborative teamwork, motivation, and leadership in the many aspects of dance like choreography, performance, mentoring, and production are factors in the determination of eligibility for induction.

## **ACADEMIC TEAMS**

### **Mock Trial**

**Mock Trial** is sponsored by the Young Lawyers of Pennsylvania Bar. Interested students are offered an opportunity to compete with other Pennsylvania High School Mock Trial teams. The students prepare both the prosecution and the defense of a case proposed by the Young Lawyers and assume the roles of lawyers and witnesses in the mock case. Participants develop thought processes and persuasive and extemporaneous speaking skills. The formal competitions are held before a Chester County Common Pleas Judge at Chester County Court House. Practices are held after school and on weekends based on availability of the assisting attorney.

### **PA Mathematics League**

The **Pennsylvania Mathematics League** hosts monthly contests to challenge and motivate students who have an interest in mathematics. Each contest is a thirty-minute, six question on-line test for which participants may use a TI-84 calculator. These contests occur monthly on predetermined Tuesdays after school. Members are required to attend six out of seven meetings. The seventh meeting features a guest speaker and a pinning ceremony for those members who attain the highest score.

## **CLUBS**

### **Annenberg Symposium**

**Annenberg Symposium** is a year-long club for juniors and seniors interested in health careers. Students will participate in a Mainline Health program with other select regional high schools. In the fall a kick-off event gives students an opportunity to see live surgery. Students select a topic for yearlong research and have the opportunity to meet with mentors in specialized medical fields. Finally in the spring students participate in a symposium with local high schools. In their presentation's students incorporate an element of the creative arts, which have included drama, song, visual art, and video production. The integration of art and science is a means of visually demonstrating science, simplifying complexity, and engaging the audience. The final event gives students the opportunity to present their medical research and creative component to a panel of judges.

### **Art Clubs**

The **Freshman Art Club** gives students an exposure to the art experience and lays a foundation for further study of art. The club is open to any ninth-grade student, regardless of experience or manifest ability. The club meets two or three times a month.

The **Sophomore Art Club** allows students to continue their growth in the arts. Members investigate different topics each month. The club is open to any 10<sup>th</sup> grade student and meets two or three times a month.

### **The Book Club**

The **Book Club** provides the opportunity for students to celebrate their love of reading and talking about books in a friendly and open atmosphere. The club setting also serves as a safe and welcoming environment to learn about and try different genres. Throughout the year, Book Club meets after school in the Learning Commons and occasionally hosts discussions on Schoology. Meetings, discussion topics and other activities are determined by Book Club member surveys. Discussions are open to anyone interested, not just club members.

## The Climbing Club

The purpose of the **Climbing Club** is to promote the development of students across the physical, social, and emotional domains. Members of the club will participate in a sequential series of activities which will ultimately enable them to acquire skills in climbing, rappelling, and belaying while also building trust, teamwork, leadership, and self-confidence. The club meets on the second Friday of the month. Because each meeting builds upon the last, attendance at all meetings is mandatory, and members are expected to be fully committed. Students will test and utilize all of the skills they learned on a culminating field trip at the end of the school year. There is no experience required to join.

## Forensics

**Forensics** is a club or academic team that involves individual or partner performances in specific events within the categories of speech or debate. Students can compete at local, regional, and national levels by perfecting a piece in a speech event or preparing to argue a position in a debate format. Members of the team seek to learn effective public-speaking and communication skills, in revising and editing their own presentations and offering constructive criticism to their peers.

## Language Clubs

The purpose of the **Language Clubs (French/Latin/Spanish)** is to promote excellence in the study of world languages and to cultivate an interest in and deeper understanding of the history and culture of countries around the world. During the year, members are expected to attend meetings and to participate actively in the planning and executing of the clubs' service projects, cultural activities, and periodic outings. Membership is open to all interested students; meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month.

## The Ping Pong Club

The **Ping Pong Club** gives table tennis enthusiasts an opportunity to get some exercise and expand their knowledge about the game. Whether an experienced player who looks to improve upon her current skills or a novice player looking to learn the game, the Ping Pong Club will have something for everyone. Members can drop in for play every Tuesday afternoon.

## The Photography Club

The **Photography Club** provides students with opportunity to explore the skills and techniques for capturing pictures as well as editing videos. Members can share their creativity, enthusiasm, and knowledge of photography and videos in a welcoming atmosphere. Club members will capture Villa memories by participating in Festival and Charity Art Show. The club meetings will take place afterschool during the 2nd Monday of each month. Participation in this club requires attendance at 6 meetings during the year.

## The St. Hildegard Club

The **St. Hildegard Club** is your launchpad for scientific exploration. We tackle mind-bending experiments, and brainstorm solutions to real-world problems. Join us to unlock the wonders of science and have a blast with fellow science enthusiasts! This club is open to all students interested in science. Meetings will be held monthly during the school year.

## Tech Club

The **Tech Club** offers opportunities for students to explore a wide variety of computing innovations. Students learn how to fly drones, both a Phantom 4 and an Altair indoor videographic drone and shoot aerial photography. Students will also learn coding and design computer games. With AutoDesk and MakerBot 3D printers, students design and print in 3D. Robot design and programming is offered through Root Robotics and MindStorms. Students have the opportunity to learn and hone gaming skills in creation and competition.

# MUSIC AND THE ARTS

## Chorus

The purpose of the **Chorus** is to provide students with the opportunity to participate in ensemble singing for enrichment and enjoyment. Chorus members are expected to participate in all performances as well as in weekly Thursday rehearsals from 3:15 to 5:00. Additional mandatory rehearsals are held close to performance dates; all ensemble members must be present for the entire duration of these mandatory rehearsals. Performances include the Christmas Concert and the Fine Arts Festival.

## Handbell Choir

The purpose of the **Handbell Choir** is to provide students with a unique ensemble experience using English handbells and choir chimes. Membership is open to all students who possess at least basic music reading skills. Members are expected to participate in all performances as well as in weekly Monday rehearsals. Additional mandatory rehearsals are held close to performance time; all ensemble members must be present for the entire duration of these mandatory rehearsals.

## The Madrigal Singers

The **Madrigal Singers** is the select choir of Villa Maria Academy. It rehearses after school on Tuesdays, 3:15-5:00. Eligibility is based on audition, and continuing membership is based on attendance at rehearsals and performances. Members of Madrigals are also required to participate in Chorus. Membership is a year-long, not a semester-by-semester, commitment. In addition to weekly rehearsals, mandatory rehearsals are held close to performance dates; all ensemble members must be present for the entire duration of these mandatory rehearsals. Performances include the Christmas Concert, Fine Arts Festival, and additional performances as scheduled.

## Orchestra

The **Orchestra** gives instrumentalists the opportunity to perform in an ensemble at school functions such as the Christmas Concert, Tri-M Music Honor Society Induction, and the Fine Arts Festival. Membership is offered to beginning as well as to advanced music students. Members are given specific assignments and are expected to practice for weekly Wednesday rehearsals. Additional mandatory rehearsals are held close to performance time; all ensemble members must be present for the entire duration of these mandatory rehearsals.

## The String Ensemble

The **String Ensemble** is an auditioned and select ensemble of sophomores, juniors, and seniors. (In certain circumstances, freshmen can be invited to join.) In order to audition, candidates must be current members of the Orchestra and must have demonstrated exemplary attendance and participation in the Orchestra for at least one semester immediately prior to the auditions. Continuing membership is by re-audition and requires exemplary attendance and participation in both Orchestra

and String Ensemble. Membership is a year-long, not a semester-by-semester, commitment. Members are expected to participate in all performances as well as in weekly Friday rehearsals except during Tri-M monthly meeting dates. Additional mandatory rehearsals are held close to performance time; all ensemble members must be present for the entire duration of these mandatory rehearsals. Performances include the Tri-M Induction, Christmas Concert, Fine Arts Festival, and additional performances as scheduled.

# PUBLICATIONS

## Literary Magazine

**Festival** challenges and showcases talented student writers and artists. Members work on all aspects of the publishing process, from campaigning for contributions to developing the theme and evaluating the works submitted, from typing and proofreading contributions to designing attractive layouts. Editors and staff members meet on **either** the first or second Wednesday of the month. Editors are also expected to meet at other times throughout the year. All members are expected to give additional time from December through March to prepare the magazine for publication deadlines.

## Newspaper

**The Villa Voice** is a student-run news publication. Members must attend training sessions in the early fall. The newspaper is published up to three times during the school year. The staff works together to brainstorm ideas and edit articles before it is published. Reporters, photographers and designers also work independently to research stories, interview sources, and write articles. During deadline week, all section leader members must attend all meetings until their section is finished for the deadline.

## Yearbook

The purpose of the **Reflections** staff is to capture the activities and events of the school community throughout the year. Editorial staff members must attend one mandatory meeting after school on Wednesdays at 2:15 each week in Room 407. In addition, they must meet with their section one time before school or after school each week until the end of February. Certain sections may meet into March to capture prom and spring sports. Students can also work on their sections at home by logging into the Jostens website. Writing staff members typically meet in the mornings once per

month. The editors attend and facilitate all staff meetings. During deadline week, all staff members must attend all meetings until their section is finished for the deadline.

## THEATER GROUPS

### Devon Theater

Devon Preparatory School invites Villa Maria Academy students to participate in **Devon Theater** which presents a fall drama and spring musical. Auditions are held at Devon Prep about three months prior to the opening of the show. Students interested in acting, singing, or dancing in serious drama or musical comedy may use this as an avenue for their talent. For specific information, contact Devon Preparatory School.

### Light and Sound Crew

Members of the **Light and Sound Crew** are responsible for helping with light and sound in the auditorium for all liturgies, assemblies, and special events. Students learn how to focus lights and design light plots, as well as how to set up a variety of sound equipment. In addition, students have the opportunity to operate VMA's state-of-the-art lighting and sound boards. Meetings and rehearsals are held on an as-needed basis.

### The Malvern Theater Society

The goal of **The Malvern Theater Society**, a collaboration between Villa Maria Academy and Malvern Preparatory School, is to improve the acting and technical abilities of each student. Each year the society produces a full-length drama in the fall and a complete musical in the spring. VMA students are involved in all aspects of the productions which are presented on the first two weekends of November and March. For more information, call Malvern Preparatory School.

### Marian Masques

**Marian Masques** is the drama club at VMA. All students are welcome to participate in all aspects of theater. The club is committed to bringing different performance opportunities to students throughout their four years at Villa. These different opportunities include the Winter Musical, radio plays, and fall dinner theater. Rehearsal schedules differ based on performance. Marian Masques is also committed to providing students

with a well-rounded theater education through seeing regional theater productions and theatrical workshops.

## STUDENT ACTION

### Blue and White Spirit Association

The **Blue and White Spirit Association** aims to promote good sportsmanship, respectful enthusiasm and Hurricane pride in all events sponsored by the Villa Maria Academy community. Meetings are held Wednesdays when Academic Council is scheduled.

### Respect Life Club

The **Respect Life Club** promotes a reverence for life in all its stages, especially the unborn, the disabled, and the elderly. The group organizes service projects to promote correction of social injustices. Meetings are held on the second Monday of the month.

### SpeakUp

**SpeakUp** is an event that encourages honest and open dialogue between parents, teens and teachers on current topics such as alcohol, pressure, social media, and relationships. A steering committee of 60 student leaders prepares the event, along with the organizers of the non-profit group, *SpeakUp*. The student leaders are from Villa Maria Academy, Malvern, Prep, Notre Dame Academy and Devon Prep.

Interested juniors send the SpeakUp moderator a letter of intent, indicating the reasons for wanting to be part of the Speak Up team. Students are then interviewed by the Speak Up moderator. A list of applicants is sent to the administration for approval. Each year eight juniors are selected for the two-year commitment. These eight juniors, combined with the eight seniors, comprise Villa's Speak Up leadership team.

The preparation and planning for the SpeakUp event involves six leadership meetings over a three-month period. These two-hour meetings are held at Malvern Prep with the leaders from the four schools.

# STUDENT LIFE

## ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

**REPORTING ABSENCES:** The school requests daily notification of student absence or lateness be made by calling the Main Office at 610-644-2551 by 7:50 am. This attendance line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Calls must be made by parents. If the school does not receive a phone call, the school will attempt to contact parents to verify the absence. Emails the mornings of will not be accepted for student absences in lieu of calling the Main Office.

Students who have been absent must present a *written* absence note to the Main Office, emails are not accepted. *Absence notes must be placed in the box assigned for that purpose by the student herself.* **Any student who fails to submit a note from her parent or guardian or physician with a satisfactory explanation for her absence within three days of her return to school will be classified as having an unlawful absence.** Failure to produce a note will also result in a hold on the student's grades, and course selection, and transcripts.

Students who anticipate being absent or late should present a note to this effect to the Main Office prior to the intended absence or lateness.

### DEFINITION OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

It should be recognized that while a student's absence might be considered excused (lawful), the absences are not expunged from the student's academic record. Occurrences constituting excused absences (with required, written absence note) include:

- Mental, physical, or other urgent reasons
- Appointments for professional health care or therapy rendered by a licensed practitioner
- Family emergency
- Death of a family member
- Authorized school activities
- Absence with prior "anticipated absence" approval.

*(from PA Department of Education. (2024). Compulsory school attendance, unlawful absences, and school attendance improvement conferences. Retrieved from <https://www.education.pa.gov/Policy-Funding/BECS/Purdons/Pages/CompulsorySchoolAttendance.aspx>)*

### MULTIDAY ABSENCES:

A student absent for three or more consecutive days because of illness is required to present a note from a physician upon return to school stating the reason for the absence. The family is also required to communicate with the school nurse regarding the student's absence.

A student suspected of having a communicable disease must remain out of school for the indicated time and must present a physician's note. This includes, but is not limited to, Covid-19, mononucleosis, contagious conjunctivitis, pediculosis (lice) and staph or strep infections.

Please see pg. 9 and 10 regarding sporadic and long-term illness policies in regard to academics and course credit.

### ABSENCE FOR NON-SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES/VACATION:

Villa Maria Academy acknowledges that many of our student's participate in special activities outside of the school day such as, but not limited to tournaments and competitions. Students who will be participating must use the "Anticipated Absence" form (pg. 61) which will require that all current academic teachers sign-off on academic good standing. Once this has been completed in full, it must be returned to the Dean of Students **FIVE DAYS PRIOR** to the absence.

Should a special occasion cause the family to schedule a vacation during regular class days, the "Anticipated Absence Form" (pg.61), which will require that all current academic teachers sign-off on academic good standing. Once this has been completed in full, it must be returned to the Dean of Students **FIVE DAYS PRIOR** to the absence.

Homework and other assignments must be completed and returned by the date indicated by the teachers. Any necessary tutoring will be the family's responsibility; it is not the teacher's responsibility to re-teach lessons or tutor a student who has missed classes due to a vacation or participation in non-school sponsored activities.

**PARENT TRAVEL:** If a **parent plans to be out-of-town**, the school asks that the Main Office be notified and specific information regarding emergency contact be given.

### EARLY DISMISSALS:

Students who request an early dismissal must bring a handwritten note, with a physical signature to the Main Office before 7:50 a.m. Should the note require clarification, the Dean of Students' office will then contact the parent before granting the same-day request. In the event that the parent cannot be reached, the request may be denied. In supporting campus safety, a student who has been granted permission to leave campus must present her dismissal slip to the Main Office and sign-out before leaving campus. A student who fails to sign out will incur disciplinary consequences.

Should a student *return to campus* after an appointment, she must report to the Main Office to sign-in before reporting to her classes.

### LATE ARRIVAL POLICY

**Each school day a warning bell is rung at 7:55 a.m.; students who are not physically in their first block classroom when the second bell is rung at 7:58 a.m. are late.** This would also include failing to go to room 316 for first block RFT where morning attendance will be taken. Those students, including all students who have arrived on late buses, are to report to the Main Office. Failure to do so will result in a disciplinary warning. Only a late school bus, a medical appointment or condition documented by a medical note, a documented DMV appointment (one per year), a court order, or a funeral will be considered as justification for *excused* lateness.

Students will be permitted a total of **six unexcused late arrivals** to school for **the entire school year** (that is, **arrival at ANY time after 7:58 a.m.**).

Students who accumulate **more than six unexcused late arrivals** during the school year will warrant the following disciplinary action:

- Seventh lateness: results in a 1-hour morning detention and meeting with the Dean. It may be necessary to place the student on disciplinary probation (see pg.28)
- Subsequent late arrivals will result in a Saturday detention, extension of disciplinary probation, and loss of parking permit.

Excessive lateness will result in a meeting with the administration.

*Attendance will be recorded on student transcripts.*

### EXEMPLARY ATTENDANCE:

At the end of each year, Exemplary Attendance Certificates are awarded to students who have not had an absence, late arrival, or early dismissal.

**ABSENCE BECAUSE OF SUSPENSION:** A student suspended from classes may check *Schoology* for assignments and/or request that class work be sent to her. She may also send work to her teachers. The handling of work including a timeline for acceptable makeup and credit will be facilitated by the Dean of Students in conjunction with the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

**NOTE: RFT and FLEX periods are instructional time and therefore mandatory attendance is required. Students who exhibit a period of lateness, or early dismissals in this time may face disciplinary consequences.**

### PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES:

**No student may participate in any school-related activity, practice, or meeting including activities sponsored by other schools, unless she has reported to school by the end of the first block. Students are responsible for being aware of the bell and the end of the first block.**

If a student *must* leave school for a medical appointment after first block, she must first come to school, follow the early dismissal procedure, and then return to school immediately following her appointment with a medical note; however, this is strongly discouraged. Should a student arrive to school later than first block and seek an early dismissal that day, she will not be able to participate in her activity after school. Activities involved include – but are not limited to – dances, field trips, athletic competitions, musical performances, and honors convocations, club meetings and practices. Likewise, students who are receiving academic accommodations due to long-term illness may be temporarily restricted from participation in activities.



## ASSEMBLIES

In addition to mandatory attendance at school liturgies, all students are required to attend assemblies scheduled during regular school hours unless otherwise exempted. **NOTE:** Any student who misses more than two liturgies must meet with the Head of School; her parent must also attend this meeting.

Students are to sit in designated sections in order that attendance may be checked. Failure to report to an assembly in a timely fashion will be considered as unexcused lateness or cutting class.

## BOOKS

Some textbooks are the property of the school and others are provided for the student's use by tax money. All students are to place their names in each book.

All textbooks are to be returned the day of the final examination. Books which are lost or damaged must be paid for by the student. Students and parents will not have access to grade reports and transcripts until all books and other school property are returned.

School bags are to be used in transporting books. Because the school is acutely aware that book bags are very heavy, the following provisions have been made:

- Textbooks are provided in common spaces and in most classrooms for in-class use.
- Musical instruments and athletic equipment must be locked in lockers or in the music closet. These items may not be carried around during the school day.

**NOTE: Book bags are never to be in hallways or doorways or in the aisles of classrooms.**

**Also, no glass bottles may be carried in book bags.**

**When reporting to the auditorium, students should leave book bags in designated areas.**

## BUSES

Many school districts provide transportation to Villa Maria Academy. All Villa Maria Academy students are expected to be respectful to the driver and to fellow passengers and to adhere to the directives of the bus driver and the sponsoring district. Students whose behavior is

deemed inappropriate and/or dangerous may lose their bus privileges. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. **NOTE:** *Due to insurance regulations, no student may ride the bus of another school district.*

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE NUMBER

Should a family have a change of address, parent email address, or telephone number at any time during the school year, the parent (s) should notify the Student Information Systems Administrator at extension 1019.

## COLLEGE VISITS

Students are encouraged to visit colleges during the summer following their sophomore and junior year and are advised to review the school calendar and plan visits that coincide with school holidays or long weekends. However, it is sometimes necessary to visit colleges on days when school is in session. In this case, the procedure is as follows:

1. The student will be responsible for notifying her teachers so that they are aware of the intended absence and the student can obtain necessary assignments.
2. Upon her return to VMA, the student must submit a proof of attendance form from the admissions office of the college to the registrar. The school absence will then be recorded as "excused".
3. During senior year, the students are allotted three (3) days for college visits. Generally, seniors who miss school more than three days for college visits are not eligible for perfect attendance.
4. Juniors are permitted three (3) college visit days during the year; this day will be considered "excused" as long as the required college documentation is submitted.

## COMMUNICATION

While there is a parent-teacher conference day scheduled in November, parents may request a meeting with a teacher, or counselor at any time. Teachers should respond to such requests within 24 hours on business days or the next school day following a weekend or break. Parents and students are urged to address questions and concerns to the appropriate teacher first. If necessary,

depending on the nature of the concern, contact can then be made with the department head, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Dean of Students, or Athletic Director. If the parent is not satisfied that the issue has been resolved satisfactorily, the parent should then request a meeting with the Head of School.

**Villa Maria Academy does not respond to anonymous communication.**

## DISCIPLINE CODE

### PHILOSOPHY

Villa Maria Academy aims to provide a discipline system that is based on personal integrity and respect. The discipline code is student-centered progressive policy that focuses on the social, emotional and intellectual growth of the student. Since discipline cuts across all aspects of student life and is integral to the academic environment within the school, each person in the school community is essential to its maintenance and formation.

Thus, while it is the school's goal that a student assumes responsibility for her actions and be aware of the consequences of such actions, it is also the duty of the administration, faculty and staff to foster an atmosphere which is conducive to this aim. Violations of school rules, therefore, are reported to the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students, in conjunction with the Student Advisory Board, assumes responsibility for leading the school community to the fulfillment of this aim by directing and implementing policies and procedures that result in the betterment of the student and VMA community.

The discipline code is designed to encourage students' adherence to school rules and to teach that violations of these rules have consequences appropriate to the nature of this misbehavior. The code is clearly communicated to each student and parent in the handbook. In addition, Villa Maria Academy provides a channel, the Dean of Students, through whom a student may respectfully question a reported offense. When a student's behavior has been judged to be unacceptable, punitive measures, usually in the form of detentions, are taken. However more serious events may be turned over to the Student Advisory Board for a student-centered hearing to determine if the student's infraction was a breach of personal, or academic integrity. The Student Advisory Board will act as indicators of the offense but

can only recommend a course of action to the Dean. All final consequences will be confidential.

All students will sign the **Villa Maria Integrity** code each school year that states: *"I am a young woman of integrity who aims to uphold the values of fidelity, creative hope, and love by empowering myself and others by contributing to the community."*

### DETENTION

A one-hour detention period is held each week. Detention days are advertised and held at the discretion of the Dean of Students.

Students assigned to detention generally receive a notice three days before the scheduled detention. This enables the students to arrange transportation, change work schedules, and notify coaches, etc. Consequently, NO student will be excused from detention or be permitted to postpone detention except for a very serious reason. Only the Dean of Students may grant permission to postpone detention. Students who receive such permission are generally required to serve double the originally scheduled detention time.

Any request citing a medical appointment must be supported by a note from the health care provider. **This note must be submitted to the Dean of Students before 7:50 a.m. the day following the scheduled detention.** Failure to follow this directive will be considered as cutting detention and grounds for serious disciplinary action.

Ninth grade students are required to have all detention slips signed by a parent; parents of older students will usually receive notice after their daughters have been assigned to two detentions in one semester, or if detention cause is a higher offense such as behavioral or academic integrity.

All parents should feel free to contact the Dean of Students whenever they have questions or concerns about their daughter's behavior.

### DISCIPLINE ISSUES

Discipline issues usually fall into three categories:

**Level One Offense:** include, but are not restricted to:

- Uniform violation
- Late to class
- Gum violation

- Uncooperative behavior
- Failure to return required forms
- Dining hall violation
- Failure to submit required absence/late notes
- Failure to observe regulations regarding use of water bottles
- Failure to read/respond to teacher email

Any combination of three “Level One” offenses in a semester usually results in one hour of detention.

**NOTE:** A warning letter will be sent to parents after a student has accumulated seven unexcused lateness’s; a student who has been late eleven times must attend a meeting with the Head of School and her parent(s) at which time she will be placed on a behavior contract.

**Level Two Offenses:** include, but are not restricted to:

- Out of assigned area
- Safety violation, including key card violation
- Cell phone/iPad violation
- Inappropriate behavior
- Rudeness/Disrespect
- Insubordination
- Inappropriate language
- Academic Integrity: Homework
- Parking violation
- Failure to observe posted speed limits
- Learning Commons procedure violation
- Study Hall procedure violation
- Failure to follow Early Excuse procedure
- Locker policy violation

Any single “Level Two” offense generally results in one hour of detention.

**Note:** Students who display persistent disrespect and/or uncooperative attitudes toward member(s) of the school community and/or school regulations will be dealt with seriously. Such behavior may result in the student’s suspension and/or expulsion.

**Level Three Offenses:** include, but are not restricted to:

- Truancy
- Cyberbullying
- Cutting class
- Leaving campus without permission
- Fighting
- Forgery
- Lying
- Vandalism

- Harassment
- Stealing
- Inappropriate use of technology\*
- Threats
- Smoking\*\*
- Academic Integrity: Plagiarism, or test integrity\*\*\*

\* **Technology:** Inappropriate use of technology includes, but is not limited to, any video or photographic posting on *YouTube* or a similar site that has Villa Maria Academy identifiers such as a T-Shirt, uniform or text.

\*\* **Smoking:** Students may not smoke, vape, or use e-cigarettes on school property, on school buses, in school uniform, or at school-related functions such as banquets, proms, athletic competitions, field trips, retreats, etc.

\*\*\* **Integrity:** Please see pg. 37

**Note:** Because an e-cigarette or vaping device could contain either tobacco or a controlled or illegal substance, students found in possession of such items will be disciplined according to the school’s “Drug and Alcohol Policy.” See pg. 39 for more information.

Level Three Offenses are judged in light of the student’s overall discipline record. Ordinarily, the minimum consequence is a one-day internal suspension. More severe consequences, including external suspension and expulsion, may result.

## HAZING

Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the philosophy, mission, and educational goals of Villa Maria Academy and are prohibited at all times. Please refer to VMA’s Hazing Policy which appears in the Appendix of this *Student Handbook* (pg.57).

**NOTE:** The purpose of the school is to teach, model and encourage behavior based on Gospel values. Therefore, the school will not tolerate any incidents of verbal and/or physical harassment or intimidation. Incidents of harassment, intimidation and/or hazing may result in suspension or expulsion. If any state or federal law has been violated, the school will observe all mandated legal procedures.

**The Head of School reserves to herself the right to judge individual disciplinary cases which may violate the purposes for which the school is conducted, or which bring dishonor upon the school whether the offense is committed on or off campus. Such cases may terminate in suspension, extended probation, or expulsion.**

## CONDUCT GRADES

Conduct grades are reported on a quarterly basis in the following manner:

**P = Passing**

**N=Needs Improvement:** Two detentions in a quarter or failure to improve in the relevant areas of concern from the previous quarter OR first offense homework violation.

**U= Unsatisfactory:** Academic honesty violation (plagiarism or cheating) OR second homework violation OR three or more detentions in a quarter.

**F = Failing:** Second academic honesty violation (plagiarism or cheating) OR a serious offense which dishonors the school's purpose or name or results in suspension.

Students who have received an "Unsatisfactory" grade (U) in conduct will be placed on "Disciplinary Watch" for the next semester. Level three offenders, depending on the nature of the offense and/or on the student's history, may also be placed directly on Disciplinary Probation.

## DISCIPLINARY WATCH

Students whose behavior during the previous semester was unsatisfactory and in need of improvement will automatically be placed on Disciplinary Watch for the current semester. During this period, the student will meet with the Dean of Students each month to review and discuss any behavioral concerns. Should the student be assigned to detention during this "Disciplinary Watch" period, she will be required to serve two hours for every one hour of detention assigned. Students whose conduct does not reflect improvement during this period will be placed on Disciplinary Probation.

## DISCIPLINARY PROBATION

Disciplinary Probation results when either

- 1) Repeated efforts over a period of more than one semester to work with the student to improve her behavior have failed: **OR**
- 2) The student has committed a very serious infraction of a school rule or policy

Generally, Disciplinary Probation results in the student's loss of the privilege to participate in all school-related activities for a period of thirty (30) days. During this period, the student may attend practices and view events as a spectator. She may not represent the school, wear an athletic uniform, or attend school dances. Furthermore, a student on disciplinary probation will not be permitted to participate in school sponsored field trips. Any student on Disciplinary Probation as a result of inappropriate behavior at a school dance will not be permitted to attend the next dance, even if the dance is held beyond the 30-day probationary period. A mandatory meeting with the Head of School and/or Dean of Students, parent(s) and student is also required.

The probationary period may be extended up to a year for extremely serious violations and/or for students whose disciplinary history warrants more drastic consequences. In the case of extended probation, consequences will be determined on an individual basis by the Dean of Students and the Head of School.

**NOTE:** *Effective July 2007, schools are required to record any student suspension for disciplinary reasons on the Common Application Form used by over 500 colleges. Villa Maria complies with this directive.*

## DRESS CODE

### REGULATION UNIFORM

Students must wear the regulation school uniform purchased from the school's designated supplier. The uniform offers several options:

#### Winter Uniform

- Regulation plaid skirt, no shorter than approximately 3" above the knee
- Appropriately sized blue or white oxford cloth shirt, no non-Villa logos or emblems; school monogram on collar is optional. Shirt must be tucked in skirt

**NOTE:** T-shirts may *not* be worn under the school shirt

- VMA navy blue blazer—required for assemblies (names are to be placed in blazers)
- Navy blue school pull-over or V-neck monogrammed, acrylic or cotton sweater (optional)
- Navy blue opaque stockings or tights OR navy leggings
- Approved brown loafer, or saddle style shoe. No designs are permitted.
- VMA lanyard with school ID

### **Summer Uniform**

- Regulation light blue cord skirt no shorter than approximately 3” above the knee.
- Regulation navy blue knit shirt with school emblem—no substitute permitted (T-shirts may *not* be worn under the school shirt)
- Navy blue knee socks or navy VMA crew socks (tights, non-VMA crew socks, ankle-style or cropped socks are not permitted)
- Navy blue school pull-over or V-neck monogrammed, acrylic or cotton sweater (optional)
- Approved brown shoes as indicated above.
- VMA lanyard with school ID

### **Sneaker Pass**

Students who require sneakers in lieu of regulation school shoes must provide a medical note. A student with a medical note and school permission may only wear athletic sneakers. Fashion style sneakers will not be permitted. On days with special assemblies, events or presentations, any students participating must wear the regulation uniform school shoes for the event only.

### **Outerwear during School Hours**

Students are permitted to wear **BLUE** Villa Maria Academy outerwear during the school day. Non-Villa Maria outerwear may not be worn. Outerwear may not be oversized and should not cover skirt. Any color other than blue is not permitted unless it is a sanctioned Villa Spirit Friday. This will be determined by the Dean of Students.

In the colder months, other acceptable outerwear may be worn to travel between buildings. However, jackets or sweatshirts with offensive logos or logos of other school are not permitted on the VMA campus at any time.

### **Athletic Dress Code**

Because of time constrictions and the desire to keep athletes in class as long as possible, athletes are permitted to wear team uniforms on days when they are participating in away contests. However, an athlete must adhere to the uniform code of her sport.

Participants who have been given official school athletic uniforms are to wear these uniforms as intended. Only regulation uniform components are to be worn. This precludes the addition of non-VMA sweatshirts and all T-shirts. If weather or regulation demands the addition of a warm-up suit, only the school-issued team suit or the VMA navy gym sweat suit is permitted. Socks which cover the ankles are required at all times. When a team or team member does not have a school-issued uniform, the Director of Athletics and coach will convey dress guidelines.

No athlete may wear an athletic uniform to liturgies or to formal assemblies—even if the liturgy or assembly is held on the day of an away contest.

The Director of Athletics and coach will issue specific dress regulations to the team and to the faculty at the beginning of each season. Athletic uniform violations will result in the loss of privilege to wear the athletic uniform during school hours and will also be considered a uniform infraction and treated in the same fashion as school uniform violations.

### **Pep Rally Dress Code**

On days of scheduled pep rallies, in lieu of their regulation school uniforms, students are to wear class T-shirt, navy Villa gym sweatpants or gym shorts as indicated (seniors may wear jeans) and sneakers. Students may also wear socks in their class color.

### **School Sponsored Dances**

Villa Maria Academy reserves the right to define the dress code for school-sponsored dances. Students should be dressed according to the standards of Christian modesty. Dresses that are immodestly designed will not be permitted. More specific directives will be given to the students before each dance. Any question regarding compliance to this policy should be addressed to the Dean of Students *before* the dress is purchased.

Should there be an issue with the appropriateness of the dress, the student may be sent home, or asked to wear a

cover-up. All students should seek dress approval from the Dean of Students, or Director of Activities. Failure to get approval, or failure to wear a dress to the event that does not present as the way it was approved, will result in losing dress up/ dress down privileges for the remainder of the school year.

Current Villa Maria students, may not bring former students to school dances. This would include students who left of their own free will and students who were asked to leave.

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Uniforms should be cleaned, neatly pressed, and properly hemmed. Severe shaven-type haircuts are forbidden as are unnatural hair colors. Piercings beyond earrings are not allowed and visible tattoos are also prohibited.

A student who is not in proper uniform should self-report to either her first block teacher, or to the Dean of Students.

Uniform checks and key card will be conducted. Students who fail to follow the dress code will face disciplinary consequences.

Occasionally, the school may relax the standard uniform dress code. Such “casual dress” days, however, still have specific directives. It is the student’s responsibility to adhere to these “special day” codes. T-shirts with inappropriate logos, cut-off jeans or jeans with tears or holes; bare midriff, halter-type or spaghetti strap shirts; flip-flops, and/or clothing advertising other schools are never permitted.

Students participating on field trips will also be given specific dress requirements appropriate for the nature of the trip.

If for any reason, a student cannot attend school in her required uniform, she must contact the Dean of the Students.

## UNIFORM SUPPLIER

Flynn & O’Hara Uniforms  
Festival Shopping Center  
428 W. Lincoln Highway  
Exton, PA 19341  
610-594-1970

Flynn & O’Hara Uniforms  
1991 Sproul Rd.  
Lawrence Park Shopping Center  
Broomall, PA 19008  
610-259-3115

**Villa Maria Academy reserves the right to define appropriate school appearance.**

## FLEX TIME / SMART LUNCH PROCEDURES

All students are required to sign-out where they intend to spend the Flex and/or Smart Lunch periods. Even if the Flex Period is prescheduled for the student, the student should indicate where she will be during those times. If her plans change during the day, the student needs to change her sign-out before the start of the flex period. The options are as follows:

- A specific classroom with a teacher
- The Learning Commons
- A computer lab
- The study hall, room 316
- The Holloway Dining Hall/Hewes Terrace
- Music/Art instruction
- Senior Lounge
- Weight room/dance studio, when available
- The Connelly Commons
- Designated outdoor space

## REGULATIONS FOR STUDENT DRIVERS

Seniors and juniors who drive to school must register their cars and park in the spaces assigned to them.

**Sophomores may not drive to school or apply for a parking permit.** The school does not expect her students to park their cars in nearby residential or business areas in order to maintain positive relations with the neighborhood and Malvern community. Because violating this expectation jeopardizes the goodwill of the school and risks adversarial relations with the neighbors, the student will have to distance herself from Villa Maria Academy if she continues with that behavior.

Preference for parking spaces will be given to seniors with valid driver’s licenses. Remaining spaces will be made

available to licensed juniors on a “first come, first served” basis.

Parking registration will be held during May for the following school year. The parking permit fee is \$100 per year; the charge for the replacement of a lost tag is \$10.

- A student must park only in her assigned space.
- All student cars are required to display a VMA parking permit. This permit should be hung from the rearview mirror.
- All cars must be locked while on campus.
- All students are to observe the 5-m.p.h. speed limit on school property.
- Students are reminded that passing a school bus while its red lights are flashing is an offense punishable by law.
- Drivers are to observe the “one-way” arrows indicated in the parking lots. Entrance and exit lanes are one-way.
- U turns are not permitted in the school parking lots.
- No one may pass another car in the school zone. Cars should wait patiently while passengers are being dropped off.
- **No student is permitted to go to her car during the school day. Permission to do so will be granted only in cases of emergency and such permission must be obtained from the Dean of Students or Main Office.**
- For safety and traffic reasons, cars may not be moved during the school day nor may students move to another space after school until 3:15 p.m.
- Any damage which occurs to cars on VMA property must be reported in a timely fashion to the Dean of Students.
- Any student who violates the attendance policies on pg.23 will forfeit their privilege to park on campus (fee will not be refunded).

**Students who violate any of the above regulations will be assigned to detention and/or lose their driving or/and parking privileges.**

**NOTE:** Students who use Uber or similar transportation services to and from campus do so at their own risk. The school assumes no responsibility for their safety.

## GUM AND SNACKS

Students may not chew gum during regular school hours—i.e., 7:55 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This includes lunch periods. Snacks are also limited throughout the duration of the day. Students may consume a small snack with teacher approval at the start of class. Other food items must be saved for lunch. Only water is allowed in classrooms.

## HOMEWORK

Villa Maria Academy is a college preparatory school. Courses aim to provide students with the necessary knowledge and the study skills needed for success in college. Students should realize that “homework” is not just written work. Often assignments require additional reading, research and/or study over a period of time; the student should learn to budget her time in order that assignments be completed in a satisfactory and timely fashion.

**Unless explicitly stated by her instructor, the students should always assume that homework is to be completed individually. When students are able to collaborate, it will be specified by the teacher. Collaboration without approval will be considered a violation of Academic Integrity.**

## ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Students may use personal listening devices on the buses. During the school day, personal headsets may be used on campus **for academic purposes only** and are restricted to classes where the teacher has allowed their use and in the Study Hall, Learning Commons and Connelly Commons.

All students should carry their iPads to school daily. Student iPads should be fully charged each day and students may wish to carry an extra USB charging cable to school should the iPad lose battery due to extended use. There are charging areas in the Learning Commons and in study hall.

The use of cameras, including video cameras, is prohibited during the school day unless permission has been given by an instructor or administrator.

**In addition, electronic texting, chatting and/or instant messaging, and game playing are not permitted during school hours, this also includes chatting/texting on any type of watch.** If at any time, a staff member asks a student to put away her electronic device, she is required to do so or she forfeits the privilege of its use at VMA.

**NOTE: A student who participates in cyberbullying and /or who photographs, records, and/or videotapes a teacher, staff member, or another student and posts the material on any electronic media without explicit authorization to do so is subject to immediate expulsion from Villa Maria Academy.**

Furthermore, no student shall use technology or school resources to create or engage in fake accounts on the Internet or on campus. Any pseudo accounts made for another student or faculty/staff member or made without the knowledge of the person will hold the creator accountable for consequences. This will include disciplinary action as well as a loss of privileges on the school network as deemed by the administration. This applies to whether the use occurs on or off campus using Villa Maria or personally owned devices. It is also prohibited to retain a photo of a faculty/staff member to be used without his/her knowledge on any social media or device settings.

It is expected that all Villa Maria Academy students behave appropriately and within the parameters of the Integrity Agreement they sign.

## TELEPHONES

School telephones may not be used for any calls other than official business. Students will not be summoned to answer telephone calls, nor will telephone messages be delivered to students except in case of emergency. Because cell phones can be distracting and disruptive to the learning environment, *students are not permitted to use personal cellular telephones on campus during the school day; this includes text messaging, taking pictures and/or checking voice mail. The aforementioned is prohibited on the iPad as well.* **All cell phones must be silenced from 7:50 a.m. until after announcements, prayers and dismissal.** In the case of an emergency, students should seek permission to use the phone in the Main Office or in the Dean of Students' office.

**Office Telephone: 610-644-2551**  
**Fax Number: 610-644-2866**

## SCHOOL SONG

Villa Maria, we love you.  
We'll be true to you  
For we're proud of all you mean,  
Your colors, white and blue.  
In life's rain and sunshine gold  
May God keep us true  
To the dearest spot on earth,  
Villa Maria, you!

Villa Maria, we love you.  
We will stand by you.  
Should your skies be misty gray,  
Our love will make them blue.  
Heart and hand are yours fore'er,  
Our Alma Mater true,  
Pledge of holy gratitude,  
Villa Maria, you

## STUDENT SERVICES

### DINING HALL

Luncheon service is available to all students in the school dining hall. All students must observe the norms of courtesy and respect and the regulations of the dining hall.

1. Students "MyKidsSpending" accounts must be in good standing to buy lunch in the dining hall. If a student has accrued a negative balance of more than \$5.00, they **WILL NOT** be permitted to buy lunch. Any student with a balance at the end of the semesters will not receive a report card, or graduation materials.

2. Students may not take food or drinks outside the dining hall, or areas designated for eating, nor may students carry glass water or juice bottles and/or coffee cups around the school building during the school day. **Note:** *For this purpose, the school day is defined as the time between 7:50 a.m. and the dismissal announcement after final prayers.*

3. Also, students are NOT to leave book bags in the dining hall while they are participating in after-school activities.

4. No more than six to eight chairs are to be placed around a dining hall table, Students are expected to sit in their designated class sections. **EXCEPTION:** Freshmen will be assigned tables by their guidance counselors.



5. Students are *not permitted* to have food delivered to the dining hall unless they have received permission to do so from the Director of Food Services.

6. Books, laptops and/or iPads may not be used in the dining hall until all students at the table have finished eating.

7. The warning bell is rung five minutes before the end of the period. If students have not already done so, they should return trays, dispose of trash and clean tables at this time. Every student at the table is responsible for the conditions of the table at the end of the period.

*Any request for an exception to the above regulations must be cleared by the Director of Food Services.*

## CHAPEL

The chapel is located in the Theresa Maxis Student Union. Students are encouraged to make frequent visits.

## COUNSELING SERVICES

The goal of the counseling Department is to support the academic, social, emotional and Christian growth of each VMA student. The department is solution focused and student centered. Each student is assigned to a School Counselor who will remain in place for all four years of high school. An additional college counselor is assigned and will work with each student during their junior and senior years.

A seminar style curriculum is instructed by the counseling department during all four high school years and is designed to prepare the students for future success. VMA students use the college search system called SCOIR, a comprehensive tool for students and families, throughout the curriculum. This resource supports student engagement and achievement while integrating individual learning plans with course, college and career information.

Mental health resources are available upon request by contacting a student's school counselor directly. Mental health concerns, or long-term illness that is mental health related should be communicated to the school counselor directly. The school counselor will disseminate appropriate information to the student's academic team and help in constructing a school return plan.

**\*If you are using an outside college consulting firm, your college counselor, and the school must be made aware.**

## TRANSCRIPTS

Graduates requesting transcripts should consult the Counseling webpage for directives. There is a fee of \$5.00 per transcript.

## Safe2Say

In the 2019-2020 school year, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, in conjunction with the attorney general, mandated that all PA schools must use the **Safe2Say** application. The application is designed for students to anonymously report concerns about another student's wellbeing. The submissions are triaged in a tiered system based on severity to the school and handled confidentially by a Safe2Say taskforce. All Safe2Say reports will result in a phone call to the students home no matter the level of severity. Submissions can be made in the application, or by going to [www.Safe2Saypa.org](http://www.Safe2Saypa.org)

## NURSES OFFICE

Students who are ill must request a Nurse's Pass from a classroom teacher at the *beginning* of her class or from the lunch moderator at the *beginning* of lunch period. The student must then report directly to the Nurse's Office. No student may be in the Nurse's Office at any time without first obtaining a pass. If the nurse judges that the student's condition indicates that she should be dismissed from school, the nurse will contact her parent or the designated emergency contact.

**No student may call or text her parent to request she go home. She must report to the Nurse's Office and follow the appropriate procedure. Failure to do so will be reported by the Nurse to the Dean of Students and can incur disciplinary consequences.**

## HEALTH SERVICES

Villa Maria Academy Health Services consists of a team of health professionals including:

- A certified school nurse and a Great Valley School District nurse (Every Tuesday)
- A physician consultant
- A certified athletic trainer

- A sports physician consultant

The **Nurse's Office** is staffed full time to provide first aid and to support students who become ill or injured during the school day or who need health maintenance of a chronic or acute condition. If further treatment is required or a student needs to go home, parents will be contacted. In the event of an emergency, 911 will be called and the student will be transported via ambulance to the hospital.

The **Athletic Trainer's Office** is staffed by a Certified Athletic Trainer who provides services to VMA's athletes. She is trained in various domains which include the prevention of sports-related injuries and illness; recognition, evaluation and immediate care of injuries; and referral of illnesses; rehabilitation and reconditioning of injuries; and healthcare administration.

### Student Care

A parent should contact the school nurse if his/her daughter has any health concerns including current or past medical diagnosis, allergies or pertinent health history. Likewise, the school nurse should be informed if the student takes medication daily.

The ImPACT Test has been administered to all incoming 9th grade students. This test provides a baseline report which can be used as a comparison should a student be suspected of having suffered a concussion.

**Long Term Illness: If a student will be absent from school due to illness/surgery or injury for an extended period of time, it is very important to contact the school nurse as soon as possible.** The school may require physician's orders clearing the student's return to school as well as any information on provisions or special needs prior to the student's return to school. Please refer to the Long-Term Absence and Concussion Policy for further information.

### Health Care Regulations

The school's health policies and guidelines are developed in accordance with school laws and regulations of the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

#### **Illness: Students should stay home when sick.**

A student may not attend school with a 100.0 fever and **must be fever-free** for 24 hours before returning to school. Vomiting/Diarrhea/Nausea: stay home until no vomiting/diarrhea for 24 hours. **In the case of a**

**contagious illness, such as "pink eye," mononucleosis, chickenpox, strep throat, please notify the school and School Nurse. The student may return to school after the start of treatment as per physician orders.**

*Medication in School:* The school nurse is authorized by the district's physician to administer acetaminophen, ibuprofen, TUMS, and (Benadryl-emergency only). Students are NOT ALLOWED to carry or possess unauthorized medications in school, including over the counter items. Written physician's instructions, as well as written parental permission to administer the medication, must accompany all medication (see "Medication Administration Form", pg.62). Medication must be delivered in the original pharmacy container labeled with the student's name, name of medication, dose and time to be taken. Such medication will be dispensed through health office personnel as prescribed. **NOTE: students to carry and self-administer asthmatic inhalers and epi-pens. Please provide the Self-Carry Medication form to the School Nurse before the start of every school year.**

Students suffering from temporary disability due to surgery or an injury and requiring transportation between buildings should report to the Main Office.

**Immunizations:** Pennsylvania state law mandates that students receive and provide documentation of required immunizations prior to entrance to school. Students who do not receive the required immunizations, will not be allowed to attend school. Please consult the school website for the list of required immunizations. **NO EXEMPTIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

**Mandated Screening:** According to Pennsylvania state law, each student will have her height, weight, hearing (11<sup>th</sup> grade only) and vision checked annually by the school nurse. A report will be sent home if any of these examinations indicates potential problems.

**Physical and Dental Exams:** Pennsylvania Health Law requires the following physical and dental exams **for entry into school:**

**Physical Exams:** Physical exams are required for all 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> graders as well as for all transfer students. This report, including an updated list of immunizations, must be submitted by August 1 of the upcoming school year, or else admission will be denied. **The PIAA Sports Physical form cannot be submitted for the School Physical Form.**

- Health records for all 9<sup>th</sup> grade students or for transfer students will be obtained from the previous school, if the school was located in PA. Parents will be notified if the health record is not complete.
- **Dental Exams:** Dental exams are required for all students who transfer from outside of Pennsylvania.

**Note:** The physical and dental exams must be completed and dated within one year from the start of the school year and are to be submitted by August 15, 2024. Forms can be downloaded from the school website and can be found under *Health Services*.

### Student Athletes:

A student who intends to participate in athletics must present the required PIAA physician's and parent's authorization forms before she will be allowed to try out for any team in the school's athletic program. Forms can be found on Family ID. **NOTE: The PIAA sports physical is only valid if completed after June 1<sup>st</sup> prior to the start of the school year. The required PA school physical cannot be substituted for the PIAA Sports Physical.** For further information and forms, contact the school's website or Athletic Trainer.

**Long Term Illness:** If a student will be absent from school due to illness or injury for an extended period of time, it is very important to contact the school nurse as soon as possible. The school may require physician's orders clearing the student's return to school as well as any information on provisions or special needs prior to the student's return to school. Please refer to the Long-Term Absence Policy (pg. 9-10), for further information.

## HURRICANE HUDDLE

Villa Maria Academy's Advisory program, Hurricane Huddle, is designed to foster skills to cultivate a safe and positive school climate, develop healthy relationships with peers and faculty, and create a nurturing environment. Hurricane Huddle is a 45-minute period that will run no more than one to two times per week. Our foundational curriculum is designed to support the student's growth and development, through evidence-based methods, with the intention of maximizing the goal that every Villa graduate is confident and ready to navigate the complexities of college and career.

The skills addressed and strengthened during Hurricane Huddle include critical thinking, emotion management, conflict resolution, decision making, and teamwork. It is designed in a manner so that each Huddle is composed of one consistent adult and a small group of same-grade students. Students will learn from their advisor, as well as from their peers. Research shows that students learn best when they feel safe and valued. As always, it is Villa Maria Academy's goal to provide strong academic rigor, a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and a safe, secure learning environment. The student's participation in this program will be noted in the school profile but will not be reflected on her transcript

## LIBRARY and LEARNING COMMONS

The mission of Library Media Services is to partner with faculty and administration to provide students with content and information services that support and enhance the VMA curriculum and help students develop information literacy skills necessary for college level research and adulthood. Within the flexible Learning Commons space, exposure to a professional librarian and different levels and formats of content helps students to ask questions, think critically about the "answers", draw conclusions, and confidently make informed decisions to apply and share with the community.

The library collection housed within the Learning Common includes a variety of print and electronic resources. Electronic resources are available to students while on-campus and remotely. All ninth-grade students receive an orientation to the library and instruction in the use of VMA library resources. Throughout the school year students of all grade-levels have research-based projects that require the use of the library and its resources, including support from the librarian.

The Learning Commons is a flexible, student-focused space that fosters collegiality and collaboration. There are laptops, printers, whiteboards, and a copier/scanner designated for student-use. The Learning Commons also has storage accommodations for in-progress projects, as well as supplies to share.

### Learning Commons Regulations:

1. The Learning Commons is located in Room 408 of Regina Mundi and is open Monday through Thursday from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on Friday from 7:45 a.m. to dismissal.

2. Students using the Learning Commons computers and printers must adhere to the Computer Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy.
3. Passes are not required for RFT; however, access may be restricted if demand and/or occupancy limit is exceeded. EXCEPTION: Generally, freshmen must have a pass from one of their academic subject area teachers or the Librarian to use the Learning Commons during RFT.
4. Students should work respectfully in the Learning Commons and not interrupt the work of others.
5. Books are circulated for a two-week period and can be renewed if not reserved by another student. Reference books do not circulate.
6. Food and/or beverages (other than water bottles) are not permitted in the Learning Commons.
7. Sign in to the Study Room with the RFT QR code.

## **LOCKERS**

All students may request a locker from the coordinator for the storage of books and equipment; a student may not change her locker without permission. It is the student's responsibility to see that her locker is kept locked; only school-issued locks may be used. Procedure for requests will be communicated to students at the start of each semester.

Students should not share their locker combinations nor should any other student open or otherwise access another student's locker. The school is not responsible for money or other valuables left in lockers.

Students are reminded that lockers are the property of the school and should be aware that school authorities may open lockers if it is deemed necessary to do so.

Students may access their lockers before and after school. Students may also use their lockers between classes but should take care to get to class on time.

Lockers must be kept clean and in order. Edible material must be removed from lockers at the end of each day.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

The school cannot assume responsibility for the student's personal property: all students are responsible for their own belongings and should take proper care of their possessions.

Names should be written in ALL items brought to school. Inquiries regarding lost blazers should be directed to the Dean of Students.

The school is not liable for any theft which occurs on its property.

Students who have lost items or clothing should check all the Lost and found locations which are located in the Connelly Commons, locker room, room 2007, 402 and 207. Found items will be displayed outside of the Main Office quarterly. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

## **VMA's WEB SITE**

The Villa Maria Academy website ([www.vmahs.org](http://www.vmahs.org)) is a resource for all prospective and current students, faculty and alumnae. It contains information about the school in general, including the curriculum and school traditions, calendar information on events and essential school resources. Snow closing and news announcements are posted here as well as other school social media outlets. Access to all portals for curriculum, email, school forms and curriculum portals are available through links on the school website.

The school curriculum management system, Schoology, is accessible through the school website or by visiting [vmahs.schoology.com](http://vmahs.schoology.com). All students and faculty have password protected access to curriculum and daily resources centered on the students' activities. Academic assignments and notices are posted by teachers, and students may use this portal to submit work and access class materials. Parents may also wish to access the academic information of their daughter's coursework and parent access codes are available through the technology office.

All parents will receive codes on the first day of the school year to create a parent account should they choose to have one. All grades are still posted on the PowerSchool portal.

All-important school messages are posted on the school website and are communicated through our School Messenger system. Parents and guardians are occasionally sent messages about key events and updates through this service. During weather-related events, this message system is activated to alert our families of closings and delays. Most messages are delivered via email and text, but important messages will also be communicated by a phone call to families.

For further information, consult the VMA website or the school technology department.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Villa Maria Academy is a Catholic Christian School which aims to teach the Gospel values, particularly stressing respect for others. It is, then, of utmost concern that the VMA student possesses the highest level of honor, integrity and honesty in her everyday actions and behaviors.

Acknowledging that learning is a process, the entire Villa Maria Academy – administration, faculty, parents and students – must value the process of learning. Any breach of academic integrity thwarts this educational process, compromises the bond of respect which must exist among the members of this school community, and violates the Gospel values on which the school rests.

Realizing that academic dishonesty is not always intentional, the school accepts its responsibility to educate her students regarding the standards of academic integrity. During their first academic quarter at VMA, all freshmen participate in multi-discipline, seminar-style classes in character education and receive practical technology instruction which aims to promote academic integrity. During the fall, incoming freshmen also receive instruction regarding the proper method of integrating the words, ideas, and opinions of another into their own written and electronic work and are taught the correct MLA format for doing so.

**PLAGIARISM** is a form of academic dishonesty. It is defined as the unacknowledged use of another's words, ideas, and/or opinions. Care must be given to credit the work of another; this is usually done by parenthetical reference to the source. All students are required to purchase Diana Hacker's *A Pocket Style Manual* which contains detailed information about the proper methods for avoiding plagiarism. This reference book is also available in the school library. Beginning at the second semester of their freshman year, all students are required to document all words, paraphrases, and private domain ideas, opinions, and visuals, whether the original source appeared in print, oral or electronic form.

***Students are warned that plagiarism takes many forms:***

1. Using another's exact words (with or without quotation marks) without following the material with the appropriate reference to the source.
2. Paraphrasing or summarizing another's work without the appropriate reference to the source.
3. Expressing opinions of another without the appropriate reference to the source.
4. Borrowing the structure of the work of another. Special caution is to be taken here, for the inexperienced student sometimes believes that substituting synonyms for the original words makes the work her own. This is not the case.
5. Relying on paraphrase or citation generators.
6. The use of AI-assisted software tools such as CHAT GPT to generate work and the submission of that work as original. Please refer to pg. 47.

**Similarity to the original and/or access to the source are the usual evidence of plagiarism.**

**Any form of lying, cheating or stealing, including plagiarism; submission of another's work as one's own; collaboration on homework assignments without permission; discussion of the content of tests and/or quizzes; violation of testing procedures, including looking at another's paper and/or using or accessing forbidden notes or electronic devices; use of an electronic translator without instructor's permission; reusing or modifying a previously submitted paper (e.g. from another course) for present assignment without obtaining prior approval from the teachers involved is considered a very grave breach of the bond existing among the members of this school community and will meet with disciplinary consequences.**

**NOTE: Using any type of answer key found on the Internet for homework or graded assignments without a teacher's explicit permission or knowledge is considered to be extremely dishonest behavior.**

## ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

*Acknowledging the bond we have with ourselves and our teachers, we, the students of VMA, guided by Gospel values, will:*

- Commit to the process of learning and strive to fulfill our personal academic potential while refraining from creating a stressful atmosphere.
- Acknowledge the importance of academic integrity and put that knowledge into practice, including following MLA guidelines for all papers and projects.
- Respect the efforts of our peers and teachers to adhere to the standards of academic integrity.
- **Accept the following as academically dishonest: plagiarism; submission of another's work as one's own; collaboration on homework assignments without permission; discussion of content of tests; violation of testing procedures, including looking at another's paper and/or using or accessing forbidden notes or electronic devices; use of an electronic translator without instructor's permission; reusing or modifying a previously submitted paper (e.g. from another course) for present assignment without obtaining prior approval from the teachers involved.**
- Accept the responsibility to plan for academic deadlines and to communicate any problem in meeting obligations to the teacher in a timely fashion before the start of the school day.
- Access Schoology to know and follow individual teacher's guidelines regarding homework assignments and missed class work.
- Ask questions and seek help with any academic issue in a responsible and appropriate fashion.
- Understand the importance of striving for balance between academic responsibilities and extracurricular activities.
- Sign an Honor Statement at the beginning of the school year and understand that my signature, whether it appears on a test, quiz, assignment, note, or form, is a reinforcement of that statement of honor.

## CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATION OF THE ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

### 1. Copying / collaboration on homework assignments without teacher permission:

#### *1<sup>st</sup> Offense:*

- Detention: One Hour for both Giver and Taker
- Academic: Consequence determined by the teacher in conjunction with the Dean of Students.
- Parent notification: 9<sup>th</sup> grade
- "Needs Improvement" (N) conduct grade

#### *2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:*

- Detention: 2 hours for both Giver and Taker
- Academic: Consequence determined by the teacher in conjunction with the Dean of Students.
- Parent notification: All grades
- "Unsatisfactory" (U) conduct grade

### 2. Academically dishonest behavior including, but not limited to, plagiarism; copying/cheating on a test; using forbidden devices or notes, or answers, including those found on the Internet; and discussion of the content of a test:

#### *1<sup>st</sup> Offense:*

- Detention: Saturday detention
- Academic: Consequence determined by the teacher in conjunction with the Dean of Students.
- Parent notification: All grades
- "Unsatisfactory" (U) conduct grade

#### *2<sup>nd</sup> Offense:*

- Suspension: 2-day suspension
- Academic: Failing grade
- Notification: Parent meeting with Dean of Students
- "Failing" (F) conduct grade

In addition, after the second offense, the student will be placed on disciplinary probation and receive a written warning letter, indicating that a third violation will result in more severe consequences including the possibility of expulsion from Villa Maria Academy.

## ALCOHOL/DRUG POLICY

The school's alcohol/drug policy is designed to help the individual student to deal with her problem and/or addiction. However, because the school must also consider the welfare and safety of the entire student body, the school reserves the right to dismiss any student whose conduct brings danger to the student body or dishonor to the school's name.

1. Using, distributing, possessing, consuming, or purchasing any illegal substance-including e-cigarettes and vaping-- on school property, at school-related functions, or on school-sponsored trips is strictly prohibited. Paraphernalia associated with such use is also forbidden. **Furthermore, VMA students involved in alcohol/drug incidents which have brought dishonor to the school's name expect to be disciplined by the school.**

2. Any student involved in an illegal substance activity as described above will be subject to the following consequences:

A. *First Offense:* The student will be suspended and placed on disciplinary probation. The consequences of disciplinary probation are outlined elsewhere in this handbook.

**Exception:** If her overall disciplinary history indicates more drastic consequences, the student may be placed on extended probation or expelled immediately.

B. Parent(s) will be notified immediately and must meet with the Head of School and Dean of Students before the student will be readmitted to classes.

C. The student may also be required to meet with a substance abuse counselor; an in-patient or out-patient rehabilitative program may also be mandated.

D. The proper legal authorities will be notified as required by law.

E. **Exception: A student found trafficking in any illegal substance will be liable for immediate expulsion.**

3. Any student involved in a **second alcohol/drug offense** will be liable for dismissal from Villa Maria Academy.

## CAMPUS SAFETY

Safety is a primary concern of the school. Ordinarily, students should not be on campus before 7:00 a.m. or after 4:30 p.m. unless they are under the supervision of coaches or moderators.

By 6:00 p.m., all students must be off campus unless participating in a supervised activity or sport. **The school assumes no responsibility for supervision of students outside these hours.**

**Student Identification /Key cards**, which also serve as keycards to access school buildings, are distributed to students on the first full day of the academic year and are deactivated at the end of the academic year. These student ID/keycards, needed for entrance into campus buildings, are operational Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

It is the responsibility of the student to wear her ID/keycard with her uniform. No stickers are to be placed on ID photo. Loss of an ID/keycard should be reported to the Main Office, Dean of Students, or Director of Activities. There is a \$10.00 charge to replace the card.

**Weapons:** According to Pennsylvania law, anyone who bring a weapon into a school building or onto the school grounds commits a misdemeanor of the first degree and can face up to five years in prison. Consequently, Villa Maria Academy prohibits any type of firearm, knife, or cutting tool/instrument which is capable of inflicting serious injury in the school buildings, on the school grounds and on school buses/vans.

## COMPUTER USE

Computer technology offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. Information gathered or distributed on VMA computers should reflect the values of the school. *See the Appendix for the Acceptable Use Computer Policy.*

## DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS

The sale of non-VMA related items on the school campus is prohibited. Also, the permission of the Director of Activities must be received before the posting of flyers, invitations, announcements and/or advertisements.

## EMERGENCY CLOSING

Villa Maria Academy uses *School Messenger*, a message alert system, to notify the school community in the event of a school closing, delay or other emergency. All parents will be notified of an emergency through their home phones and any other phone or email address given to the school at the start of the school year. Occasionally, the system will be used for informational announcements. This alert system will be tested each fall to ensure that the communication information is accurate.

***Such information will also be posted on VMA's Website and emailed to the addresses registered with the school.***

Usually, the decision to close school is made by 5:00 a.m. Occasionally, on icy mornings, Villa Maria Academy and servicing school districts will announce a delayed opening—i.e., two hours later than the normal 7:55 a.m. start. Students should follow the directions of the school district providing their transportation. Should the student's school district close due to weather conditions, the student's absence will be considered "excused due to weather."

Parents should be sure that their daughters, especially those who drive to school, have contingency plans in the event of weather emergencies.

*Students who are passengers in student-driven cars must have permission forms filed in the Dean of Students' office in order to be dismissed early.*

Should the school need to be evacuated and students not have access to their cars, Chester County Emergency Services will arrange for the transportation of students to the school's evacuation site. In such an event, parents and school districts which supply bus services for our students will be notified that students will be dismissed from that site.

## EMERGENCY DRILLS

The school has an extensive crisis management plan in effect. Each year students receive instructions regarding procedures in the event of an emergency. Drills are held and directions regarding evacuation of buildings are

clearly posted in the front of all classrooms. Students should take care that book bags are not left in areas that would hamper evacuation or prove to be safety hazards.

## FIELD TRIP POLICY

Occasionally, the school may sponsor off-campus trips which are designed to enhance and/or to enrich the student's learning experience. Such trips are privileges, and students who fail to meet academic, behavioral, health, financial, attendance and/or dress requirements may be prohibited from participating and students must complete the "Missing Class" form. Names of students attending the trip must be approved by the administration. **NOTE:** Should the field trip take place for only part of the day, students are expected to attend their other classes.

No student will be allowed to participate in an off-campus activity without two signed forms, the official school permission slip and the VMA Field Trip Medication Form. Telephone calls will **not** be accepted in lieu of permission slips.

## FINANCIAL AID

Villa Maria offers financial aid through Marian Grants to families that demonstrate financial need, complete the necessary application, and submit the required forms by the deadline.

For the 2024-2025 school year, Villa Maria will again be using the online service of ISM's Financial Aid for School Tuition (FAST) to process financial aid applications. FAST will be open and available for applications on October 1, 2024. A hyperlink to FAST can be found at [vmahs.org](http://vmahs.org) under Admissions- Tuition and Financial Aid.

For incoming freshmen, Marian Grants will be awarded beginning December 1, 2024. Villa Maria has a limited budget for financial aid. Therefore, applicants must complete the process by November 30, 2024. Please note that a financial aid application will only be processed if the student is granted admission and the financial aid application is complete, including a 2022 IRS form 1040 loaded to the FAST site.

**Please be advised that Marian Grants are an annual award. Recipients must reapply each subsequent school year.**



For returning students, Marian Grants will be awarded beginning January 1, 2024. Villa Maria has a limited budget for financial aid. Therefore, returning-student applicants must complete the process by December 31, 2024. Please note that a financial aid application will only be processed if the student's financial aid application is complete, including a 2022 IRS form 1040 loaded to the FAST site.

**Please be advised that Marian Grants are an annual award. Recipients must reapply each subsequent school year.**

**To protect the confidentiality of all applications, please do not mail any financial aid applications or supporting documentation to Villa Maria Academy.**

Decisions regarding financial aid will be released at the end of January for incoming freshmen and late February for returning students. All applications must be complete to be considered for financial aid.

**Note:** Applications for financial aid must be renewed each year.

## FUNDRAISING PROCEDURES

Fundraising activities at Villa Maria Academy High School are held to high standards of transparency and best practices. Formal procedures have been established for all student fund raising projects. These guidelines will enable student groups to raise money while meeting compliance requirements showing good internal controls:

1. Student fundraising activities must be approved in advance by the Head of School and the Director of Activities.
2. Project proposals should be submitted in writing to the Activities Office so that a time can be scheduled to present the proposal in person to the Head of School. The proposal should name the purpose of the fundraiser, provide a timeline for the activity, list the type of fundraiser planned, and identify the target audience for donations. A form will be provided to help prepare the proposal and may only be submitted in support of an established club/activity.
3. Activities that benefit an outside charitable organization should include a statement about the charity and why it was chosen as the recipient of funds.

4. Once approved, a project code will be assigned to properly track revenues and expenses for the activity through the business office.
5. Procedures for accepting, depositing and receipting gifts will be provided to the student leadership and activity moderator to ensure that accurate records are kept.
6. An event summary report must be submitted at the end of the event, including a narrative about the activity and participants, a statement of revenue and expenses, and a list of suggestions to improve the next event.

It is critical to the success of the mission of Villa Maria Academy that all fund-raising activities are coordinated with the Advancement Office and Director of Activities to ensure that these efforts reflect favorably upon the image of VMA.

## INSURANCE

Villa Maria Academy enrolls each student and staff member in a medical accident insurance program. This insurance is intended to cover those minor accidents and/or injuries which may occur on school property or at school-sponsored events. All such accidents or injuries must be reported to the nurse as soon as possible after the accident/injury has occurred. Forms may be obtained in the Head of School's office.

## LEAVING CAMPUS

Since the safety of the students and the security of the campus are a primary concern of both the school and the parents, students who arrive on campus in the morning are required to remain on campus for the duration of the official school day unless an *early excuse request* has been received and approved.

There are, however, after-school activities which require travel, and/or late afternoon/early evening practices. Guidelines explaining when/if a student may leave campus after 2:55 p.m. and return that same day will vary for each activity and will be distributed by the appropriate coach or moderator.

**Parents who agree to allow their daughters to leave campus must assume responsibility for their daughters during these hours.**

## PHOTOGRAPHING/VIDEOING STUDENTS

Villa Maria Academy takes photos, videos, and livestreams students on campus and at events. These pictures may be used, for example, in school print and electronic publications, on Villa Maria's websites and social media accounts, in press releases, and on promotional materials like brochures, posters and ads.

In most instances the student will not be identified by name. Exceptions include press releases and online posts about a girl's accomplishments in academics, sports, music, service or other activities. Students may also be named in the weekly *Hurricane Happenings* e-newsletter, *Views of Villa* magazine, and Villa Marian alumnae e-newsletter.

## SCHOLARSHIPS

A limited number of partial merit scholarships are available each year. Generally, such awards are determined by the incoming students' scores on the VMA entrance test. Students who are awarded these scholarships are required to maintain at least a 3.5 GPA each semester and to participate in one extra-curricular school activity, as well as be in good standing

Failure to meet the above requirements may result in the loss of the scholarship.

**\*\*Good Standing Clause:** Violations in academic, disciplinary, and/or financial obligations (i.e. current tuition balance, fees, etc.) to Villa Maria Academy High School may cause a student to lose her good standing status. Holds may be placed on her account impacting scholarship and/or financial aid awards, course requests, transcripts, and/or diplomas. Participation in school related activities, such as athletics, dances, and extracurriculars may also be prohibited due to loss of good standing status.

## RFT RULES FOR SOPHOMORES, JUNIORS, & SENIORS

We are proud of the fact that at Villa Maria, we work to empower our students to be strong, responsible, and wise young women. Our RFT plan will help our Sophomore, Junior, and Senior students learn to make smart choices about how to use their free time, away from class.

1. When a Sophomore, Junior, or Senior has a RFT period, under certain parameters (see #3 below), she no longer needs to check in with Study Hall in Room 316 of Regina Mundi Hall.
2. A Sophomore or Junior with a RFT period is free to report to eight locations without checking in with anyone. The student is to go directly from class to one of these locations be there by the start of the RFT period and use the QR code to check in:

- Study Hall (check in with moderator in RM Room 316)
- A scheduled music lesson
- The Learning Commons
- Computer labs when available
- The outdoor area between the Convent, the Marian Center, and Regina Mundi
- The Adirondack chairs
- The Holloway Dining Hall/ Hewes Terrace
- The Connelly Commons

A Senior with a RFT period is free to report to nine locations without checking in with anyone. The student is to go directly from class to one of these locations, be there by the start of the RFT period and use the QR code to check in:

- Study Hall (check in with moderator in RM Room 316)
- A scheduled music lesson
- The Learning Commons
- Computer labs when available
- The Senior Lounge
- The outdoor area between the Convent, the Marian Center, and Regina Mundi
- The Adirondack chairs
- The Holloway Dining Hall/Hewes Terrace
- The Connelly Commons

3. Should a Sophomore, Junior, or Senior with an RFT period have a need to see a teacher, counselor, or other administrator, she must produce a PASS from this person and present this PASS at the start of the RFT period to the Study Hall moderator in Room 316. The student will sign out for that period with the Study Hall moderator.
4. If the student's appointment with this teacher, counselor, or other administrator does not last the entire period, it is expected that the student will report to one of the locations mentioned above (in #2) according to her year of grade and use the QR

code to check in. Failure to do so will result in the loss of this privilege and you will be assigned to Study Hall for the remainder of the semester.

5. Regarding use of the high-top tables outside Study Hall Room 316: We consider those tables an extension of Room 316 and Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors wanting to use them should be checking in with the Study Hall moderators just as if you would if you wanted to spend your RFT in Room 316. Those working at those tables are bound to the “all quiet” rule. Faculty and staff have been told they may endorse this “quiet zone” rule as needed.
6. Students are reminded that they are to be attending the lunch assigned to them (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup>) according to their class schedule. You do not have the option to simply attend a different Lunch than that you were assigned.

It is to be understood that a Sophomore, Junior, or Senior with a RFT period **MUST** be in one of the areas stated above (in #2) OR be accounted for with the Study Hall moderator (in #3-5).

Random checks for students will be made by administration on a regular basis. Any violation of this privilege by a student will result in her being assigned to Study Hall for the remainder of the semester. (Use of restroom facilities is not an excuse for not being where you should be!)

## TUITION POLICY

A condition of enrollment of Villa Maria Academy is a parental agreement to pay assigned tuition and fees as well as enrollment in the FACTS Management Tuition Program. If tuition is delinquent and an acceptable alternative arrangement has not been approved by the Head of School, students will not be permitted to attend the Fall Ball, Spring Formal or the Prom. There is the

possibility they would be denied participation in field trips. Records, report cards and/or transcripts will not be released, and re-registration will not be accepted until all financial obligations are paid in full. Although seniors may be permitted to participate in graduation activities, they will not receive diplomas nor will records be forwarded to colleges until all financial obligations have been paid in full.

Early withdrawal in the first semester (before November 1, 2024) requires payment in full of the first semester assigned tuition. Withdrawal after that date requires payment in full of the first and second semester tuition.

***All tuition payments after May 15<sup>th</sup> must be in the form of certified checks, cash or money orders.***

## VISITORS/DELIVERIES

All visitors **must** report to the Main Office upon their arrival on campus. The school has set aside certain “visiting days” for prospective students. For information regarding these dates, consult the school calendar or the Admissions Director.

No student should bring a guest to school without first receiving permission from the Head of School or Admissions Director. Parents are always welcome, but appointments should be made to meet with an administration official or faculty member. These appointments can be made by email or voice mail.

The school discourages the delivery of gifts, flowers and food to individual students, for such deliveries are disruptive to the educational process. Any item left for a student will be held in the Main Office until the end of the school day. The office cannot guarantee that such items will be distributed on the same day.

**The education of the Villa Maria Academy student is a partnership between the parent(s) and the school. If, in the opinion of the administration, that partnership is irretrievably broken, the school reserves the right to require the parent to withdraw her daughter.**

**The Head of School retains the right to amend the *Student Handbook* for just cause; parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.**

### **ACTIVITY QUEUES**

Queue A	Student Council Mission and Ministry									
Queue B	Blue and White Spirit Association		Orchestra		Chorus/Madrigals					
	VMA Ensembles		Festival Reflections		Villa Voice		Handbells			
Queue C	National Honor Society		French Honor Society		Latin Honor Society		Spanish Honor Society			
	Math Honor Society		Pennsylvania Math League		Tri-M		Quill and Scroll		Student Integrity	
Queue D	DEIB		Respect Life		Light and Sound Crew		Tech Club			
Queue E	Freshman Art Club			Sophomore Art Club		Altar Servers		Marian Masques		Mock
	Trial Music Ministry			Speak Up		Ping Pong		Book Club		

## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
FIRST FULL WEEK OF THE MONTH	Mission and Ministry-A Handbells-A/B Student Council-A	Madrigals-A/B Reflections-A/B Tech Club-A/B	Orchestra-A/B Festival-A/B Reflections-A/B	Chorus-A/B Reflections-A/B DEIB-A/B	Tri-M-A*
SECOND FULL WEEK OF THE MONTH	Handbells-A Respect Life-A Student Council-A Photography Club-A	Madrigals-A/B Reflections-A/B Ping Pong-A	Orchestra-A/B Festival-A/B NHS-A/B Reflections-A/B	Chorus-A/B Reflections-A/B Language Honor Societies and Language Clubs-A	Climbing Club-A
THIRD FULL WEEK OF THE MONTH	Mission and Ministry-A/B Handbells-A/B Student Council-A	Madrigals-A/B Reflections-A/B Tech Club-A/B	Orchestra-A/B Reflections-A/B	Chorus-A/B Reflections-A/B	
FOURTH FULL WEEK OF THE MONTH	Handbells-A/B Student Council-A	Madrigals-A/B Reflections-A/B	Orchestra-A/B Reflections-A/B	Chorus-A/B Reflections-A/B	A= 3:15 - 4:15 pm B = 4:15 -5:15 pm

The Athletic Teams practice in season at the discretion of the coaches.

Once a month, the Honor Society meetings take precedence over other activities and are scheduled on Committee Meeting Wednesdays.

Blue and White Spirit Association meets on Academic Council Wednesdays.

The Pennsylvania Mathematics League competitions are published for student reference.

Clubs not mentioned above meet on a moderator determined schedule set at the start of each semester and published for student reference.

\*Tri-M Music Honor Society will meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month that school is in session.

## Technology User Agreement

Villa Maria Academy (VMA) recognizes that access to technology in school gives students and teachers greater opportunities to learn, engage, and communicate. We want to prepare students to be caring and contributing members of a global society who utilize technology in ethical, innovative and creative ways.

Existing and emerging digital technologies present new opportunities and challenges for our community. Villa's Technology User Agreement applies to all students, faculty, administrators, staff and volunteers allowed to access school technology resources.

As a member of the VMA community, the student, as well as any other stakeholders, supports and fosters the mission and core values of Villa Maria Academy. The student pledges to uphold the Academy's core values in all aspects of technology use both on and off campus. Social media postings should reflect positively on the student, other community members and the school. The student agrees to act responsibly, ethically and with integrity by following the policy outlined below:

- Students will act courteously, appropriately, respectfully, and ethically online in accordance with our Catholic faith.
- Students will use school technology in accordance with this policy.
- Students will use school-owned technology and their personal devices in school for appropriate learning purposes under the supervision of the classroom teacher.
- All activity over the network or using school technologies may be monitored and retained.

Villa provides Internet access, desktop lab computers, mobile devices, videoconferencing capabilities, online collaboration tools, email and more for student and staff use.

### EMAIL GUIDELINES

VMA provides all students with an email address. Students are required to check their school email daily for school announcements, academic information and general communication.

- Sending or displaying offensive messages, discriminatory, obscene language or pictures is prohibited. Harassing, insulting, or attacking others is prohibited. This includes emails sent from the user's in-school account. Messages sent under an assumed name, modified address, or intending to obscure the message's origin are prohibited.
- **Email is not guaranteed to be private.** The contents of these files and the copies on system backups and archived storage are subject to investigation by the Director of Technology if suspicion of a violation occurs.

It is imperative for all users to understand that email communications and other data transmitted via the network may contain perspectives, interpretations, and subjective viewpoints that were not originally intended for public dissemination.

- No one may distribute unwanted emails or other messages. These include but are not limited to email threads, solicitations, blogging, photos, and mass group emailing.

## NETWORK GUIDELINES

- Students are responsible for their accounts and all activities conducted with their accounts.
- No food or drinks are permitted in the lab areas or near any computer at any time.
- Computer labs are to be maintained as quiet study areas. If a student wishes to listen to a school-related educational video on a school computer, headsets must be worn.
- Vandalism is any attempt to harm or damage computers, computer systems, or computer networks or infiltrate another computer system. These activities are prohibited, and the user is responsible for all repair costs incurred by the Academy as a result of such actions.
- No student may use the VMA network for financial gain, hacking, creating or spreading viruses on the school's network, selling or storing non-academic materials on the servers or private drives.
- No member shall use technology or school resources to engage in fake accounts on the Internet or on campus. This is to hold true whether the use occurs on or off campus and whether using Villa Maria or personally owned devices. Violations will be subject to disciplinary action.

### Senior Accounts

Please be aware that senior accounts will be deactivated 90 days after graduation. At this time, graduates will no longer have access to email, Google Workspace, Microsoft 365 or the Adobe Creative Cloud through Villa Maria. Seniors should transfer any necessary files to a personal account before this time.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND PERSONAL CONDUCT ONLINE

All users are to respect themselves and the Villa Maria Academy name when posting to blog/social media sites off campus. Users are expected to communicate with the same courteous, mindful, and respectful conduct online as offline. Posts, chats, sharing and messaging may be monitored. Users should be careful not to share personal information online.

Villa Maria Academy reserves the right to impose consequences for inappropriate behavior that takes place off-campus and outside school hours. Inappropriate use may include, but is not limited to:

- Harassment, use of school name, remarks directed to or about teachers, offensive communication and safety threats are prohibited.
- Students are responsible and will be held accountable for what they post on public outlets.
- Students are prohibited from posting as faculty/staff online or creating accounts (X, formerly Twitter, Facebook, Instagram etc.) using another person's identity or personal information. Any inappropriate behavior that contradicts VMA beliefs and values will result in disciplinary consequences, including detention, suspension, and/or dismissal.
- It is prohibited to retain a photo/video/audio recording of a staff member to be used without his/her knowledge and consent on any social media or devices.
- Cyberbullying is prohibited. Cyberbullying is the act of intimidating, threatening, or coercing people online through the use of social media, email, text messages, blog posts, or other digital or electronic methods. Cyberbullying usually involves using derogatory, aggressive, or threatening language. Reports of this behavior should be reported immediately to the Dean of Students (or any adult).

Engaging in these behaviors or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime.

## ADDITIONAL TECHNOLOGIES

- **Cell phones are not to be used during the school day.**
- The teacher reserves the right to check the content of memory on student TI 83/84 calculators and free up memory for academic purposes.



- The school administration reserves the right to limit or prohibit external devices in the classrooms, such as personal laptops, iPads, smart phones, calculators, wireless devices, wearable technology, etc.
- Any personal laptop must have updated virus protection before use on the campus network.
- In order to be mindful of conserving environmental resources, students should try to limit printing to essential documents and choose to print double-sided when feasible.

## **COPYRIGHT/WEB USE GUIDELINES**

- It is inappropriate to access, copy, or distribute another's computer files or programs without consent.
- Copyrighted material must not be downloaded or used without the author's permission.

## **IPADS AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

- All students are required to bring a fully charged iPad to school each day. No classroom electrical provisions are available for devices that lose battery power during the academic day.
- Filtered Internet access will be available to users with authenticated Wi-Fi personal devices.
- **Students must secure permission from each teacher in whose classes they plan to use their laptops.** Teachers will provide their acceptable use guidelines within their class materials.
- Teachers have a right to restrict student use of the iPad, laptops, software, and the Internet within the confines of their class.
- Any unauthorized recording or photographing of any person or class is prohibited.
- Personal and school-owned devices are required to install the Google Workspace Device Profile. The purpose of this profile is to streamline access to the primary wireless network, *VillaMobile*, and allow access to our printers. Devices that do not have a profile installed are allowed to use the Guest network, but will lose access to our internal services, such as printing.
- All personal devices should be identifiable with the student's name on the device. A device should be securely stored when not in use and is the owner's responsibility. All activity that is authored on the device is the responsibility of the registered owner of the device.

## **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**

Artificial intelligence (AI), like any technological resource, holds both possibility and challenge. While a potentially beneficial instructional tool, as a school, we are challenged to examine its potential consequences that could impact our value-driven mission. We are called to approach AI with discernment, making certain its evolving development and use align with our belief that all human beings are made in the image and likeness of God, possessing intrinsic worth and potential. We adhere to educating the whole student, and abiding by that non-negotiable principle, we believe in cultivating the God-given gift of human creativity. AI should not diminish that gift but only serve to enhance it by responsible and ethical use.

Keeping Villa's mission and charism in mind we have established the following principles:

### **Principles for AI Use**

- **Human-Centered Approach:** AI will provide support, not replace the educator or the student in the teaching and learning process. We will preserve and prioritize the human approach in our classrooms.
- **Support Education Goals for All:** AI will be thoughtfully used to strengthen student outcomes.
- **Privacy and Security:** AI use will align with regulations protecting student data privacy, safety and accessibility.
- **Academic Integrity:** AI should be used to support learning and not to undermine the integrity of student work. Students will produce original work and properly credit sources including AI tools.
- **AI Literacy:** Students and teachers will build skills to critically evaluate and utilize AI tools ethically.
- **Realize Benefits and Address Risks:** We will cautiously explore AI benefits while proactively addressing risks.
- **Continuous Evaluation:** Villa will routinely evaluate AI use, update policies and training as needed.

**Students should be aware that AI is NOT to be used for assignments or other academic-related purposes unless explicitly directed to do so by their classroom teacher.** The unauthorized use of CHATGPT or other similar AI tools to complete schoolwork is a violation of academic integrity and is subject to disciplinary action.

- Teachers will provide clear guidelines on acceptable AI use for specific assignments and projects.
- The school reserves the right to monitor and restrict access to AI tools if deemed necessary.

**Please note:** Many AI programs such as CHATGPT state that users must be 13 or older. If you are under 18, you need your parent or guardian's permission to create an account.

#### **Acceptable Uses of AI:**

- AI can be used as a tool for research, to generate ideas, and to assist with learning, provided it is done transparently and with proper attribution.
- **Personalized Learning:** AI-powered tutors or adaptive learning platforms can provide personalized study plans and targeted practice based on individual strengths and weaknesses.

#### **Unacceptable Uses of AI:**

- **Plagiarism:** Using AI-generated content to replace your own work constitutes plagiarism. All assignments must reflect your own understanding and effort.
- **Cheating:** AI tools should not be used to gain an unfair advantage on tests, quizzes, or other assessments. This includes using AI to generate answers or translate text during exams.
- **Cyberbullying or Inappropriate Content:** AI should never be used to create or share content that is disrespectful, harassing, or violates the privacy of others.
- **Disinformation:** Be mindful of the potential for bias or misinformation in AI-generated content. Critically evaluate all information and consult with teachers for guidance.

## Student Responsible Use Policy

Cell phones are not to be used during the school day.

Using your device is a privilege, and any privilege comes with responsibility. Here are the expectations for using your personal devices at school or anytime you are using school-provided devices.

- I will use technology constructively to complete school related assignments and activities.
- I will use technology honestly and ethically by fact-checking information, citing all sources, and using appropriately copyrighted material.
- I will be kind and respectful when communicating with others through any online means.
- I will not film, record, or photograph any person without their permission.
- I understand that nothing on the internet is truly private and I will not share personal information about anyone.
- **I understand that I am responsible for what happens when my accounts are used for social media and with regard to access and use.**
- I will respect all Villa technology including their network security.
- I will only log in with my school issued username and password.

I understand that using any school technology, networks or personal devices at school is a privilege I must earn through responsible use; but we all make mistakes. When I do something with my device that is not in line with this agreement, I will let a trusted adult know and ask them to help me make it right. If I can't consistently keep my part of this agreement, I understand that privileges may be removed for a time and that I may face additional consequences.

I have read and understand the expectations listed above. I also understand that I will abide by these expectations for the duration of my time at Villa Maria Academy High School.

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Villa Maria Academy

## Hazing Policy

### Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a safe learning environment that is free from hazing for students and staff members. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the philosophy, mission, and educational goals of Villa Maria Academy and are prohibited at all times.

### General Statement of Policy:

- No student, teacher, administrator or other school employee, contractor or volunteer shall plan, direct, encourage, aid or engage in hazing.
- No student, teacher, administrator or other school employee, contractor or volunteer shall permit, condone or tolerate hazing.
- Apparent permission or consent by a person being hazed does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- A person who engages in an act that violates school policy or law to initiate a student into a student organization shall be subject to disciplinary consequences.
- A person who engages in an act that violates school policy or law in order to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization shall be subject to discipline for that act.
- This policy applies to hazing behavior that occurs on or off school property and during and after school hours.
- The school will act to investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other school employee, contractor or volunteer who is found to have violated this policy.

### Definitions:

"Hazing," means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization, or for any other purpose. The term "hazing" includes, but is not limited to:

- Any type of physical brutality or placing a harmful substance on the body.
- Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, calisthenics or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
- Any activity involving the consumption of any alcoholic beverage, drug, tobacco product or any other food, liquid, or substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
- Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects a student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in school.
- Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or of school district policies or regulations.

"**Student organization**," means a group, club or organization having students as its primary members or participants. It includes grade levels, classes, teams, activities or particular school events. A student organization does not have to be an official school organization to come within the terms of this definition.

**Reporting Procedures:**

Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of hazing or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute hazing shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy.

Any person should report hazing to the Head of School and/or the Dean of Students.

Teachers, administrators, other school employees as well as contractors and volunteers shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances or events that might include hazing. Any such person who receives a report of, observes, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute hazing shall inform the Head of School and/or Dean of Students immediately.

Submission of a good faith complaint or report of hazing will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades or work assignments.

**School Action:**

Upon receipt of a complaint or report of hazing, Villa Maria Academy shall undertake or authorize an investigation.

The school may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, reporter, students or others pending completion of an investigation of hazing.

Upon completion of the investigation, the school will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension or dismissal from the student organization, and/or suspension or expulsion the school.

**Reprisal:**

The school will take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other employee of the school, or any contractor or volunteer who retaliates against anyone who makes a good faith report of hazing, or who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation or hearing about a hazing incident. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

**Dissemination of Policy:**

This policy shall appear on the website and in the *Student Handbook*, *Faculty Handbook* and the Athletic Handbook; it will also be issued to all attendees of the first meeting of the school year of each student organization (including all athletic teams and clubs) who will sign that they have been informed of the school's hazing policy and understand their obligation to abide by the school's policy.

Modified from *Hazing Policy*, National Federation State High School Associations, 2015  
August 2015

## ATTENDANCE QUICK SHEET

610-644-2551 ext. 1008  
available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

- **Tardies/Absences** – parents are **expected** to call **before** 8:30am.
- **Tardy Notes** – student must bring a note with them upon arriving to school and sign in at the main office.
- **Absent Notes** – student must bring a note to the main office upon returning to school. Lack of a note will be considered unexcused absence (UA). **Doctor's Note** will be required for any absence of 3 days or more.
- **Early Dismissals** – all early dismissal notes must be brought to the Dean of Students **before** first block to obtain the pass.
- Early Dismissals requested by parents **after** school starts must be in writing and **dropped off** to the main office by the parent before their daughter can leave. **No phone calls or emails will be accepted.**

**CALLING THE ATTENDANCE LINE DOES NOT ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR A  
HARD COPY OF A NOTE!**

**Villa Maria Academy High School**

**Attendance Form**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check one:**

Tardy \_\_\_\_\_

Absent \_\_\_\_\_

Early Dismissal \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Returning to School Yes/No

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

-----

**Villa Maria Academy High School**

**Attendance Form**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check one:**

Tardy \_\_\_\_\_

Absent \_\_\_\_\_

Early Dismissal \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Returning to School Yes/No

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Villa Maria Academy

## Notification of Student's Anticipated Absence Form

I/We are requesting to take my/our daughter on a non-school sponsored activity, or trip during regularly scheduled school time.

Date of Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Anticipated Absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

In order for the faculty to have time to prepare work for the student, this request must be submitted to the Dean of Students no fewer than five (5) days prior to the proposed trip.

### Teacher and Counselor Recommendation/ Endorsement:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

A teacher, or counselor reserves the right to endorse a student's absence based on academic performance. Should the student take the absence without the recommendation of the teacher, the student and family both understand that any work the student has missed, or any drop in academic performance is the responsibility of the student. The student also acknowledges that the work must be made-up in a timely manner. Teachers will not be expected to re-teach material to that student.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## VILLA MARIA ACADEMY

### AUTHORIZATION FOR SCHOOL MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

~~~~~  
Administration of prescription medication in school requires a written order form from a physician and a parent signature. Please have the medication form below completed and return it to the health office. Written permission from your physician can be faxed directly to the school office. If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the school nurse.

#### PHYSICIAN'S REQUEST

Name of prescribed medication(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Dose: \_\_\_\_\_

Time to Administer: \_\_\_\_\_

Treatment of: \_\_\_\_\_

Route: \_\_\_\_\_

Side Effects: \_\_\_\_\_

Other medication student is taking \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name of Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

I, the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ request that the Villa Maria Academy nurse, Principal, or designee administer the above-named medication as prescribed by my child's physician. My signature on this document constitutes a complete waiver of liability claim in any and all respects against Villa Maria Academy, its Board of Directors and all of its' employees unless they are negligent with regard to any claim for injury in connection with dispensation of the prescribed medication.

I also agree to provide the medication to the school nurse in the original pharmacy container or place it in a sealed envelope for transport to school. I accept the responsibility to provide a physician's note and written instruction if the medication is changed or discontinued. I also give my permission for the school to communicate with the physician regarding this medication/medical condition.

Villa Maria Academy High School  
370 Central Ave.  
Malvern, PA 19355

**AUTHORIZATION FOR SELF-CARRY/ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINE  
AT SCHOOL AND AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

PA Board of Education policy permits a responsible, trained student to carry and/or self-administer medication for asthma (wheezing), severe allergic (anaphylactic) reaction or diabetes on his/her person for immediate use in a life-threatening situation with written order of physician, parent request, and school nurse approvals.

**PHYSICIAN/PRESCRIBING HEALTH CARE PROVIDER**

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Condition for which the medication is administered \_\_\_\_\_

Name of medication, dose and method administered \_\_\_\_\_

Indication or time for administration \_\_\_\_\_

Side effects to be noted/reported \_\_\_\_\_

Other recommendations \_\_\_\_\_

Duration (dates) of administration: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (limit of one school year).

**IN MY OPINION, THIS STUDENT SHOWS CAPABILITY TO CARRY AND SELF-ADMINISTER THE  
ABOVE MEDICATION.**

---

Physician Signature

Print Name

Telephone

Date

**PARENT/GUARDIAN AUTHORIZATION**

I request that my child, named above, be permitted to carry and self-administer the above ordered medication. I take responsibility for this permission. I understand that the medication must be in the original pharmacy container, labeled with name of student, prescribing health care provider, and medication; date of original prescription; strength and dose of medication; and directions for use. This medication will be destroyed unless picked up within one week after the end of the school year or end of the medical order.

---

Parent Signature

Date

Parent Telephone Numbers

---

Student Signature

Date

We accept the parent request and physician statement. We will permit and assist the student to be responsible, but reserve the right to withdraw the privilege if the student shows signs of irresponsible behavior or there is a safety risk. We will contact the parent as soon as possible in this event.

---

School Nurse Signature

Date

## **Concussion Policy**

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that can have a serious effect on a young, developing brain. While most teens with concussion recover quickly and fully, some will have concussion symptoms that last for days, weeks, or even months.

Not giving the brain time to heal after a concussion can be dangerous. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain heals from the first, usually within a short amount of time, can slow recovery or increase the chances for long-term health problems.

- If a student is suspected in any way of being concussed, they must see a physician the following day, and cannot come to school unless they have been seen by a health care provider.
- The Athletic Trainer/School Nurse will contact the Concussion Support Team that the student may have possibly been concussed and are being referred to a physician/health care provider.
- When they return to school, they must provide documentation from a physician that they are cleared or require accommodations to the school nurse.
- If accommodations are necessary, that letter will be shared with Concussion Support Team and the student's teachers.
- Student who has sustained a concussion cannot participate in certain activities such as dances, pep rallies, and extra-curricular activities on or off Villa Maria's campus until cleared by her physician.

## Concussion Form Villa Maria High School

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Duration of Recommendations:    1 Week                      2 Weeks                      3 Weeks

The student will be reassessed for revision of these recommendations on: \_\_\_\_\_

This student has been diagnosed with a concussion (a brain injury) and is currently under care. Flexibility and additional support are needed during recovery. The following are suggestions for academic adjustments to be individualized for the student as deemed appropriate in the school setting.

**Please check which applies your patient:**

\_\_\_\_\_ No school for \_\_\_\_\_ school day(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ Full school days as tolerated by the student

\_\_\_\_\_ Half days until \_\_\_\_\_

**Attendance**

**Visual Stimulus**

\_\_\_\_\_ Allow student to wear sunglasses in school

\_\_\_\_\_ Limited computer, TV screen, bright screen use.

\_\_\_\_\_ Change classroom seating as necessary

**Workload/Multi-Tasking**

\_\_\_\_\_ Reduce overall amount of make-up work, classwork, and homework

\_\_\_\_\_ Prorate workload when possible

\_\_\_\_\_ Reduce amount of homework given each night

**Physical Exertion**

\_\_\_\_\_ No physical exertion/athletics/gym/dance class

\_\_\_\_\_ Walking in gym class only

\_\_\_\_\_ Begin Return to Play protocol as per Athletics

\_\_\_\_\_ No participation in dances, prom, pep rallies and assemblies

**Current Symptoms**

\_\_\_\_\_ Headache    \_\_\_\_\_ Visual problems    \_\_\_\_\_ Sensitivity to noise    \_\_\_\_\_ Memory issues

\_\_\_\_\_ Nausea    \_\_\_\_\_ Balance problems    \_\_\_\_\_ Feeling foggy    \_\_\_\_\_ Fatigue

\_\_\_\_\_ Dizziness    \_\_\_\_\_ Sensitivity to light    \_\_\_\_\_ Difficulty concentrating    \_\_\_\_\_ Irritability

**Breaks**

\_\_\_\_\_ Allow the student to go to the nurse's office if symptoms increase

\_\_\_\_\_ Allow student to go home if symptoms do not subside

\_\_\_\_\_ Allow other breaks during school day as deemed necessary and appropriate by school personnel

**Audible Stimulus**

\_\_\_\_\_ Lunch in a quiet place with a friend

\_\_\_\_\_ Avoid music

\_\_\_\_\_ Allow to wear earplugs as needed

\_\_\_\_\_ Allow class transitions before bell

**Testing**

\_\_\_\_\_ Additional time to complete tests

\_\_\_\_\_ No more than one test a day

\_\_\_\_\_ No standardized testing until \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Allow for scribe, oral response, and oral delivery of questions, if available

**Additional Recommendations**

---

---

---

Physician's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**VMA FIELD TRIP MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION FORM**  
**ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-2024**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please note: Students must have an order from a Pennsylvania licensed health care professional with prescriptive authority and parent/guardian permission for ALL medications and treatments administered to them. The ONLY medications a student may self-carry and self-administer are an asthma rescue inhaler, insulin, glucagon, and an epinephrine auto-injector.**

***Please have the Child's physician complete and sign below.***

As deemed necessary, I give permission for the nurse to give my Child: (please circle)

**Tylenol (acetaminophen):**      Yes      No      **Advil/Motrin (ibuprofen):**      Yes      No

**TUMS (antacid):**      Yes      No      **Benadryl (emergency only):**      Yes      No

**MY CHILD REQUIRES THE FOLLOWING ESSENTIAL MEDICATIONS:**

| DIAGNOSIS | MEDICATION | DOSAGE | TIME | ROUTE |
|-----------|------------|--------|------|-------|
|           |            |        |      |       |
|           |            |        |      |       |
|           |            |        |      |       |

**ALL MEDICATIONS MUST BE IN THEIR ORIGINAL, LABELED CONTAINERS FROM HOME.  
DO NOT SEND LOOSE MEDS IN BAGGIES - THEY WILL NOT BE GIVEN.**

**HEALTH CARE PROVIDER** (Pediatrician or Family Doctor):

I certify as the Health Care Provider that the above stated medications are to be given to the above named student while on the school sponsored trip.

\_\_\_\_\_  
HEALTH CARE PROVIDER signature & phone number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**PARENT/GUARDIAN:**

I, as the Parent/Guardian, wish to have the above state prescription medications(s) taken by the above named student during the sponsored trip.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARENT/GUARDIAN signature & phone number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **“Virtual Villa”**

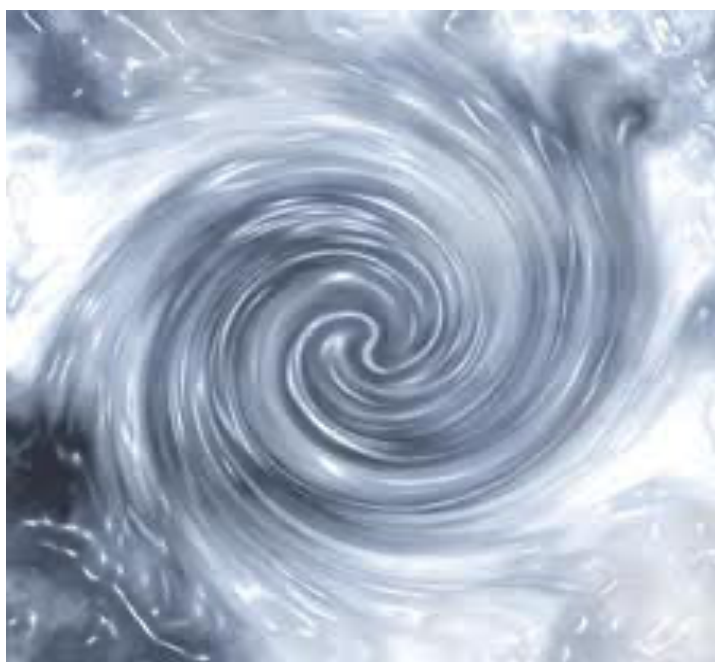
If either as a result of inclement weather, or some other inability to attend classes physically on campus, Villa Maria’s students will attend “Virtual Villa” at the discretion of the Head of the School. “Virtual Villa” is homebound education that is done synchronously with the student and the school to best deliver real-time, in-home instruction. Policies for “Virtual Villa” are below:

- While a student may use multiple types of technology to navigate the virtual setting, each student must have an iPad as Villa Maria Academy is a one-to-one iPad school and the applications necessary for class must be available for use and be able to be correctly submitted in the Schoology platform.
- Students must abide by Villa Maria’s *Computer Network and Acceptable Use of Technology* policy on pg. 47 in the handbook. In particular, students should not record, or post images from their class without the consent of the instructor.
- Students must abide by the typical attendance policies. If a student is absent, or late they must email [office@vmahs.org](mailto:office@vmahs.org), and copy the Dean of Students. Tardies and absences will still require appropriate documentation, including medical notes when appropriate.
- At the discretion of the teacher, students who miss their virtual classes, will not be eligible for participation points.
- If students travel to another location beyond their home and experience technical difficulties with connectivity, the student assumes the responsibility of not being able to connect synchronously or submit work.
- Students are to be in an appropriate set workspace.
- Students are to be dressed appropriately in a Villa Maria top and should not be in pajamas.
- Students’ behavior should model on-campus classroom behavior and professionalism.
- Students must be on camera to participate. Device screens should NOT be muted for the duration of the class.
- All academic integrity policies apply in the virtual setting. In particular, students should not be sharing assignments, exams, or projects with other students. Students also should not be using outside resources such as Google Translate.
  - Students may be required to film themselves on Zoom while taking an assessment at the discretion of the teacher for purposes of academic integrity.
- Students must check all emails and if an email negates a response, respond within 24 hours.
- All school policies in the Villa Maria Student Handbook apply in the virtual setting, and students can face disciplinary action.
- Study Hall and RFT will be “free time” for a student on “Virtual Villa” days. There is no need to check in with anyone.
- School counselors will be available for students during the usual school hours.
- Administrators will be available during school hours to offer support as needed for faculty, staff, students and parents.
- The block schedule for all-school Virtual Villa days will be as follows:
  - Block 1 – 8:30 a.m. to 9:50 a.m.
  - Block 2 – 10:10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
  - Block 3 – 12:10 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
  - Block 4 – 1:50 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.

# **VILLA MARIA ACADEMY**

## **Student and Parent Athletic Handbook**

### **2024-2025**



June 2024

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                            |           |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Introduction.....</b>                                   | <b>70</b> |
| <b>Purpose of Athletics.....</b>                           | <b>70</b> |
| <b>Description of Athletic Program.....</b>                | <b>70</b> |
| <b>Interscholastic Sports.....</b>                         | <b>71</b> |
| <b>Athletic Forms.....</b>                                 | <b>71</b> |
| <b>Athletic Fees.....</b>                                  | <b>72</b> |
| <b>Athletic Program Policies.....</b>                      | <b>72</b> |
| <b>Athlete Code of Conduct.....</b>                        | <b>72</b> |
| <b>Academic Eligibility.....</b>                           | <b>73</b> |
| <b>School and Class Attendance.....</b>                    | <b>73</b> |
| <b>Behavior Expectations.....</b>                          | <b>74</b> |
| <b>Hazing.....</b>                                         | <b>74</b> |
| <b>Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Policy.....</b>               | <b>75</b> |
| <b>Dress Code.....</b>                                     | <b>75</b> |
| <b>Expectations for Captains.....</b>                      | <b>76</b> |
| <b>Name, Image and Likeness Rule.....</b>                  | <b>77</b> |
| <b>Game Day Procedures.....</b>                            | <b>78</b> |
| <b>Team Travel.....</b>                                    | <b>78</b> |
| <b>Medical Information.....</b>                            | <b>78</b> |
| <b>Athletic Trainer Support.....</b>                       | <b>78</b> |
| <b>Insurance.....</b>                                      | <b>79</b> |
| <b>Emergency Procedures .....</b>                          | <b>79</b> |
| <b>Athletic Awards.....</b>                                | <b>79</b> |
| <b>Qualifications .....</b>                                | <b>79</b> |
| <b>Senior Night.....</b>                                   | <b>80</b> |
| <b>Communication .....</b>                                 | <b>80</b> |
| <b>Student-Athlete Conflict Resolution Procedures.....</b> | <b>80</b> |
| <b>Parent /Coach Relationship.....</b>                     | <b>81</b> |





## VILLA MARIA ACADEMY STUDENT ATHLETE HANDBOOK

### Mission Statement

Villa Maria Academy, a Catholic college preparatory school in the charism of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, empowers young women to lead lives of spiritual growth, intellectual inquiry and Christian service.

### Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to act as a guide for the student-athlete and parents in order that they are aware of policies and expectations of Villa Maria Academy's athletic program in particular. It is essential to any athletic program that all participants, student-athletes, coaches, and parents, be thoroughly informed of all rules and regulations governing the athletic department of Villa Maria Academy as well as the school's expectations for behavior on and off the field/court. This Athletic Handbook is in tandem with the *Villa Maria Academy Student Handbook*. Should the Athletic Handbook not address a certain situation, the *VMA Student Handbook* should be referenced for clarification. **The VMA Student Handbook will always take precedence over the Athletic Handbook in the rare case of a conflict.** Participation in the athletic program is a privilege and Villa Maria Academy reserves the right to revoke the privilege if the student athlete or her parents are in violation of the accepted policies.

### Purpose of Athletics

Rooted in the IHM charism of fidelity, creative hope, and love, Villa Maria Academy is dedicated to the full growth of the whole person and athletics can play a significant role in this commitment. Competitive sports enhance the physical growth and development of the participants, as well as the qualities so necessary to compete at a high level – grit and resilience. The athletic program enhances school spirit while teaching both athlete and spectator the value of fair competition and good sportsmanship. While there is a strong commitment to winning, there exists a greater commitment to student athletes' ability to build confidence and character.

### Athletic Program

Villa Maria Academy is a member of the AACA (Athletic Association of the Catholic Academies) which is governed by PIAA (Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association). With this in mind, student athletes need to establish priorities that reflect the Villa Maria/PIAA philosophies. All student athletes are expected to adhere to the policies outlined in the *Villa Maria Student Handbook* and the *Villa Maria Academy Athletic Handbook*. Scheduling for all teams is done based on available competition with the Catholic Academy League and then priority given to other PIAA programs.

Villa Maria has a long history of highly successful athletic teams at the league, district and state levels which have won championships at each level. Villa's coaches are knowledgeable, dedicated professionals who are committed to the overall mission of the school. As a result, Villa coaches do not build successful teams; they develop successful programs. When a student becomes Villa Hurricane, she becomes part of one of the greatest high school athletic traditions in the area.

Students who do earn membership on a team must understand that this honor involves hours of time for practice and games as well as strenuous physical exertion on their part to stay in good physical condition. Every student athlete must recognize the commitment that she is making to the team and be responsible to keep that commitment.

All qualified students may vie for positions on sports teams. Unfortunately, it is not possible for everyone who tries out to be accepted on the team. The coach, in conjunction with his/her assistants, will make the decision which students will gain membership on any given team and that decision is final. The school administration will respect the decisions of the athletic department and will not intervene in these decisions. It is the responsibility of parents to help their daughters understand that not everyone can be selected. This builds resiliency and grit.

**Interscholastic sports** at Villa Maria Academy include:

**Fall:** Cheerleading, Cross Country, Field Hockey, Golf, Rowing, Soccer, Tennis, Volleyball  
**Winter:** Basketball, Freshmen Basketball, Cheerleading, Indoor Track and Field, Paddle Tennis Club, Rowing, Swimming and Diving  
**Spring:** Lacrosse, Track and Field, Rowing, Softball

**Varsity Sports:** Varsity athletes are those athletes who have tried out for the team who exhibit the highest level of skills from among the pool of candidates. They will have the opportunity to compete against other talented athletes from opposing schools. The purpose of a Varsity level team is to hone the skills of the athletes, as well as to provide the school with the ability to compete at the Varsity level.

**Junior Varsity Sports:** Programs at the Junior Varsity level offer students who do not yet possess the skills or playing experience of a varsity player the opportunity to develop those skills and knowledge of the sport while gaining playing experience in a competitive environment. Occasionally Junior Varsity athletes may “play up” for a Varsity team; however, this should not be misinterpreted to mean the student will be moved to the Varsity level.

Villa Maria Academy offers freshman teams in some sports, when possible.

### **Athletic Forms and Fees**

Membership in PIAA allows athletes to compete at the district and state levels. Villa Maria Academy abides by all rules and regulations mandated by this state organization. Student-athletes must comply with the PIAA rules regarding eligibility:

- All athletes must submit a PIAA Physical Form dated after June 1st<sup>t</sup> of the current year in order to participate in a sport. This form needs to be uploaded to Family ID two weeks prior to first day of tryouts.
- A transfer student needs to submit the proper paperwork provided by PIAA to assure her athletic eligibility based on athletic participation and academic eligibility at her previous institution.
- All student athletes must take an Impact test prior to the school year.

For more information regarding PIAA rules and regulations, please visit the PIAA website at [www.piaa.org](http://www.piaa.org).

In addition, Villa Maria Academy athletes must

- Complete registration on Family ID.
- Purchase the required team uniform components as specified by the specific teams.
- Remit the required sports' fee by the date due.

**NOTE:** Athletic fees have been established to help offset the rising cost of athletics. The current fees are as follows:

| <b>\$365</b>           | <b>\$175</b>                       |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Basketball             | Freshman Basketball                |
| Cheerleading           | JVB Field Hockey                   |
| Cross Country          |                                    |
| Field Hockey           |                                    |
| Golf                   | <b>\$2100</b> Rowing -both seasons |
| Indoor Track and Field |                                    |
| Lacrosse               | <b>\$1040</b> Fall Rowing          |
| Soccer                 |                                    |
| Softball               | <b>\$1560</b> Spring Rowing        |
| Swimming and Diving    |                                    |
| Tennis                 |                                    |
| Track and Field        |                                    |
| Volleyball             |                                    |

**\*\*\* Note: Full payment of the sports fee is required once the roster is set, and you are billed through FACTS.**

### **Athletic Program Policies**

#### **Athlete Code of Conduct**

- Student athletes at Villa Maria Academy are expected to always exhibit appropriate Christian conduct, always conscious that they represent Villa Maria Academy High School.
- Student athletes will conduct themselves as exemplary members of the school community in school, out in the community and on any school campus which their team is visiting.
- At all times, team members are to act with respect toward their coaches, teammates, officials, opposing teams, and all staff members.
- Proper dress, behavior, and language on and off campus are mandatory for all student athletes.
- Student-athletes are expected to follow all rules, procedures and policies mandated by their coach.
- Student-athletes must attend all games, practices, and team functions. Coaches or the Athletic Director may impose a suspension, probation, or dismissal from the team if there are issues with a student-athlete's attendance.
- If an unforeseen emergency arises and attendance at a game or practice is not possible, the student-athlete must personally notify the coach.
- The use of tobacco, alcohol, and/or drugs is strictly forbidden. This also includes any form of vaping, or use of an electronic cigarette. **If a student-athlete violates this policy, she will be removed from the team for the remainder of the season.**

Any violation of the above regulations, act of unacceptable behavior which includes violation of civil law or of *Villa Maria Academy Student Handbook* and/or *the Athletic Handbook* may lead to indefinite suspension or dismissal from the team for the remainder of the season.

### Academic Eligibility Policy

According to the PIAA, academics “shall always be a priority and demonstration of satisfactory academic performance is an essential and mandatory prerequisite to student eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletics. ... students not meeting core academic requirements are not eligible until they can correct those deficiencies.”

(*Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association. (2023). Constitution and by-laws.*

<https://www.piaa.org/schools/eligibility/default.aspx>)

Villa Maria’s Student Support Team will actively monitor students’ academic progress. A student with a below 73% course average will be identified for further intervention. Once a student-athlete is identified for intervention, she is advised to:

1. Meet weekly with the subject teacher(s)
2. Follow the recommendations of the subject teacher(s)
3. Report to any assigned tutoring
4. Report regularly to her Counselor.

If initial intervention efforts are not successful in helping the student elevate her grades in the course(s) of concern, she will be deemed ineligible for extracurricular participation, including athletics. Villa Maria’s student-athletes are fully responsible for monitoring their academic progress via PowerSchool. It should be no surprise if a situation arises that could render a student-athlete ineligible for an extracurricular activity. If a student-athlete is deemed ineligible, her status will be communicated to her by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction in conjunction with the student’s Counselor, the Director of Student Activities, and the Athletic Director. Ineligibility will continue until the student-athlete has improved the course average in every class to at least 73%. Grade check updates will be conducted by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction on Fridays after the initial grade check.

### School and Class Attendance

Students and teachers are notified in advance by the athletic director of any scheduled departures for athletics events. Students are required to notify their teachers prior to missing any class due to a sports’ dismissal. It is likewise the student’s responsibility to schedule a time with her teachers to fulfill any missed obligation including quizzes, tests, and/or class work.

An athletic commitment is not an excuse to miss detention. Any student -athlete assigned to detention must report to the Dean of Students and serve her scheduled detention prior to going to the athletic competition. Failure to do so will result in her ineligibility to participate in the next scheduled game.

All student athletes **MUST** report to school by the end of first block if they wish to participate in either a game, or practice. If a student *must* leave school for a medical appointment after the first block mark, they must first come to school, follow the early dismissal procedure, and then return to school immediately following their appointment with a medical note, however this is strongly discouraged. Should a student arrive to school later than first block and seek an early dismissal that day, they will not be able to participate in their activity after school.

**NOTE: A student-athlete is expected to report to school for first block on the day after an athletic competition unless a special exemption for late arrival has been granted.**

## BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

### **HAZING: Villa Maria Academy's Hazing Policy (please see pg.57 for a more detailed overview)**

- No student, teacher, administrator or other school employee, contractor or volunteer shall plan, direct, encourage, aid, or engage in hazing.
- No student, teacher, administrator or other school employee, contractor or volunteer shall permit, condone, or tolerate hazing.
- Apparent permission or consent by a person being hazed does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- A person who engages in an act that violates school policy or law to initiate a student into a student organization shall be subject to disciplinary consequences.
- A person who engages in an act that violates school policy or law in order to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization shall be subject to discipline for that act.
- This policy applies to hazing behavior that occurs on or off school property and during and after school hours.
- The school will act to investigate all complaints of hazing and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other school employee, contractor or volunteer who is found to have violated this policy.

"Hazing," means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person, in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization, or for any other purpose. The term "hazing" includes, but is not limited to:

- Any type of physical brutality or placing a harmful substance on the body.
- Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, calisthenics or other activity that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
- Any activity involving the consumption of any alcoholic beverage, drug, tobacco product or any other food, liquid, or substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
- Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects a student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame or humiliation that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in school.

Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves violation of state or federal law or of school district policies or regulations.

## **Alcohol, Tobacco and Drug Policy**

Student athletes will not use or possess any quantity of alcohol, tobacco or illegal/non-prescription drugs (including steroids). Athletes may not be present at a party or in any situation where alcohol or any controlled substances are consumed by minors. Any athlete who violates the school policy regarding alcohol/drug use will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with school policy, including immediate suspension and probable expulsion from the team.

## **Uniforms**

The school purchases uniforms for the following sports: Field Hockey, Soccer, Basketball, Lacrosse, Softball and Volleyball. All equipment and uniforms are to be returned clean and in good condition on the required date when the athlete completes the sport either at the end of the season or leaves the team. NOTE: Athletes will be held financially responsible for any uniforms or equipment damaged or not returned and will be billed \$150.00. NOTE: Additional uniform pieces and/or team spirit wear must be purchased through the Villa Maria Academy Spirit Wear Store.

## **Athletic Dress Code**

It is the vision of the Villa Maria Community to make our athletes look as uniform as possible. In the effort to do this, we offer a warm-up that the athlete may purchase. In lieu of purchasing the athletic warm-up, the athlete can wear their Villa Maria gym suit. Below is a description of these articles of clothing.

### **Horizon Warm-Up**

- Navy and Carolina blue full zipper jacket with “Villa Maria Athletics” and the athlete’s name embroidered on the jacket.
- Pants are navy with Carolina blue pin stripe down the side.
- Team official warm-up shirt.

### **VMA Gym Suit**

- Navy blue sweatshirt with "Villa" across the front
- Navy blue sweatpants with "Villa" down the leg

### **Basketball, Cross Country, Indoor/Outdoor Track and Swimming**

- Athletic warm-up with the Team official warm-up shirt
- VMA Gym Suit

### **Field Hockey**

- Weather permitting, team uniform with Team official warm-up shirt
- Athletic warm-up with Team official warm-up shirt
- VMA Gym Suit

### **Golf**

- Golf uniform
- Villa golf jackets

### **Soccer and Lacrosse**

- Weather permitting, team uniform
- Athletic warm-up with team jersey or with Team official warm-up shirt

- VMA Gym Suit

#### Tennis

- Weather permitting, team official warm-up shirt with tennis uniform
- Athletic warm-up with Team official warm-up shirt
- VMA Gym Suit

#### Volleyball

- Weather permitting, team jersey with gym shorts
- Athletic warm-up with team jersey or Team official warm-up shirt
- VMA Gym Suit

#### Softball

- Weather permitting, team uniform
- Athletic warm-up with team jersey or Team official warm-up shirt
- VMA Gym Suit

#### **Please note:**

- Villa athletic warm-up is the only warm-up that may be worn.
- The team jersey (if not sleeveless) may be worn with the warm-up. If team jersey is sleeveless, then the student needs to wear the team warm-up shirt. **No other t-shirt or shirt is acceptable.**
- Athletes are not allowed to wear any spirit wear to school that they purchased from their team store except the official team warm-up shirt (except on Spirit Fridays).
- Socks must cover the ankle and must be white or blue.
- Sneakers must be tied.
- All shirts and jerseys that are meant to be tucked in should be tucked in.
- When the student body changes the uniform to winter wear, all athletes must wear the regulation warm-up or gym suit.
- Athletes are NOT permitted to wear school outerwear in lieu of a warm-up. All athletes must be in the official team uniform, or warm-up.

#### Penalty for Failure to Adhere to the Athletic Dress Code:

1. First demerit: The athlete will lose the privilege of wearing her sports uniform to school on “away” game days for two weeks.
2. Second demerit: The athletic forfeits the privilege of wearing her sports uniform for the remainder of the season.

#### **Expectations of Captain**

Captains play a vital role on a team and in the school. All team captains are expected to set a good example for their team members by the following behaviors:

- Set a good example academically
- Show respect for the team uniform by adhering to the athletic dress code and ensuring other team members do likewise

- Act as a liaison between the AD /Dean of Students and team
- Attend and arrive on time to all practices and games, and be the last to leave
- Lead the warm-up activities before practice and matches
- Commit to working and training and lead by example
- Exhibit good sportsmanship
- Be a positive influence on and off the field
- Thank all officials after completion of a game
- Help with game advertisement or publicity
- Help with uniform collection at the end of the season
- Hold team meetings for spirit and morale periodically throughout the season

### **Name, Image and Likeness**

Students may receive Consideration for the use of their own name, image, and likeness (NIL). Such permissible activities include commercial endorsements, promotional activities, social media presence, product or service advertisements, and unique digital items/assets. NIL contracts/agreements need to come from analysis of the value an athlete brings for providing a specific service/activity, not as an incentive for enrollment decisions or membership on a team. No school or anyone employed by or affiliated with a member school, including booster clubs, coaches, collectives, administrators, and alumni, may solicit, arrange, negotiate or pay for a student's, other than their own child, use of their NIL and/or the provision of Consideration to a student for the use of their NIL.

In engaging in NIL activities, students may not make any reference to PIAA or a PIAA member school (including the school and/or team name, nicknames, terms by which a school or team is commonly referred or identified, logo) and may not wear school uniforms or school-identifying apparel or items). Students may not endorse or promote any third-party entities, goods, or services during team/school activities. Students may not wear the apparel or display the logo, insignia, or identifying mark of an NIL partner during any team/school athletic activities unless it is part of the standard school uniform for that sport. Students may not engage in any NIL activities involving, displaying, or endorsing the following categories of products and services:

- (1) Adult entertainment products and services.
- (2) Alcohol products.
- (3) Casinos and gambling, including sports betting, the lottery, and betting in connection with video games, on-line games, and mobile devices.
- (4) Tobacco and electronic smoking products and devices.
- (5) Opioids and prescription pharmaceuticals.
- (6) Controlled dangerous substances.
- (7) Weapons, firearms, and ammunition.

**Within 72 hours after entering into any type of NIL contracts/agreements, a student, or the student's parents/guardians must notify the Head of School or Athletic Director of the student's school of entering into that agreement.**



Failure to do so can result in loss of eligibility for the student athlete and forfeiture of games by the entire team.

## **GAME DAY PROCEDURES**

### **Home Games**

Athletes are permitted to change into their team uniforms at their lunch periods. Once the athlete has changed into their team uniform, they must follow the “Athletic Dress Code” as stated on page 75 and 76. At the end of the day, athletes are to proceed directly to the playing field.

### **Away Games**

When a game is scheduled off-campus, student-athletes are permitted to wear their team uniforms with their school approved athletic warm-up, or Villa gym suit to school. If an athlete does not have the school approved warm-up, or Villa gym suit, she is to wear the regular Villa uniform during the school day. Athletes are not permitted to wear their team uniforms to liturgies or to formal assemblies – even if the liturgy or assembly is held on the day of an away contest.

### **Team Travel**

While visiting other schools, student-athletes of Villa Maria Academy are representatives of the school. Student athletes are to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect a positive image on themselves and on the school. Appropriate conduct must be exhibited at all times. Generally, student athletes need to travel in regulation warm up suits and present a uniform appearance. A neat and clean appearance is required, also.

Villa Maria Academy’s Athletic Department generally provides buses for athletes to travel to and from athletic contests. All athletes are expected to travel to and from the game site on the bus. Parents may pick up athletes after away games only when the coach has received a note by the coach’s deadline for such note.

Student athletes should make sure that they know the time and place of their departure and be prompt and ready to leave at the scheduled time.

## **MEDICAL INFORMATION**

### **Athletic Training Support**

A Certified Athletic Trainer is available to all student-athletes for evaluation, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation of athletic-related injuries, as well as referral for medical or emergency care. The following procedures are in effect:

- Student-athletes should contact the athletic trainer immediately in case of sports-related illness or injury, no matter how minor.
- Student-athletes who need the attention of the athletic trainer should report for treatment prior to practice or competition time. When appropriate, a pass from the athletic trainer is required.
- Student-athletes should follow all recommendations and guidelines regarding treatment and rehabilitation as set by the trainer.
- The trainer has the right to prohibit student-athletes from practice and/or competition when deemed appropriate or necessary.

- Failure to follow recommended treatment, rehabilitation, or medical follow-up may result in suspension and/or loss of eligibility to participate in practices and/or competitions for a specified time which will be determined by the Athletic Director in consultation with the athletic trainer and the appropriate coach
- All medical equipment loaned to the student-athlete by the school (braces, crutches, etc.) is to be returned when no longer needed.

## **Insurance**

Villa Maria Academy enrolls each student in a medical accident insurance program. This insurance is intended to cover those minor accidents and/or injuries which may occur on school property or at school-sponsored events. An accident report must be completed and filed in the Nurse's office. All injuries which occur during practices or competitions must be reported immediately but no later than 24 hours after the injury has occurred. Please contact the Athletic Director or Athletic Trainer for further information.

## **Emergency Procedures**

In the event of serious injury, the school representative will call 911, and the student will be transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital. The athletic director, coach, assistant coach, or athletic trainer will notify the athlete's parents and follow the ambulance to the hospital.

## **ATHLETIC AWARDS**

Each sport holds its own individual sports banquet at the end of its season. At this event, student-athletes and coaches are recognized for their outstanding athletic and academic achievements during the year. The following awards are presented:

|                  |                                                                                                             |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| First Year Award | JV Certificate or Varsity letter & pin                                                                      |
| Two Year Award   | JV Certificate, Varsity Letter and/ or Varsity pin*                                                         |
| Three Year Award | JV Certificate, Varsity Letter and/or Varsity pin*                                                          |
| Four Year Award  | Varsity pin or Varsity letter & pin<br>(If the athlete did not receive a letter and pin in a previous year) |

\*If an athlete received a Varsity letter in any sport the previous season or year, the athlete will only receive a pin to add to that letter.

Additional awards may-also be presented each year by the coaches; these include MVP, Coach's Award, Most Improved Player, etc.

## **Earning a Varsity Letter**

All athletes must meet the following requirements to be eligible to receive a Varsity Letter:

1. The sport must be officially sanctioned by the National Federation of High School Sports, PIAA, and Villa Maria.
2. A full-time coach must be selected by the administration and employed by VMA.
3. The athlete must comply with all requirements regarding eligibility in terms of her enrollment and academic standing.
4. The athlete must have attended practices and meetings as designated by the coaching staff.
5. The athlete must not have violated any Level 3 rule regulation or policies (*Student Handbook*, pg. 27-28), including use of alcohol, nonprescription drugs, or tobacco products.

6. The athlete must have competed in an appropriate number of varsity competitions as designated by each coaching staff per sport (usually at least one half).
7. The athlete must have completed the season in a satisfactory manner.
8. The athlete must have returned equipment and/or uniforms issued to her by the coaches.
9. The athlete must not have violated any rules, regulations or policies regarding criminal activity requiring a police report.
10. An athlete could receive a varsity letter if the coaching staff feels the athlete was an integral part of the team and did the best she could considering her physical abilities and year of graduation.
11. Athletes in compliance with the above will be awarded a JV Award if they do not merit an award at the varsity level.

### **Senior Night Events and Special Celebrations**

Traditionally, seniors are honored by their teams at one of their final home games of the season. All senior recognition activities and other team dinners will be scheduled in advance in coordination with the Athletic Director.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **Expectations of Parents**

Parents of student athletes **are required** to attend a Sports Information Night program at the beginning of the sport season. Parents are expected to encourage and support their daughters and their teams in a positive manner and to model the sportsmanlike behavior expected of their daughters. As spectators, parents are expected to cheer for their daughters but never to become belligerent toward players, coaches, officials, or other fans. No parent may be on the team sideline or in the locker rooms before, during or after a practice or game. Parents should not criticize coaches, other athletes, or the school and are expected to accept the coaches' decisions with respect.

**NOTE:** Parents may not hold tail gate parties or other social events connected with a team at a game unless the event is open to all team members. **At no time may alcohol be served at any event connected with a game.**

### **Conflict Resolution**

Athletes and their parents must respect the authority of the coaches to resolve any issues that develop. When a problem arises for a student-athlete, the following steps are to be followed to address the situation:

- The student athlete should contact the coach to discuss the concern directly. If the initial contact with the coach does not resolve the issue, the student athlete should contact the Athletic Director.
- A parent should schedule a meeting with her daughter's coach directly with questions or requests for clarification. At no time, should a parent try to engage a coach in a discussion immediately after a game. Should the issue warrant further attention, the Athletic Director will address the concern in a timely fashion.
- While the administration maintains a position of overseeing the athletic department, it is not involved with the daily workings of the department. A referral to the Head of School will only be addressed when all other avenues have been exhausted.

The following are not considered appropriate concerns to be directed to a coach by parents: playing time, team strategy, play calling, other student athletes.

### **Twenty-four Hour Rule**

In the unfortunate circumstance that a student or parent is upset about something that has occurred during a practice or a game, he/she is requested to follow the 24-hour rule. This 24-hour rule requires that the student athlete or the parent who is upset to wait until a full day has passed before making any contact with a coach to voice his/her concerns. This practice allows for the emotions to drain from the situation so that communication can take place in a reasonable and effective manner and focuses on the good of the student athlete. If waiting until the next day could cause injury or harm to a student, communication is encouraged to take place immediately.

### **PARENT/COACH RELATIONSHIP**

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, coaches and parents are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefits to the athlete. When a student becomes involved in VMA's athletic program, parents have a right to understand what expectations are placed on their daughters. This begins with clear communication from the coach.

#### *Communication a Parent Should Expect from the Coach:*

1. The philosophy of the coach
2. The expectations the coach has for the student athlete as well as the players on the team
3. The locations and times of all practices and contests
4. Team requirements such as fees, special equipment, off-season conditioning, etc.
5. The discipline issues that result in the denial of the student athlete's participation

#### *Communications Coaches Expect from Parents:*

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach
2. Notifications of any schedule conflicts well in advance
3. Specific concern in regard to a coach's philosophy and/or expectations

When a student athlete becomes involved in the programs at Villa Maria Academy, she will experience some of the most rewarding moments of her life. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things do not go the way parents or athletes wish. At these times, parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the coach.

#### *Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches:*

1. The treatment of student- athlete.
2. Ways to help the student-athlete improve.
3. Concerns about the student-athlete's behavior

It is difficult for a parent to accept that his/her daughter may not be playing as much as may have been hoped. Coaches are professionals. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be best for all athletes involved. As the above list indicates, certain things can be and should be discussed with student-athlete's coach. Other things, such as those listed next, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

Issues **NOT** Appropriate to Discuss with Coaches:

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student athletes

If a parent has a concern to discuss with a coach, this procedure should be followed:

1. Call and set an appointment with the coach.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, please bring this to the attention of the Athletic Director.
3. Please do not attempt to confront a coach before or after a contest or practice. These can be emotional time for both the parent and the coach. Meetings of this nature do not promote resolution.
4. NOTE: If the meeting with the coach did not bring a satisfactory resolution, the parent should call to make an appointment with the Athletic Director to discuss the situation. At this meeting, the appropriate next step can be determined.