



PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK 2026-2027

Mercy High School
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High School Code for Standardized Tests: 281-719

www.mercyhigh.org

NOTICE

This Parent/Student Handbook is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute a contractual agreement between Mercy High School and any student or any parent of any student.

The information contained in the Handbook provides a general description of rules and regulations. The school reserves the right to add to, to modify or abolish any of the Handbook provisions without notice.

Non enforcement of any of the rules or regulations does not serve as a waiver of their future enforcement.

This Handbook does not create any restriction upon Mercy High School's right to institute any course of disciplinary action which, in Mercy High School's sole discretion, it believes is necessary and consistent with its Catholic educational mission.

PARENT/SCHOOL CONTACT

Mercy High School prides itself in its partnership with parents. We notify parents of concerns about student life or behavior, even when off campus. If at any time parents have a question or concern, they are encouraged to contact school personnel according to the listing below.

Academic Concerns: Teacher, then Academic Advisor, then Principal

Physical and Emotional Concerns: School Counselor, then Principal

Special Academic Needs: Academic Success Coordinator, then School Counselor, then Principal

Athletic Concerns: Coach, then Athletic Director, then Assistant Principal, then Principal

Other Extracurricular Activities: Extracurricular Sponsor, then Assistant Principal, then Principal

Financial Concerns (Tuition, Fundraising, Workstudy): President

MERCY HIGH SCHOOL'S MISSION

Mercy High School is a diverse educational community, founded by the Sisters of Mercy, focusing on academic excellence and inspiring young girls to become confident women of Mercy who embody faith, knowledge and compassionate service.

THE GOALS OF MERCY HIGH SCHOOL

Over 150 years ago, Catherine McAuley founded the Sisters of Mercy to minister to Christ's people through service to the poor, sick and ignorant, especially women and children. "No work of charity is more productive of good to society nor more conducive to the happiness of the poor than the careful instruction of women." Mother McAuley's mission and that of Mercy High School are the same.

Women. Mercy is dedicated to the education of young women, providing each with the ideals and principles that ensure wholesome living while challenging all to pursue and accept roles of leadership and responsibility in family, church and society.

Gospel. Mercy is a Catholic school dedicated to and follows the authentic teachings of the Catholic Church. Through religious instruction and planned experiences, each student is called to grow in personal faith toward an ever-maturing response to Jesus. Mercy strives to develop compassionate women, steeped in Catholic belief and tradition, responsive to social concerns, especially of the needs of the poor and aware of a personal supernatural destiny.

Instruction. Mercy is dedicated to quality instruction in the humanities, arts and sciences. Through a comprehensive curriculum, modern pedagogy and diversified methodology, students are guided toward responsible democratic citizenship, reverence for life in all aspects of daily life.

Community. Mercy is dedicated to creating an environment of family where everyone is recognized as unique and important to the welfare of the whole. The foremost emphasis in all school activities is the emergence of responsible women who make choices guided by an integrated values system that acknowledges the importance of God, others and self in all aspects of daily life.

Fiscal Responsibility. Mercy is dedicated to sound fiscal management. Everyone involved with Mercy, the Board of Directors, faculty, students, parents, alumnae are urged to assume responsibility for sustaining the mission of Mercy High School by careful use of our material resources, by participating in fundraising and development, and by bearing a fair share of individual per pupil cost through negotiated tuition. Mercy is dedicated to preserving our human resources through just reimbursement for services rendered, and by providing a safe and pleasant learning environment. No student is denied a Mercy education because of economic reasons.

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Mercy High School of Omaha conforms to the policy of the Omaha Archdiocesan Board of Education and admits students of any race, national and ethnic origins and to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Mercy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. Mercy admits students of all abilities if, with reasonable accommodations, the student can meet the program requirements.

Further, Mercy High School seeks to attract and make every effort to include in all its programs and activities young women from all geographical areas of the city of Omaha and of all economic situations. Those not able to meet the financial obligations of the school shall be given every opportunity for financial assistance.

While attending Mercy High School students shall reside with a parent, guardian or an adult acting in “loco parentis.”

MERCY CORE VALUES

COMPELLED BY MERCY

Mercy students, in the spirit of our founder Catherine McAuley, are steadfastly determined to take Mercy into an interconnected world. Our shared sense of social consciousness is fortified by universal empathy and a conviction that all are worthy of God’s mercy. This deep awareness and compassion move us to take principled action and serve the needs of others.

EDUCATIONAL COURAGE

Mercy students welcome the challenge of pursuing their full potential in a culture of excellence, critical thinking and curiosity. Their multifaceted journey builds character while it builds essential skills. Our holistic program expects engagement, a thirst for knowledge and personal responsibility, while preparing students to thrive for a lifetime.

INSPIRED BY FAITH

Mercy students become living models of faith and forceful advocates for Gospel values. Grounded in our Catholic identity in the Mercy tradition, we welcome all faiths and are strengthened and shaped by these relationships. As we pursue a personal relationship with God, we strenuously follow Jesus Christ’s example of social justice, love and service.

PRINCIPLED LEADERSHIP

Mercy students are poised to lead with their unique gifts. Prepared with an ethical and moral compass, we put Mercy values into action and work assertively for what is right. We’re equipped to make difficult choices, learn from our mistakes and develop high emotional intelligence. As an international community, we’re confident in our ability to make a positive difference and push for systemic change.

A VOICE FOR DIGNITY AND RESPECT

Mercy students honor the intrinsic value of the individual and recognize God's presence in each person. We embrace a global vision and value differences of opinion, and are unafraid to confront hostile or hurtful attitudes. By standing up for those who can't, we go beyond acceptance to help make sure everyone feels recognized and heard.

SISTERS OF MERCY CRITICAL CONCERNS

EARTH

We believe in the need to work toward the sustainability of life and support movements and legislation that secure the fundamental right to water for everyone, and that address climate change. That leads us to examine our own behaviors and policies and to adopt more environmentally sustainable practices. We also advocate against hydrofracking; against mining that impacts indigenous and impoverished communities; for regulations that protect land, air and water; and for national and international agreements that mitigate climate change and ensure support for those most vulnerable to its effects.

IMMIGRATION

We revere the dignity of each person and believe everyone has the right to a decent home, livelihood, education and healthcare. In the United States we work for just and humane immigration laws, a reduction in deportations that tear families apart, and an end to the detention bed quota. We look at the root causes of immigration, including U.S. policies that contribute to the economic and social conditions that push people to flee their countries, and the global impact of migration through our reality as an international community of women religious.

NONVIOLENCE

We work for peace through prayer, education, and personal and communal practices of nonviolence. We support nuclear disarmament, reduction of arms, and the use of dialogue instead of armed conflict. We work to prevent domestic violence and abuse of women and children, stop human trafficking and reduce violence in our communities. That leads us to advocate for commonsense gun violence prevention legislation, an end to the death penalty, an end to the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan, and dialogue with Syria and Iran.

RACISM

We believe racism is an evil affecting us all. We work to mobilize sisters and associates in recognizing and dismantling institutional racism to become an anti-racist multicultural community. We advocate for upholding the voting rights of marginalized Americans and for a fair criminal justice system and point out racism wherever it exists.

WOMEN

We believe that women's education, health and spirituality need special attention. We continue this mission in our schools, colleges, health-care institutions and spirituality centers. We advocate for equal pay, for services for domestic violence victims, and for the rights of

girls and women in especially repressive societies.

SUSCIPE OF CATHERINE McAULEY

My God, I am yours for time and eternity. Teach me to cast myself entirely into the arms of your loving Providence with a lively, unlimited confidence in your compassionate, tender pity. Grant, O most merciful Redeemer, that whatever you ordain or permit may be acceptable to me. Take from my heart all painful anxiety; let nothing sadden me but sin, nothing delight me but the hope of coming to the possession of you, my God and my all, in your everlasting Kingdom. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE BEATIFICATION

OF CATHERINE MCAULEY

Loving God, you chose Catherine McAuley for the service of your people who are poor, sick and uneducated. You inspired her to found the Sisters of Mercy so that these good works might endure. Give to each of us a portion of her compassionate spirit and an ardent desire to serve your suffering people. Graciously hear our prayers for Catherine, and by granting the favors we ask through her intercession, hasten the day when her sanctity will be celebrated by all the church. Amen.

FIGHT SONG

Cheer, cheer for ol' Mercy High.
Roll out the scoreboard as you're passing by.
We know you will put one through
So come on, you girls, we're counting on you.
Some days we win and some days we lose,
But we never ever have the blues.
'Long as we are backing you
It's a victory for Mercy High.
Rah! Rah! Rah!

SCHOOL SONG

The spirit of all Mercy girls will linger through the years.
We'll wear our colors blue & gold through all our joys and tears.
For we are made for greater things in all our work and play.
Come join us and our faculty and praise the Mercy way.

(SENIORS ONLY SING)

Hear O Mary, Queen of Mercy
On this day we pledge to thee
All our faithful loyalty.

(EVERYONE REPEATS REFRAIN)

The spirit of all Mercy girls will linger through the years
 We'll wear our colors blue & gold through all our joys and tears.
 For we are made for greater things in all our work and play.
 Come join us and our faculty and praise the Mercy way

BELL SCHEDULES

Regular		Joint/Advisor Homeroom		Suscipe		Late Start	
Period 0	6:50- 7:36	Period 0	6:50- 7:36	Period 0	6:50- 7:36	NO 0	-
Period 1	7:40 - 8:30	Period 1	7:40 - 8:26	Period 1	7:40 - 8:22	Period 1	8:55 - 9:34
Period 2	8:34 - 9:21	Period 2	8:30 - 9:14	Period 2	8:26 - 9:06	Period 2	9:38 - 10:16
Period 3	9:25 - 10:12	Period 3	9:18 - 10:02	Period 3	9:10 - 9:50	Period 3	10:20 - 10:58
Period 4	10:16 - 11:03	Period 4	10:06 - 10:50	Period 4	9:54 - 10:34	Period 4	11:02 - 11:40
xxx	xxx	Homeroom	10:54 - 11:16	Mass	10:40 - 11:32	xxx	
Lunch A	11:03 - 11:33	Lunch A	11:16 - 11:46	Lunch A	11:32 - 12:02	Lunch A	11:40 - 12:10
Period 5a	11:07 - 11:54	Period 5a	11:20 - 12:04	Period 5a	11:36 - 12:16	Period 5a	11:44 - 12:22
Lunch B	11: 54 - 12: 24	Lunch B	12:04 - 12:34	Lunch B	12:16 - 12:46	Lunch B	12:22 - 12:52
Period 5b	11:38 - 12:25	Period 5b	11:51 - 12:35	Period 5b	12:07 - 12:47	Period 5b	12:15 - 12:53
Period 6	12:29 - 1:16	Period 6	12:39 - 1:23	Period 6	12:51 - 1:31	Period 6	12:57 - 1:35
Period 7	1:20 - 2:07	Period 7	1:27 - 2:11	Period 7	1:35 - 2:15	Period 7	1:39 - 2:17
Period 8	2:11 - 3:00	Period 8	2:15 - 3:00	Period 8	2:19 - 3:00	Period 8	2:21 - 3:00

TECHNOLOGY

FACTS Family and Canvas

FACTS is our Student Information System (SIS). It is designed to assist with communication between the school and families, track student information, and provide online access to student grades, absences and discipline information. To access Facts Family for the first time, go to www.mercyhigh.org > FACTS Login.. You must input the email we have for you on file. The use of FACTS Family allows access to student grades, attendance, behavior and tuition.

Canvas is a learning management system used for electronic communication between the student and teacher. Class assignments and assignment due dates are posted on Canvas.

Apple Classroom

Apple Classroom is a powerful iPad feature, built natively into the iPad operating system. This tool helps teachers guide learning, share work and manage student devices. All students agree to be subjected to device management during school hours. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

Inappropriate use will result in disciplinary action.

Internet Access

Students should access the school's wireless network on school-approved devices.

School-Related Email

All students have school managed email accounts. Any email communication to teachers must be conducted using school issued email. Students are responsible for regularly maintaining and checking their email. Neglecting to check and respond to emails will result in disciplinary action. Students can access their email for school-related work. Abuse of this privilege results in three demerits.

Social Networking

Students are not to invite teachers, coaches or staff members to join their social media accounts.

STUDENT DEVICE USE INSTRUCTIONS

Enter your username. Usernames consist of your first initial, last name and your abbreviated graduation year. Example: Barb Smith's Username: bsmith22.

Enter your Password. You must enter the same password you created and turned in during the beginning of the current school year. Keep your password to yourself; it is for *your* use and knowledge only.

Always log on to a school device using your username and password. Always log off the computer at the end of your session by going to Start>Log off Student.

SAVING YOUR WORK ON A SCHOOL DEVICE

Students will save all their student work to their school issued Google Drive account. To log onto this account from a computer, students should open a web browser, go to drive.google.com, and click "Go to Your Drive." The student will then enter her school issued email and password.

Student emails follow this template:

Example: Barb Smith's email would be: bsmith22@mercymonarchs.org

1:1 Technology Program Student Guide

Each student is provided with an Apple iPad and a combination Case/Keyboard. The following information is to help students understand the expectations and responsibilities of using a school-issued iPad.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Students are required to acknowledge receipt of the Student Technology Handbook and the Technology Responsible Use Agreement each year before receiving a school-issued iPad.
- Students are issued devices each year. iPad models and configurations may vary year to year based on available inventory.
- Students are reminded that devices remain the property of Mercy High School at all times. Students do not own the device and are required to follow proper caretaking guidelines.
- Students are required to fully charge the iPad and bring it to school each day.
- Students must use their school-issued iPad every day at school. Personal devices are not permitted unless approved by a faculty or staff member.
- Students should use headphones or earbuds when listening to audio in public spaces.
- Earbuds and headphones are not allowed in the hallways and during class unless teacher or Administration permission is granted. Demerits will be issued for wearing earbuds and headphones in the hallway.
- Students are expected to respect individual privacy and should not use the camera to record or otherwise capture others or the teacher/adults without their expressed permission.

HANDLING AND CARE

- iPad should be kept in the school-issued case. The keyboard is a component of the case and functions as a protective cover for the iPad. It must be kept on the iPad at all times.
- Do not set books on top of the iPad.
- Do not have food or drinks around the iPad.
- Wipe iPad surfaces with a clean, dry soft cloth. Never use a wet cloth to clean the iPad.
- Avoid touching the screen with ink pens or pencils.
- Do not leave the iPad exposed to direct sunlight or near heat or moisture sources for extended periods.
- Do not use cleaning products or compressed air on the iPad.
- Replacement of lost, stolen, or damaged power cord and/or brick are at the student's expense.

TRANSPORT

- Transport iPad in its protective case.
- Do not leave the iPad in a vehicle for extended periods of time or overnight.
- Do not leave the iPad in visible sight when left in a vehicle.

MONITORING AND SUPERVISION

- Do not leave the iPad unattended in an unlocked classroom, common area or during an extracurricular activity.
- Do not lend the iPad to a classmate, friend, or family member.
- Any attempt to "jailbreak" school devices will result in disciplinary action.
- Students are expected to respect the web filter as a safety precaution and shall not attempt to circumvent the web filter.
- Students are responsible for the safety and security of their assigned iPad and any activity on the device.
- Mercy may disable the iPad remotely to protect the device and/or data on the device.

APPS

- Students are required to use the Manager app to download apps to the iPad.
- The App Store is not allowed.
- Apps must be approved to be available for download in the Manager app. A procedure for app approval is available by request from the Technology Director. You can email him cwittry@mercyhigh.org. The procedure is also communicated annually to students.
- App requests may be denied with or without notice, and with or without cause.

MANAGED APPLE ID

- Students are required to use the managed Apple ID assigned by the school.
- Students are never permitted to use a personal Apple ID on a school device.
- Students who sign out of their managed Apple ID and log in to their personal Apple ID will have their device automatically erased and be subject to disciplinary action.

ICLOUD BACKUP AND STORAGE

- Students are required to enable iCloud on the iPad for automatic data backup and storage.
- 200GB of storage is provided to students as part of Mercy's Managed Apple ID program.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

- Students have access to a myriad of technical support resources.
- Please go to the library for consultation during regular school hours for technical support.

DAMAGE, LOSS, OR THEFT

- All iPads are covered with a 4-year Apple Care Plus warranty.
- The Logitech Rugged Keyboard Combo are covered with a 3-year warranty.
- Students are required to report the damage, loss, or theft of school-issued devices immediately to the Technology Director by emailing him at
- A loaner iPad may be issued in the event of damage where repair is required. Students will be held responsible for any damage or loss associated with loaner devices checked out to them.

PRINTING

- Students are encouraged to consider the necessity of printing documents. If printing is required, students should visit the Media Center.

WIRELESS CONNECTIVITY

- Students are expected to stay connected to the designated wireless network at all times while in school.
- The use of personal hotspots, VPN, and other wireless networks are prohibited while in school. Any use of these networking services will result in disciplinary action.

WITHDRAWAL OR DISMISSAL

- In the event a student withdraws or is dismissed from the school, students are required to return all property belonging to Mercy. This includes school-issued devices and related accessories.
- Failure to return property belonging to Mercy High School may result in referral to law enforcement or other collection action, such as the use of a debt collection agency.

PART I – SPIRITUAL LIFE

The development of a spiritual environment at Mercy High School is the primary role of the Campus Minister. This includes organizing and assisting students and sponsors in Campus Ministry groups, i.e. Operation Others, Pro Life, Service, Retreats, and Pastoral Council. Special attention is given to all spiritual activities that create a praying and faith-based atmosphere. Morning prayer over the PA, school Masses, prayer services, Reconciliation services, retreats, Theological reflection on service performed are among the important components in creating a Catholic, Mercy sponsored school community.

SUSCIPE

“**S**ustaining **U**s Spiritually as **C**ommunity **I**n **P**rayers and **E**ucharist” is an acronym using Catherine McAuley’s prayer, her Suscipe, wherein she expresses her commitment to God. The Mercy High School Community gathers in Our Lady of Mercy Chapel during the Suscipe period. The entire school community, students and teachers, join in celebrating Mass, Prayer Services or an assembly.

RECONCILIATION

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is made available to students during the school year. Generally, students are scheduled into a service during a theology period. Students of other faiths are encouraged to pray with their classmates and may, if they so desire, approach the priest for a blessing.

RETREATS

Every student is required to attend an annual retreat. The purpose of the retreat is to help students grow in their relationship with God. Retreat Days are scheduled in fall and spring. Retreats are planned and directed by appropriate members of the faculty.

KAIROS RETREAT

Upper class women can attend an optional 3-day Kairos Retreat. Kairos is a word that is loosely translated as “God’s Time.” It is a retreat centered in helping retreatants to discern and discover how God is at work in their lives. The goals of the retreat are two fold. First, for retreatants to build a stronger relationship with God through reflection, discernment, discussions, talks, personal prayer, Mass, Reconciliation, and communal prayer experiences. Secondly, to build a sense of community with the large group on retreat, within small groups, through liturgy and discussion, with the goal of returning to Mercy and having a positive impact on the culture of our entire school. The retreat experience is an opportunity to get away from the busy-ness of everyday life and take some time to be still and listen and learn more about yourself and the God who loves you.

SERVICE REQUIREMENT

“Do all you can for God and God’s people because time is short” Catherine McAuley

Mercy High School inspires young women

**to become confident women of Mercy who embody
faith, knowledge and compassionate service.**

From Mercy High School Mission Statement

It is in the context of the above mission and the Graduation Standard, “**Graduates of Mercy High School will be Women of Mercy who are compassionate, community oriented and committed to helping others**” that the following requirements have been developed. To assist with meeting the service requirement, benchmark amounts are due the **first Friday of each December**. Hours continue to accumulate towards your 40-hour graduation requirement all year. However, due to the importance of continued service throughout your high school career, **a minimum of 5 hours toward your designated benchmark must be completed each academic year.**

Benchmark Totals:

**Freshmen Year: 5 Hours
Sophomore Year: 15 Accumulated Hours
Junior Year: 30 Accumulated Hours
Senior Year: 40 Accumulated Hours**

The following items will help you comply with MHS Service Requirements.

- It is the student’s responsibility to record all service activity on their MobileServe app or on a service record form. The record **MUST be signed by a supervisor**. It is strongly recommended that service documentation be submitted immediately upon completion of the service. No record will be accepted beyond 30 days after the service is performed.
- Hours completed over the summer **MUST BE** turned in **by the second Friday of September** if you want that service to fulfill your service requirement.
- All service requirements must be completed and submitted (paper or electronically) to the Campus Ministry office **by the first Friday in December each year**.
- An incomplete service requirement is treated as an “Outstanding Obligation.” This means a **student who has not fulfilled her service requirement will not be allowed to participate in Final Assessments in December**.
- Hours beyond the minimal requirement may be submitted at any time during the school year.
- Work done for family members, such as babysitting or cleaning cannot be counted as service hours; these are tasks that are expected as a family member.
- Though we do not do service for recognition, Mercy does give out service awards and many colleges and scholarship applications ask for service records.
- All service records will be processed through the Campus Ministry office and recorded on the MobileServe app. Theological Reflection on student service activities will take place in Theology classes as scheduled by the Campus Minister.

SERVICE FAIR

This is an awareness effort. At least once a year, usually in fall, a number of agencies are invited to come into Mercy during the lunch period to set displays explaining the works of

mercy that they perform for members of the Omaha community. Students are encouraged to visit these displays, receive information about volunteering, and, in general, learn about the opportunities for service that exist in our community.

MERCY LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Each summer 4 – 6 students, usually Student Council leaders, attend a leadership conference in Philadelphia. Students from several Mercy High Schools participate in leadership workshops on such topics as Meyers-Briggs, team building, leadership in a multicultural community, and how to be a leader of Mercy beyond high school. Hosted by a Mercy sponsored college, the students also learn about life at other Mercy high schools as they share many of the activities and programs that their schools sponsor.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION

In the spring, Juniors are invited to self-select to become Eucharistic Ministers during their senior year. Mercy's Campus Minister provides formation and information about the application process and the requirements.

PART II – STUDENT LIFE

Extracurricular activities comprise the other half of a Mercy education. While it is extremely important for the student to grow spiritually and excel academically, it is beneficial for the student to be involved in extracurricular activities during her four years at Mercy. A wide variety of extracurricular activities are offered in an attempt to meet the needs of all students. Clubs are based on student interests and require faculty sponsorship. All clubs may not be offered each year.

Opportunities for involvement with each class include the following: Freshman Year –

Freshman Unity Day

Sophomore Year – Sophomore Talent Show

Junior Year – P.A. (Prom Announcement)

Senior Year – Mercy Day and Farewell Day

In addition to the above activities, students are encouraged to select activities listed on the following page:

CLUBS, ACTIVITIES AND SPORTS	ENTRY METHOD				TIME COMMITMENT
ACTIVITY	Sign-UP	Audition / Try-out	Elected	Meet Qualifying Criteria	

Clubs & Activities					
Abriendo Puertas	X				All Year
Art Club	X				All Year
Book Club	X				All Year
Cheerleading (Basketball)		X			Mid November – Early March
Cheerleading (Volleyball)		X			Mid August – Early November
Class Officers			X		All Year

Craft Club		X				All Year
Dance Team			X			Mid August – Late February
Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)		X				All Year
Math Club		X				All Year
Melting Monarchs		X				All Year
Mock Trial		X				All Year
Musical			X			Early September – Mid November
National Honor Society (NHS)					X	All Year
Operation Others		X				All Year
Pastoral Council		X				All Year
Monarchs for Life		X				All Year
Show Choir			X			All Year
S.P.A.R.K					X	All Year
Spring Play			X			Mid February – Mid April
Student Ambassadors					X	All Year
Student Council				X		All Year
Yearbook		X				All Year
Sports						
Basketball			X			Mid November – Early March
Cross Country			X			Early August – Mid October
Golf (Co-Op)			X			Early August – Early October
Soccer			X			Late February – Mid May

Softball (Co-Op)			X			Early August – Mid October
Swimming & Diving (Co-Op)			X			Mid November – Late February
Tennis			X			Late February – Mid May
Track & Field			X			Late February - Mid May
Volleyball			X			Early August - Early
Wrestling (Co-Op)			X			Mid November - Late February

PART III – ACADEMIC POLICIES

No work of charity is more productive or good to society nor more conducive to the happiness of the poor than the careful instruction of young women.” Catherine McAuley’s insight 150 years ago guides Mercy High School today as we strive to provide an excellent education for each student entrusted to us. Mercy is dedicated to quality instruction, comprehensive curriculum and effective teaching methods that promote lifelong learning and prepare students for further academic study or employment. Mercy adheres to the Nebraska State Department of Education Policy of providing a minimum of 1080 hours of instructional time yearly.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

All students are required to have a total of 50 credits for graduation. Specific course requirements for graduation are printed in the CURRICULUM GUIDE. Seniors who do not have the necessary 50 credits will NOT BE PERMITTED TO GO THROUGH THE GRADUATION CEREMONY, AND WILL NOT RECEIVE A DIPLOMA UNTIL 50 CREDITS HAVE BEEN OBTAINED AND ALL COURSE REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN MET. The school administration may reconsider this policy if the student is one credit short and the student provides documentation of enrollment in a make-up course.

COMPUTATION OF CREDITS

Full year courses meeting 5 days a week = 2 credits Full year Courses meeting 2 or 3 days a week = 1 credit

Semester courses Meeting 5 days a week = 1 credit

Semester Courses meeting 2 or 3 days a week = .5 credit

ACADEMIC PROBATION

Academic Probation is a period during which the student’s academic performance is monitored closely by the administration out of concern for academic progress and to provide additional support for students academically at risk. Students with a cumulative or semester GPA near or below 1.5 at the end of each semester grading period may be placed on

Academic Probation.

1. Any student who drops below a 1.5 cumulatively **or** after any current semester may be placed on academic probation and required to meet with her School Counselor and Academic Success Coordinator to develop a plan for academic improvement. The student and her parent(s) will need to agree to the plan and sign it once it is determined. The student will be required to meet with her School Counselor weekly to review academic progress.

2. Any student who remains below a 1.5 cumulative GPA **or** achieves less than a 1.5 for a second consecutive semester will have her status reviewed by the administration and may be asked to consider other educational options.

3. The progress of all students on academic probation is monitored and reviewed at the end of each semester by the Principal. When warranted, the Principal will make the decision regarding continued enrollment.

ACADEMIC POLICY FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students who are involved in extracurricular activities must demonstrate academic progress to continue participation in the activities. The following extracurricular activities are included:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1) Cheerleading | 7) Sports |
| 2) Class Officers | 8) Student Ambassadors |
| 3) Dance Team | 9) Student Council |
| 4) Music Groups | 10) Theater Productions |
| 5) Pastoral Council | 11) Any other activities deemed by |
| 6) Speech Team | Administration |

1. Academic progress for all students involved in the named extracurricular activities will be reviewed at Progress Report time (mid quarter) **and** Quarter Report time.

2. Any student with two or more F's at the progress **or** quarter report time will be removed from all designated extracurricular activities for ten school days. The student has ten school days to raise her grade from failing status.

3. The student will be required to meet with the Academic Success Coordinator to determine an appropriate plan to improve her grades.

4. At the end of the ten-day period the student is reinstated provided she is not failing more than one class. If more than one grade is still in failing status at the conclusion of the ten-day period, she remains out of the activities until the required academic progress is achieved.

(The student must also realize that ten days missing from an activity may result in the coach/sponsor/director requiring complete withdrawal from the activity due to the amount of time missed.)

ACADEMIC POLICY FOR CONTINUED ENROLLMENT

Since 50 credits are required for graduation from Mercy High School, it is important that the student receive class credits for each semester of enrollment. If a student receives **2 or more semester F's** within a semester or academic year, she **MAY NOT** return to Mercy. **No student may begin her senior year in credit deficit.**

HOMEWORK

Each teacher designs homework assignments to reinforce learning in the classroom. Each teacher determines the amount and type of homework given along with how much value homework carries in determining the overall quarter and semester grades. It is essential that students do homework faithfully.

It is strongly recommended that each student include Study Hall in her schedule, at least 5 periods per week. In addition to her study hall time, most Freshman and Sophomore students should expect an average of 1 to 2 hours of homework/study time per day. Juniors and Seniors, especially those taking AP classes, may average 2 to 3 hours of homework/study time per day. If a student finds that her homework load exceeds these general guidelines on a regular basis, she should consult with her Academic Advisor or her Counselor.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress Reports will be emailed to parents/guardians at mid quarter. Progress reports are sent so parents/guardians may review the student's current standing in each class. Students with a D or F in any class at the end of a reporting period must remain in their structured Study Hall unless being tutored in the Academic Success Center. This procedure is in effect until the next grading report period.

REPORT CARDS AND GRADING

Report Cards will be emailed to parents/guardians as soon as possible following the end of each quarter. Parents/guardians may pick up first quarter report cards at the parent/teacher conference. On the report card, a letter grade and specific comments are indicated for each course. Following is the traditional numerical scale used to convert a percentage average in a course to a letter grade.

REPORT CARD GRADING SCALE

	Letter Grade	GPA Points for Regular Classes	GPA Points for Honors & Non AP Dual Enrollment Classes 5 day	GPA Points for AP Classes & Dual Enrollment AP Classes 5 day
94-100	A	4	4.5	5
90-93	A-	3.7	4.2	4.7
87-89	B+	3.3	3.8	4.3
84-86	B	3	3.5	4
80-83	B-	2.7	3.2	3.7
77-79	C+	2.3	2.8	3.3
74-76	C	2	2.5	3
70-73	C-	1.7	2.2	2.7
67-69	D+	1.3	1.8	2.3
64-66	D	1	1.5	2

63.5 <	F	0	0	0
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NOTE: IF A STUDENT RECEIVES A SEMESTER GRADE OF “F” IN A REQUIRED COURSE, THE PARENT/GUARDIAN IS RESPONSIBLE FOR REGISTERING THE STUDENT IN SUMMER SCHOOL OR OTHER REMEDIAL COUSEWORK, AT THE PARENTS’ EXPENSE. THE STUDENT’S COUNSELOR CAN HELP PROVIDE INFORMATION ON WHAT IS REQUIRED TO MAKE UP THE CREDIT.

TESTING

Classroom Tests

Each teacher designs and executes tests that are given in the classroom. Each teacher determines the number of tests and the types of tests that are given along with how much value tests carry in determining the overall quarter and semester grades.

Performance Assessment

At the end of each grading period in October, December, March & May, teachers design performance assessments through which students demonstrate their mastery of the subject matter to that point in time, as well as demonstrating their ability to apply that knowledge. These assessments may take the form of oral presentations, group presentations, group work projects, portfolio reviews, video presentations, PowerPoint presentations and/or written examinations. Students must have their school accounts current in order to participate in the December and May assessments.

Standardized Tests

Freshmen and Sophomores take the PreACT test every October. Juniors take the PSAT/NMSQT test every October. Juniors and Seniors take the ACT and/or SAT test(s) if they are pursuing college plans. The ACT and SAT tests are held off campus and students are responsible for registering for these tests prior to the deadline dates. The School

Counselors inform students of these upcoming test dates and can assist with registration.

THE ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER

The Academic Success Center is open to all students during study hall and after school until 3:45. It is staffed by the Academic Success Coordinator, ESL Coordinator and two School Counselors.

The Academic Success Center provides a collaborative space for the following purposes:

- Peer tutoring (arranged through the Academic Success Coordinator) • Regular study group meetings
- One on one consultation with the Academic Success team
- Self-directed individual study
- Group project work
- College and career information searches
- College application help
- College scholarship searches

The Academic Success Center is **not** a place for students to congregate and socialize during study hall. If a student is not actively involved in school-specific tasks, she will be asked to

leave.

AFTER SCHOOL HELP

All full-time classroom teachers are available from 3:00-3:45 daily to help students who are struggling with homework, course concepts or are in need of extra assistance— Students need simply to ask. Part-time teachers are available by appointment and should be contacted in advance if possible. **The first line of assistance should always be the classroom teacher.**

After school walk-in tutoring is available in various subjects throughout the year. Students should check in the Academic Success Center for current offerings.

HOMEWORK LAB

The Homework Lab is available Monday through Thursday after school from 3:05 – 3:35pm. This is a walk-in service and no prior sign up is required. This service is provided by members of the National Honor Society (NHS).

TUTORING

In addition to seeking one-on-one assistance from the teacher, peer tutors are available upon request. The Academic Success Coordinator will match the request with an able peer who is either currently taking the class or has taken it in the past and who shares her study hall. The student being tutored must be a willing and active participant, as the tutor is giving up her study hall to provide this service. If the student requires more than once or twice weekly tutoring she should seek outside, professional tutoring. One-on one tutoring is arranged at the request of the student and the classroom teachers.

MANDATORY HOMEWORK LAB (MHL)

The after-school Homework Lab may be deemed mandatory for a period as a consequence for habitual missing work or significantly incomplete work. Students are required to attend MHL for four school days each time they have failed to turn in four assignments for any class, or at the discretion of the classroom teacher. In addition, students in MHL must remain in silent study hall during the school day with limited use of their iPad during that time.

Students are informed of Mandatory Homework Lab by the classroom teacher via a specific form. Students are then required to report to MHL the following Monday - Thursday from 3:05-3:35pm to complete the assignments listed on the form. Once the work is complete, students will spend the remaining days working on current homework.

Students are NOT excused from or allowed to be late to MHL due to carpools, club meetings or work study. If a student misses her work study responsibilities she is expected to report to work at 3:35pm or decide with her supervisor to make up the time.

Parents are notified of Mandatory Homework Lab placement via email each Friday.

DIRECT SUPPORT

Direct Support is a program designed to assist struggling students who are in danger of failing or have received an F in any class on a progress report or quarter/semester report card. Teachers may also request that a student be placed in Direct Support when the student

has not sought help on her own.

Students in this program will report to the teacher of the failed class for **four separate meetings** from 3:05-3:35pm. Students will sign a Direct Support form on which the meeting times will be listed. The student is expected to mark these meeting times on her calendar. While working with the teacher the student will focus on preparation for upcoming tests and review of current materials.

Parents will be informed of Direct Support via an email from the classroom teacher. Students are NOT excused from or allowed to be late to Direct Support due to carpools, club meetings or work study. If a student misses her work study responsibilities she is expected to report to work at 3:35pm or decide with her supervisor to make up the time. If a student is unable to attend, that day's session must be rescheduled with the teacher in advance. Missed meetings due to absence from school will be re-scheduled if possible. Skipped Direct Support meetings will not be re-scheduled. Inability to improve with Direct Support will result in parent contact. Students who are placed in Direct Support for more than two courses will be Referred to her School Counselor.

HONOR ROLL

An honor roll will be compiled at the end of each semester. Students who have a semester grade point average of 3.7 or above will receive first honors. Students who have a semester average of 3.3 to 3.69 will receive second honors. Any student with a D+ or below or an incomplete grade on the semester report card is not eligible for that semester's honor roll, regardless of the numerical average.

CLASS RANK

Class rank will be determined by Cumulative Grade Point Average, which is calculated using semester grades earned at Mercy High School. Valedictorian and Salutatorian honors are based on class rank at the conclusion of 7.5 semesters. A student must attend Mercy High School for a minimum of six semesters to be eligible for Valedictorian or Salutatorian recognition.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

All juniors and seniors who have a 3.7 or higher cumulative GPA will be considered candidates for induction into the McAuley Chapter of the National Honor Society. Each candidate will be asked to submit an essay and application for membership and return it to the faculty advisor by the announced deadline. The application will ask for information about leadership positions held, participation in school and community groups, service activities, and any awards received. A five-member faculty council meets to review each candidate's application materials. TO BE SELECTED TO MEMBERSHIP, THE CANDIDATE MUST DEMONSTRATE EXCELLENCE IN EACH OF FOUR AREAS: CHARACTER, LEADERSHIP, SCHOLARSHIP, AND SERVICE.

DUAL ENROLLMENT

Dual enrollment means the student has the option of registering to earn college credit through successful completion of the Mercy course, at a price much lower than typical college

tuition. Registration to the college and payment of the fee occurs during the first few weeks of the course. Please see the Course Description Book for the complete list of offerings.

***All Mercy students in AP courses** are **REQUIRED** to take the Advanced Placement exam in May, unless they are dual enrolled in the AP Class. Students are responsible for payment of the exam fee (approximately \$95 per exam.) If the student is dual-enrolled, and elects to take the AP exam the sponsoring university may cover part or all of the cost of the AP exam fee.

How a student applies for and pays for dual enrollment

- Each college or university handles the dual enrollment process differently. Students will receive information about the dual enrollment process in class from the Mercy teacher, including how to register and pay for the course.
- In some cases, students may seek need-based financial assistance towards the cost of dual enrollment courses through the ACE scholarship program. ACE (“Accessing College Early”) is a program sponsored by the state of Nebraska; funds are limited. See Mercy’s school counselors for information and application.
- If a student withdraws from a dual-enrolled course, she must notify the sponsoring college/university of the drop. Refund of fee mirrors the college/university tuition refund policy. (Expect no refund after the college’s drop deadline.)
- Dual enrolled students gain access to the sponsoring college/university library and various other campus resources and activities.

How the dual enrollment course appears on student’s educational records

- Mercy classroom teacher will submit course grades for all dual-enrolled students to the college by their deadline, in addition to submitting the course grade to Mercy as per any other course.
- The course appears on Mercy’s transcript just as any other Mercy course, and the grade counts into student’s high school GPA. There is no notation on the Mercy transcript that the course was taken for college credit under a dual enrollment agreement.
- The course appears on the sponsoring college/university official transcript just as any other college course, and will count towards cumulative college GPA and towards college/university graduation requirements if attending the sponsoring institution.
- Acceptance of Dual Enrollment credit by institutions other than the sponsoring college/university is completely up to each college or university. Course credits are generally accepted by other colleges and universities under their transfer of credit policies. Students should contact the registrar of the college or university they plan to attend to verify transferability of the dual enrollment credit.
- Students are responsible for requesting their official college transcript directly from the registrar of the sponsoring college/university when needed.

PART IV – SCHOOL SERVICES

Beyond the classroom setting, many other services are needed to help the young women of Mercy in their education. All members of the Mercy school community stand ready to assist the students and their parents.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mercy High School uses a variety of methods to communicate information to parents. The methods of communication are FACTS Family, Mercy's Website, Canvas, Standard Email, Parent Alert Text Messages and US Mail.

via FACTS:

- Student Attendance, Grades, Behavior & Tuition
- Weekly Bulletin

via Mercy's Website under Current Parents

- School Calendar
- General School Information

via Canvas

- Student Class Assignments & Assignment Due Dates

via Standard Email:

- Athletic Information (physical form, event invitations, coach updates, summer events)
- FIESTA Information
- Invitation to School Events & Extracurricular Events
- Messages from the Principal and Assistant Principal
- Monarch Parents Club Event Invitations
- Student Fundraising Information
- Quarterly Progress Reports
- Quarterly Report Card
- Re-Enrollment Information
- Weekly Bulletin

via Parent Alert Text Messages

- Emergency communication
- Reminders from the Advancement Office
- "Day of" evening activity cancellations

via US Mail:

- FIESTA Information

It is vital that parents check FACTS Family and their email on a regular basis for school information. Notify the school office if your street or email address changes.

GENERAL OFFICE SERVICES HOURS

The office is open from 6:30am to 3:30pm Monday through Friday. Students may be in the building from 6:30am to 5:00pm. Access is gained through a buzzer system. Students are never to open the doors for strangers.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

A student may pay tuition in the office any time during office hours. If a student or parent has any questions about tuition accounts, the accountant can provide information during office

hours. (See Part VIII concerning financial policies.)

TELEPHONES

The office phones are business phones and are not available for student use except in the case of an emergency or if the student is conducting school business. Telephone messages for students will be accepted only from parents and employers. Please ask your parents to avoid such calls unless the message is very important. Students will not be called from class to take calls except in extreme emergencies.

PERMANENT RECORDS

Student records are kept in the school office so that they are readily accessible. These records contain each student's grades and test scores. According to state law these records are accessible to the student, parent and school personnel only. To have records sent to another school, prospective employer, or any other party requires a written release form signed by the parent or student (if of age).

MEDICAL RECORDS

Mercy's Certified Athletic Trainer maintains the medical records of those students who receive treatment in the Athletic Training Room. Students or parents desiring a copy of the records may contact the Athletic Office.

STUDENT VALUABLES

Students are cautioned not to bring large amounts of money to school. If it is necessary to bring more money to school than what is needed for lunch, it would be advisable to leave that money in the school office for safe keeping. Students should also take special care in keeping track of their electronic devices, purses, watches, rings and books. Students are advised to keep their lockers always locked. Students, not the school, are responsible for their personal property.

BULLETINS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

A Weekly Bulletin outlining major meetings, activities and events for the week is shared to all students and parents.

Special notices may be hung as poster signs throughout the school. Posters advertising non-school sponsored events must be approved by the school administration before they are posted. Posters for school events must be approved by the teacher sponsoring the event. Clearance must be obtained from the school administration in order to circulate petitions in or around school.

HEALTH SERVICES

The goal of the school health program at Mercy High School is the promotion of physical and emotional health. The services are intended to support, not substitute for the health care provided by parents.

Nebraska law states that students will have a physical examination by a licensed physician

when transferring from an out-of-state school. Mercy High School requires that all freshmen have a physical examination by a licensed physician before beginning their freshman year. The following immunizations are also required: diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, rubella and varicella. Compliance to both sections of the law must be met or the student shall not be permitted to continue in school until compliance occurs. Health records are maintained including information related to physical and dental care, immunization status, and the results of screenings completed in school.

The "Annual Student Health Update" is completed online during the registration process. It is important that the update be completed prior to fall orientation day so the school is aware of your child's health status. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school office if changes occur.

Students becoming ill during the day MUST report to the office. The school secretary (NOT THE STUDENT) will call the parent and request permission to release the student. When possible, parents will come to pick up their ill daughter and will come into the school office, identify themselves, and leave with their daughter. In circumstances where the parent cannot come to school, appropriate verification of the student's arrival at home will be arranged with the parent. IN NO CASE WILL THE STUDENT BE ALLOWED TO LEAVE SCHOOL WITH ANY PERSON NOT SPECIFICALLY APPROVED BY THE PARENT.

Mercy High School contracts with the Visiting Nurses Association for the services of the school nurse who will be in the building twice a month. The nurse's schedule may be obtained from the school office. A student desiring to see the nurse should contact the school office in advance when possible.

MEDICATION

The school will not prescribe nor give out any form of medication. When it is necessary that a student take medication during school hours, it is the parents' responsibility to make arrangements with the school office. STUDENTS ARE NOT TO CARRY, STORE, OR DISTRIBUTE ANY PRESCRIPTION OR NON-PRESCRIPTION DRUGS OR PILLS. ALL MEDICATION IS TO BE CHECKED INTO THE OFFICE unless other arrangements have been made through the school. Students may self-carry emergency meds, inhalers and epinephrine if a physician order and self-carry form is provided to the school.

Students taking prescribed medication must have a written order from the physician detailing the name of the drug, dosage and time interval that medication is to be given, and written permission from the parent/guardian requesting that the school comply with the physician's orders. Medication must be checked into the school office in the original, appropriately labeled container. It becomes the student's responsibility to see to it that an adequate supply of medication is available at the home during non-school hours.

Non-prescription medication requires written parent permission, and the medication must be checked in to the school office.

Students needing to take cough drops during the school day must submit a written note from the parent and receive a cough drop pass from the office.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE POLICY TO LIFE-THREATENING ASTHMA OR ANAPHYLAXIS.

Mercy High School has adopted the Emergency Response to Life-Threatening Asthma or Anaphylaxis protocol. Trained responders will be available to provide an EpiPen injection and Albuterol nebulizer treatments to ANY student or school staff member should an emergency arise in the school building during school hours. Parents will be asked to reimburse the school for any medications used by their daughter.

IMPORTANT: The emergency EpiPen and Albuterol are not intended to replace a child's own prescribed medications for asthma/allergy control and management. Parents are expected to ensure their children have inhalers, EpiPen, etc. available at school and have an Asthma/Allergy Action Plan or emergency medical plan on file with the school.

COUNSELING SERVICES

STUDENT COUNSELING

Following the American School Counseling Association framework, some of the services offered at Mercy include:

- Post-secondary planning including college and career planning.
- Classroom instruction of the school counseling curriculum standards from the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success.
- Assessing student abilities, interests and achievement to help them make decisions about their futures.
- School counselors are prepared to recognize and respond to student mental health needs and assist students and families seeking resources.
- Implementation of strategies to support student achievement with parents, teachers, other educators and community organizations.
- Providing referrals for students and families to school or community resources for additional assistance and information.

HOW TO SEE THE COUNSELOR

Students may make an appointment to see their counselor during study halls. A pass will be issued by the counselor. In the event of a crisis during class, students may ask their teacher for permission to speak with their counselor.

ACADEMIC ADVISORS

In addition to a school counselor, each student will be assigned an Academic Advisor who will help the student with curriculum planning and career choices along with monitoring the student's academic progress.

PARENT CONCERNS

Parents are urged to consult with their daughter's counselor when they feel it is to the benefit of their daughter. Many times, situations arise that need to be shared or communicated to the school that will benefit the student's progress or future. Parents should contact their daughter's counselor if a student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), a documented learning disability or is undergoing an evaluation for a potential learning disability. Parents

should feel free to call their daughter's counselor or a school administrator anytime.

DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS

In cases of discipline problems, students and parents are urged to discuss the matter with the faculty member involved first. If further discussion is needed, the Principal may be helpful, however, she should only be involved after contacts with the involved teacher prove unsatisfactory.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER SERVICES

The school Library/Media Center is a pleasant place in which to read or study. Students may use the Library/Media Center before school, during study periods and after school. Hours are 7:15am – 4:00pm. There is quiet study before school and cooperative study at all other times. A black and white printer for school-related use is available in the library/media center. Color print copies are available on request at a cost of .25 cents per page.

Print copy books are checked out for a period of three weeks and may be renewed for another two weeks. Students may also access digital books and research databases with their Mercy High login at any time and from home. The student is responsible for any lost materials. She must pay all replacement costs for the materials. Reference books and teacher reserve materials are to be used ONLY in the Library/Media Center.

Apple TV Conference Rooms are available for group work. The room must be signed out at the Circulation Deck prior to use.

ANY UNAUTHORIZED REMOVAL OF LIBRARY MATERIALS FROM THE LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER WILL RESULT IN SERIOUS DISCIPLINARY MEASURES. NO FOOD, DRINK (except a transparent water bottle) ARE ALLOWED IN THE LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER.

ONLINE BOOKSTORE

Mercy High School partners with EdTech as the school's official online bookstore. Bookstore access: CustomersFirst@EdTechSolutions.com It is the student's responsibility to make sure books are ordered in time for the start of the school year.

PART V - REGISTRATION PROCESS

Academics are of primary importance at Mercy High School. The student's academic advisor is prepared to help the student meet with academic success during her four years at Mercy.

CHOOSING A COURSE OF STUDY

Each student will work with her academic advisor in designing a course of study, which will be most beneficial to her. Advisors meet with their advisees throughout the year to check on the progress being made. Also, the advisor works closely with each advisee every February when the registration process for the upcoming year begins. Students are given a COURSE

DESCRIPTION BOOK each year which details all the course offerings for the upcoming year. The Advisor will help each student select the classes that are needed to satisfy her course of study. A non-refundable registration fee is due by the specified date in the spring.

EVERY STUDENT MUST CARRY A MINIMUM CLASS LOAD OF 6 FULL CLASSES EACH SEMESTER.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

When students are registering for the upcoming year, they must be certain about the courses they are requesting. Schedule changes made after the first week of school are subject to a \$50.00 charge. The schedule change fee is waived when a teacher makes the recommendation or when the principal needs to make a change to accommodate the student's schedule. If a student feels she is not appropriately placed in that class, she must approach her teacher or her advisor who will consult with the principal about a possible change.

After the first two weeks of each semester, students will be unable to drop, add, or change courses. Course changes that occur because of a student's lack of careful planning are detrimental to that student, as well as disruptive to the total educational process. Therefore, schedule change policies and deadlines will be strictly followed.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

If it becomes necessary for a student to withdraw from school prior to the end of the normal school year, she should contact the Principal. A student who does not do this will not be entitled to any refund of tuition (if any is due).

PART VI - ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Truancy is a violation of Nebraska's Compulsory Attendance Law. Therefore, attendance data is a part of every student's permanent record. In addition, the school feels that a student's attendance in class is extremely important to the learning process. Because of this philosophy, the following attendance policy has been developed.

CLASSES MEETING 5 DAYS A WEEK

If 12 days of non-school related absences occur within a semester, the student may be placed in failing status. The parent/guardian and the student will be notified via email when 6 and 9 absences have occurred and will also be notified of the potential for charges of truancy. At 9 absences a meeting will be held with the student, parent, counselor, and administrator to determine the next steps, including but not limited to Saturday School Attendance.

CLASSES MEETING 2 or 3 DAYS A WEEK

The same policy as above applies to classes meeting 2 or 3 days a week with these changes:

- 6 days of non-school related absences in a semester may place the student in failing status.
- The parent/guardian and student will be notified via email when 3 & 5 absences have

occurred.

-On the 6th absence, students will be assigned to Saturday School.

MEDICAL EXCEPTIONS

If a physician has ordered a student to be out of school for an extended period, the student must submit a note from her attending physician when she returns to school. When this happens, these days are not counted toward failure in a class. Please note that this exception is in place to create leeway for a student who might get very ill with mono, pneumonia, etc. Normally, medical exceptions involve missing more than one consecutive week of school. In the case of excessive days of absence for health or other reasons, the family will meet with the school counselor and principal to devise a plan to best suit the student.

APPEAL PROCESS FOR FAILURES DUE TO ABSENTEEISM

The parent/guardian, on behalf of the student, may request an appeal hearing for a semester grade of F due to poor attendance. The appeal committee consists of the Principal, the Assistant Principal, and the student's Academic Advisor. Please note that only medical documentation submitted on the day the student returns from an extended absence will be considered during the appeal hearing. If the appeal is granted the grade issued will be a D-.

SCHOOL AND NON-SCHOOL RELATED ABSENCES

All absences are non-school-related except for the times when a student needs to be released from a class in order to participate in school-related activities such as athletic, dramatic, speech and music competitions; recruitment team visits; and/or field trips & educational excursions. **Students are expected to have all assignments, tests, quizzes, projects, etc. completed prior to the absence unless the teacher directs otherwise.** Teachers do reserve the right to deny permission for school-related absences. School related absences do not count towards placing a student in failing status.

College Visits:

Juniors are allowed 1 day a school year and seniors are allowed 2 days a school year for the purpose of visiting university/college campuses. Students are allowed a half day at a time for visits to local colleges/universities. These days are recorded on the student's attendance record, but do not count toward attendance failure, **IF ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE IN ADVANCE WITH THE MAIN OFFICE.** The day the student returns to school she must submit a letter from the College Admissions Counselor documenting the date and time of the visit. Once the letter is submitted, the day(s) will be considered excused.

REQUIRED DAYS OF ATTENDANCE

All school days, whether regular class days or special days (such as school picnics and retreats) are a required part of school attendance. The same rules apply to special days as to regular class days. A student should not be kept home on special days if the parent would not keep her home on a regular day. If a student does not attend on special days, she will be

counted absent.

PARTICIPATION IN OUTSIDE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

For a student to participate in an outside school activity she must be in school at least 4 periods the day of that activity. Exceptions will be granted by the Athletic Director.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AN ABSENCE

If a student is absent from school, the student's parent/guardian must call the school (402-553-9424) or email attendance@mercyhigh.org between 6:30am and 8:30am stating the reason for the absence. Calls should be made each day of the absence. If a student is reported absent at school but her parent/guardian has not called the school by 8:30am, the office will contact the parent/guardian to determine the situation. Parents can save the office a great deal of time by remembering to call in.

STUDENT ADMITTANCE FOLLOWING AN ABSENCE

The student must report to the school office **BEFORE SCHOOL** with a written excuse from the parent/guardian if the office did not receive notice of the absence the day before.

EARLY DISMISSALS

A student requesting early dismissal before the end of the regularly scheduled day for doctor's appointments, dentist appointments, etc., **must stop** in the school office before the beginning of the school day. Written parental permission must be presented at this time and an early dismissal pass will be issued. When it is time for the student to leave class, the student will present the pass to her teacher who will initial the pass. The student is to stop in the office before leaving for her appointment to surrender her pass & to let the office know that she is leaving. If the student did not drive to school, the parent/guardian picking up the student must come into the building and be prepared to show identification and sign her out.

IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT APPOINTMENTS BE SCHEDULED OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL TIME WHENEVER POSSIBLE. LATE START WEDNESDAYS ARE IDEAL TIMES TO SCHEDULE THESE APPOINTMENTS. THESE DAYS ARE CLEARLY MARKED ON THE SCHOOL CALENDAR.

Seniors who do not have a scheduled 8th period class or any other school function to attend after 7th period, may have permanent early dismissal. NOTE: Schedule changes will not be permitted to facilitate early dismissal. All Seniors are required to be at any assembly, pep rally, religious function scheduled after 7th period. Administration reserves the right to revoke this privilege.

LEAVING SCHOOL FOR UNSCHEDULED REASONS

If a student needs to leave school for an unscheduled reason such as illness or an emergency, **she must come to the school office** where a **school official will call the parent/guardian**. Parental/guardian permission will be required in all cases before a student is allowed to leave the building. Students may not leave school to pick up papers or books or other materials that have been "forgotten" at home, or to run errands for friends, etc. If a student should leave the school building at any time without permission from the school

office, the student will be issued a Class "B" detention.

MAKEUP WORK FOLLOWING AN ABSENCE

Class work missed due to excused absences is the responsibility of the student. The student will be allotted the number of days missed to makeup the work.

ACQUIRING ASSIGNMENTS DURING ABSENCES

When a student is absent from class she should check Canvas for her assignments. All assignments will be posted on Canvas by 4:00pm each day.

CLASS SKIPPING

Class Skipping, defined as not being in class, homeroom, or study hall when not excused from the class, homeroom, or study hall, particularly after the student has reported to school, will result in a Class "B" detention and a "0" grade for the class skipped. When a study hall is skipped, pass privileges will be terminated for an appropriate period of time.

Students who have left home without parental permission and who, at the same time, do not attend school will be subject to discipline and academic consequences as determined by the school administrators.

SKIPPING A SEMESTER ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Skipping a semester assessment activity is a serious offense. The student's right to makeup the assessment will be determined by the principal and the teacher involved. THE STUDENT WILL BE WITHHELD FROM ALL REMAINING ASSESSMENTS UNTIL THE STUDENT HAS VISITED WITH THE PRINCIPAL. Consequences for skipping the assessment may include: 1) denial to reschedule which could mean semester failure & loss of credit, 2) rescheduling but automatically lowering the earned grade, 3) forfeiture of right for remaining assessments.

TARDINESS

Punctuality in arrival and attendance at each class or assigned study hall is required of all students.

If a student is detained by a faculty member and thereby caused to be late for a class, a note from the faculty member should be requested by the student.

A student who is late coming to school must report to the school office to obtain an admit slip. Students that obtain 5 tardies will be assigned one hour of detention. Ten tardies will result in 2 hours of detention and a meeting with the assistant principal, parent and counselor. Fifteen tardies to school or to class will result in Saturday School. Habitual tardy issues will be addressed on a case by case basis.

ATTENDANCE AT ASSEMBLIES, PEP RALLIES, RELIGIOUS FUNCTIONS

Since assemblies, pep rallies and liturgical functions are looked upon as celebrations of what we are as a Christian community, all students are expected to attend.

ATTENDANCE AT RETREATS

Retreats foster the very essence of Catholic education by building a closer relationship with Christ by providing the opportunity for better understanding of self and others. Since retreats underscore the very reason for Mercy High School's existence, and since students receive release time from classes to participate, all students (Catholic & non Catholic) are required to attend one retreat a year.

PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCES

During the year there may be times the student knows in advance she needs to miss school (medical procedures, college visits, funerals, trips, etc.)

The absences MAY be considered excused by the school if the following procedure is followed:

1. The parent contacts the School Office to explain the circumstances.
2. The student then receives an "Extraordinary Absence Request Form" and sees each of her teachers for assignments.

** A form is only needed for absences of two or more days. **

3. The teacher will sign the form & comment on how the absence will affect the academic status of the student.
4. The student returns the completed form to the School Office one week prior to the absence. (If the student fails to return the form, makeup work will not be allowed.)
5. A copy of the completed form is sent home with the student.
6. The student is responsible for completing the work assigned in accordance with the school's makeup policy unless directed other-wise by the teacher.

THE EARLIER THE SCHOOL IS NOTIFIED; THE SOONER PARENTS WILL BE IN POSSESSION OF THE INFORMATION NEEDED TO BASE THEIR DECISION REGARDING THE ABSENCE.

The school's policy regarding trips rests upon the premise that the chief responsibility for a child's education rests with the parents. To help the parents determine how this trip will affect their daughter's academic work, the system outlined above has been set in place.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE WILL MAKEUP WORK BE ALLOWED IF THE SCHOOL OFFICE IS NOT GIVEN ADVANCE NOTICE OF THE TRIP.

ABSENCE DUE TO PROLONGED HOSPITAL STAYS OR INJURIES WHICH PREVENT CLASS PARTICIPATION

In the event a student is hospitalized for 3 weeks or more, the school will assist the student with a modified course of study. However, the following must be understood by the student & her parents:

1. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the Principal or the Assistant Principal of the hospitalization as soon as possible.
2. The hospital controls the amount of time the student/patient may spend on school work; therefore, the school can make NO GUARANTEE that credit will be earned in classes. This

determination will be made by the school after work is completed and evaluated.

3. It may be necessary for the student to drop certain types of activity classes P.E. Art, Music, Speech, Technology classes, etc. from her schedule.

4. The student's Counselor serves as liaison for home, school and hospital communication.

5. BEFORE the student returns to school, the student & parent must meet with the Principal or Assistant Principal and Counselor to best determine the student's status so that she may continue to improve.

6. Classwork is handled on a correspondence basis. The teacher will provide assignments for one day. No new assignments will be issued until all previous assignments given in that subject have been completed and returned to the teacher.

7. The final date for course-completion is determined by the school administration.

8. The student is restricted from all social functions at school until she has been released from the hospital and has been given her physician's permission to return to school for classes.

9. In the event of an injury which prevents full class participation in an activity class for more than three weeks the student may be required to drop the class.

PART VII - STUDENT REGULATIONS

At Mercy High School, we believe that self-discipline is necessary to the formation of Christian behavior, Christian values, and Christian responsibility in our community. These guidelines are to serve as an aid in promoting the Christian atmosphere that is the essence of Mercy High School. Respect & cooperation are the key elements for making Mercy an enjoyable and safe school. No set of rules and regulations could ever cover all the different situations that might arise during the course of a school year. Therefore, students are asked to conform to whatever is asked of them by school officials in a cooperative & respectful manner. However, students do have the right to know the framework within which they are expected to assume personal responsibility for their actions. They should know the disciplinary measures that will be taken when they fail to show this personal responsibility.

The school reserves the right to enter into student affairs if these affairs are damaging to the school's reputation. When on or off campus activities that damage the school's reputation are reported to the school, there may be disciplinary action for the student behavior.

RESPECT

As previously stated, respect and cooperation are the key elements for making Mercy an enjoyable and safe school. Every member of the Mercy community is valued as a person and respected for their unique gifts. Students are called upon to respect the talents and uniqueness of each person and refrain from any actions, which infringe upon the basic principle of respect.

HONOR CODE

The students of Mercy High School, themselves, have requested that all students operate under a Code of Honor. This means that all students will follow the rules and regulations of

Mercy High School out of respect and loyalty to Mercy's reputation as a school of excellence. When a violation of rules and regulations that deal with the integrity of the school and its programs is observed, or when actions are observed that endanger or threaten the safety of the school population, students are honor bound to report the violation to the proper school authority.

BULLYING / HARASSMENT

Mercy High School affirms the Christian dignity and value of every person; therefore bullying or harassment, whether verbally, in writing, in person, or in an electronic format, against a staff member or student will not be tolerated.

Bullying is defined as any intentional ongoing pattern of written or verbal expression, electronic abuse, physical acts, or gestures intended to cause distress/harm upon one or more students and includes an imbalance of power. Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology.

Harassment is defined as any physical, verbal, graphic, electronic, or written material, which may be related, but not limited to a person's disability, gender, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or religion which has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment. Slurs, taunting, derogatory jokes, or language of any kind, which is disparaging, demeaning or threatening to others on the basis of a person's: disability, gender, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or religion will not be tolerated.

While the school has no duty to regulate student behavior off-campus or review off campus internet messages, statements, postings, or acts, Mercy students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately as women of Mercy and refrain from activities that can be defined as illegal, immoral, unhealthy, or highly inappropriate and may be held responsible for actions that contradict either the values set forth in our mission statement or the policies and procedures set forth in our student/parent handbook when off campus. Mercy reserves the right to review, investigate, and discipline students for bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or other disciplinary violations when such actions threaten violence against an explicitly named student, compromise said student's ability to receive an education or otherwise disrupt the learning environment or school activities. Any allegations of dating violence will be investigated and will be referred to the appropriate authorities when deemed necessary.

If a student is the victim of or suspects someone to be the target of either harassment or bullying, they are encouraged to notify their counselor or the assistant principal. When reporting an incident, it is helpful to provide as much information as possible, including a description of the event(s), the number of occurrences, dates and places offenses occurred, names of any witnesses, and any other evidence available.

Confirmed violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action and consequences commensurate with the nature of the act, including but not limited to detention, counseling referral, parent meeting, suspension or expulsion. Retaliation of any kind against a target of harassment or bullying, against a witness to said activity, or against any person providing information about the activity is strictly prohibited.

5032 Student Offensive Conduct, Bullying or Harassment

Student offensive conduct, bullying or harassment (repeated incidents of such conduct) based on a person's gender, sexual orientation, race, color, age, religion, national origin, marital status or disability is prohibited. Offensive conduct, bullying or harassment could result in suspension or expulsion.

Examples of offensive conduct, bullying or harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Explicit and offensive references or gestures.
- b. Unwelcome physical contact and unwelcome verbal, written, or physical advance or suggestions.
- c. Name calling or taunting on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, marital status or disability;
- d. Language of any kind, including graffiti, epithets, vulgar or profane jokes, which is disparaging or demeaning to others on the basis of their gender, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, marital status or disability.

Policy Approved: October 15, 1995

Policy Revision: June, 1999; May, 2006; April, 2010; September, 2016; August, 2023

5033 Procedures for Reports and Investigations Relative to Offensive Conduct, Bullying or Harassment

An individual who has complaints of offensive conduct, bullying or harassment will report such conduct to the principal/administrator. If an individual feels uncomfortable with bringing the matter to the principal/administrator, or if the principal/administrator is thought to be involved in the offensive conduct, bullying or harassment, this individual will inform the Superintendent of Schools of the Archdiocese of Omaha. Charges of offensive conduct, bullying or harassment will be promptly and thoroughly investigated and a written report will be made concerning the results of the investigation.

If it is determined that offensive conduct, bullying or harassment has occurred, appropriate relief for the individual bringing the complaint and appropriate disciplinary action against the guilty person, up to and including dismissal or expulsion will follow.

The school will not tolerate retaliation against any employee or student who complains in good faith of offensive conduct, bullying or harassment or provides in good faith, information in connection with any such complaint.

The school will assist persons falsely accused of offensive conduct, bullying or harassment in making known to appropriate parties, the false complaint. The school will take disciplinary action, which may include dismissal or expulsion, if sufficient evidence substantiates the guilt of a person who falsely alleges offensive conduct, bullying or harassment.

If the principal/administrator determines that there is reasonable cause to believe that child abuse has occurred, the principal/administrator shall make a report to the Child Protective

Services ("CPS") Division of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services or law enforcement. The offending conduct may also violate the Safe Environment Policies of the Archdiocese of Omaha.

Policy Approved: June 30, 1999

Policy Revision: May, 2006; November, 2006; April, 2010; August, 2023

5040 Restraint and Seclusion Policy

Physical restraint and seclusion of students for behavior management shall be used in circumstances and under conditions that are in the best interests of students.

Physical restraint is appropriate when a student is displaying physical behavior which presents substantial imminent risk of injury to the student or others, and the student is demonstrating the intent and the ability to cause injury within a matter of seconds or minutes. The degree of physical restriction employed should be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident, the size and condition of the student, and the potential risks for injury to the student or others. Physical restraint does not include: (a) taking away a weapon; or (b) breaking up a fight.

Seclusion is appropriate when a student is displaying physical behavior that presents substantial imminent risk of injury to the student or others, and the threat could be diminished if the student were placed in a safe environment away from other students and staff. Seclusion should only be used as long as necessary and should be discontinued when the student is no longer a threat to himself/herself or others. Time out procedures which do not constitute seclusion are permitted in school.

Immediately after the student has restored emotional and behavioral control following the use of physical restraint and/or seclusion, a staff member not involved with the incident shall examine the student to ascertain if the student has sustained any injury. The Principal (or Teacher Facilitator) will verbally notify the parent/guardian as soon as possible (no later than the end of the school day in which the physical restraint or seclusion occurs).

All use of physical restraint or seclusion must be documented in a memorandum within one school day of the incident. The Principal (or Teacher Facilitator) will send a copy of the memorandum to the parent or guardian within two school days following the use of the restraint or seclusion.

GENERAL DRESS AND GROOMING

Your grooming should reflect sensitivity to others and respect for yourself and those around you. Unbecoming fashions or anything designed to attract undue attention to the individual are not acceptable. Neatness and appropriateness of hair, clothing, jewelry and your person are part of this framework.

Not acceptable at Mercy High School:

- Hair coloring that does not occur naturally (ex. bright red, blue, green, • orange, pink, etc.)
- This policy applies to natural hair, highlights and extensions.
- Costume make-up
 - Eye altering contacts
 - Excessive jewelry

- Body piercing (other than ears) must be covered
 - Facial piercings must have a small or clear stud, no hoops or dangles.
- Body markings (tattoos must be covered)
- Heavily scented perfumes and lotions
- Any other items that attract undue attention

**These guidelines are subject to administrative discretion.*

UNIFORM DRESS

On regular school days, each student must be in uniform from the beginning of school in the morning until the final dismissal bell in the afternoon. The lunch period and senior study hall are considered part of the school day.

Regulation Uniform

Skirt:

- The navy and gray plaid uniform skirt must be worn no shorter than 3" above the knee.
- The uniform skirt must be fully zipped, not rolled, and worn at the waistline. • Students are not allowed to change the appearance of the plaid of the uniform skirt.
- Skirts can be purchased through the Mercy/DiGiorgio's online store or you can also visit DiGiorgio's store at 14111 Q Street to purchase the skirt. The Mercy Spirit Store has all available sizes of the skirt for your daughter to try on prior to purchasing. Skirts purchased online will be delivered to Mercy about once per month. You will be notified when your item(s) are ready to be picked up.
- DiGiorgio's will still provide alterations for skirts purchased through the online store – contact them directly for those services. *(Additional charges may apply for alterations.)*

Pants:

- MUST be purchased at DiGiorgio's Sportswear. Navy blue slacks with the Mercy logo.

Polo:

- Polo options include a navy short sleeve or long sleeve, or a gray short sleeve or long sleeve embroidered with the Mercy logo.
- Polo shirts are only available for purchase at Mercy's Spirit Store. **The polo can be purchased in store or via our online Spirit Store.**
- A solid white short sleeve t-shirt (no printing) or white tank may be worn **UNDER** the uniform shirt. The T-Shirt sleeves **may not** be longer than the polo shirt sleeves.
- The polo shirt and t-shirt must be tucked in at all times.

Socks, Tights, Leggings

- Socks must be white, navy, gray, or black and worn at ALL times. • Socks must be visible above the shoe with minimal logos.
- Girls may wear tights or leggings under their uniform skirt, tights or leggings must be solid navy, solid gray or solid black (No leg warmers, thermal tights, or runner/aerobic tights allowed). Tights and leggings must be full length and cover the entire leg. Capri style leggings and flared leggings are not acceptable.

Shoes:

- Shoes must be worn at all times, and they must be COMPLIMENTARY to the rest of the uniform. All shoes must have backs or back straps. Shoes must be closed toe.
- There are styles of shoes that will not be allowed - NO SLIDES, MULES, MOCCASINS, SLIPPERS, SLIPPER-LIKE SHOES, BOOTS, BOOT- LIKE SHOES. No shoes with faux or real fur. This list is not inclusive as to all the types of shoes that would be considered not acceptable for school.

Scarves and Hair Bands:

- May be worn to hold hair in place or to tie back hair. Hats may not be worn with the uniform.

Backpacks:

- Will not be allowed in the classrooms.
- Student may carry a small pencil pouch to hold their personal items

Headphones:

- Headphones and earbuds are only allowed with teacher permission.
- ARE permissible for use during lunch.
- Items should be off and out of sight at all times between 7:40am and 3:00pm.

Optional Uniform Pieces (Quarter Zip, Cardigan, Plaid “M” Crewneck):

- Gray or navy embroidered quarter zip
- Gray or navy cardigan sweater
- Gray plaid “M” crewneck sweatshirt
- When the uniform polo is worn with either the quarter zip, cardigan, or plaid “M”, **they must be contrasting colors**. *Ex: navy polo with grey quarter zip, gray cardigan, or plaid “M” crew. The grey polo with navy quarter zip or navy cardigan.* The polo shirt must **always** be worn underneath these uniform pieces, and it **must be** visible.
- The embroidered quarter zip, embroidered cardigan sweater, and the plaid “M” crewneck sweatshirt are only available for purchase at Mercy’s Spirit Store. **These items can be purchased in store or via our online Spirit Store.**

** All items ordered online through the Mercy Spirit Store will typically be fulfilled within three days and can either be picked up at school for free or you can pay for the order to be shipped directly to you.*

- *You will receive notification when items are ready to be picked up.*
- *If you have a current Mercy student, we can also send orders home with her.*

***EACH UNIFORM ITEM MUST BE WELL-KEPT AND IN GOOD CONDITION. A STUDENT IS CONSIDERED OUT OF UNIFORM IF HER UNIFORM IS NOT IN GOOD REPAIR. ANY UNIFORM VIOLATION WILL RESULT IN TWO DEMERITS.**

PHYSICAL EDUCATION ATTIRE

- T-shirt with sleeves (Any printing on the shirt must convey an appropriate message.)
- Athletic shorts, sweatpants or wind pants (no boxers, spandex or jeans.) • Socks and athletic

shoes with laces.

SPIRIT SHIRT AND DRESS-DOWN DAYS

If a student chooses to participate in spirit shirt days, a Mercy T-shirt or sweatshirt **must** be worn on the designated day. The Mercy T-shirt or sweatshirt **may not** be covered with any other apparel (jackets, sweaters, sweatshirts, etc.). Jeans or shorts may be worn on spirit shirt and dress down days. The jeans or shorts **may not** be tattered or torn. Shirts must cover the entire upper torso. Crop tops and mid-drift tops are **not** acceptable. Tops with spaghetti straps are not allowed. Common rules of modesty apply on all spirit shirt and dress down days. Socks and shoes are required for spirit shirt and dress down days. Shoes must have a back or back strap. Hats may not be worn on spirit shirt and dress down days.

NEBRASKA STATE LAW

Any student who acts in violation of any of the laws of the state of Nebraska while in attendance at school, or property directly adjacent to that of the school during, immediately before or after school hours or a school sponsored activity may face serious disciplinary action.

While attending Mercy High School students shall reside with a parent, guardian or an adult acting in "loco parentis."

Academic Integrity Policy

Cheating is defined as representing another's work as your own, manipulation of information to gain an unfair advantage, and enabling others to use your work as their own. This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Providing or obtaining answers to test/quiz questions or class assignments from sources other than those allowed by the instructor.
- Appear to be providing or obtaining answers to test/quiz questions or class assignments from sources other than those allowed by the instructor.
- Plagiarizing any portion of reports, essays, papers and other assignments/ projects.
- Submitting information from the Internet without proper documentation.
- Altering test/quiz/assignment scores.
- Unauthorized use of foreign language translators (individual units or web based).
- Unauthorized use of technology to reproduce a test/quiz or other class work.
- Software or programs that compose work for students, like Chat GPT, are not allowed without teacher approval.

Cheating and plagiarism offenses will be evaluated based on the following levels:

Level 1 Offenses:

- Cheating or unintentionally plagiarizing on a daily/minor assignment. Level 1 Consequences:
- The student will receive a zero on the assignment and may receive three demerits for unauthorized use of technology. The teacher will contact parents regarding the offense.

Level 2 Offenses:

- Second occurrence of a Level 1 Offense.
- Cheating on a quiz.

Level 2 Consequences:

- The student will receive a zero on the assignment and a Class B detention. The assistant principal will contact parents regarding the offense.

Level 3 Offenses:

- Third offense, or blatantly mis-citing your work, plagiarism, cheating on a significant assessment (project, paper, unit test, performance or art test, lab report, presentation, final exam).

Level 3 Consequences:

- The student will receive a zero on the assessment although the student may be allowed to re-do the work for partial credit at the teacher's discretion.
- The student will also receive two detentions, and a parent meeting will be held with school administration.
- If the student cheats on a final exam, she will not be allowed to retake the exam for partial credit.

Multiple level 3 offenses will be addressed, and additional consequences will be assigned by the administration.

SMOKING AND VAPING

Students are prohibited from smoking or vaping in the school building, at school sponsored events, on school grounds or within one block of the school building.

DRUG POSSESSION, USE OR SUSPICION OF USE

Possession, use and/or sale of alcohol, prescribed drugs not cleared through the office, all illegal drugs, and drug related items, may result in immediate expulsion or request to leave. This rule applies to the possession, use and/or sale at school events, prior to coming to school events, on school property or prior to arriving on school property. If evidence exists school officials will immediately remove the student from the activity and notify the Assistant Principal and other appropriate authorities. A conference will be scheduled as soon as possible with the Principal, Assistant Principal, the parent(s) and the student.

If a suspicion of any type of drug abuse exists in the opinion of a faculty/staff member, she or he will notify the Assistant Principal of the suspicion. The Assistant Principal will inform the student's Counselor of the suspicion and the parents will be notified. The student's Counselor will arrange a counseling session with the student.

NOTE: Drug abuse includes alcohol as well as other chemicals. Suspicion of drug abuse is based on the behavior of the student, as well as concerns expressed by other members of the Mercy community.

DANGEROUS OBJECTS / CHEMICALS / WEAPONS

Any student on school property or at a school sponsored event found possessing or storing any object and/or chemical deemed to be harmful to another individual may result in immediate expulsion.

FORGERY

No student may forge or alter a note, medical form or pass. No student may be in illegal possession of official school forms or passes. Forgery and/or illegal possession of official school forms will result in a Class "B" detention.

DISRUPTIVE ACTIONS

Any individual student who engages in any disruption of the learning environment will be ordered by any staff member to cease the disruption and be subjected to disciplinary action including losing her right to the education provided by the school.

Any student found guilty of setting off a fire alarm falsely will be subject to severe disciplinary action. (Students are reminded that setting off a false alarm is a crime and that it also causes serious danger to the public safety because firefighters must be called to investigate.)

All members of any group of students engaged in any activity such as picketing, boycotting, unauthorized meeting during school hours or unauthorized use of school facilities will cease such action upon immediate order of any staff member and be subject to disciplinary action.

CUTTING, DEFACING, VANDALISM AND THEFT

Action of this sort against school property, or another person's personal property will not be tolerated. If in violation of civil, state or federal law, the case may be referred to the proper authority. Action of this sort can lead to disciplinary proceedings. Students will also be responsible for paying for the loss or damage.

CRIMINAL ACTS

If a student is cited by law enforcement for committing a serious criminal act she will remain at home until the case is decided in court. Pending the court decision, the student may be required to withdraw from Mercy High School.

VIOLATIONS RESULTING IN DEMERITS OR FINES

Demerits will be issued for the rule violations listed below.

ONE DEMERIT will be issued for the following rule violations:

- Beverage/food/gum outside of cafeteria
- Wearing uniform improperly
- Being somewhere without a pass during studyhall
- Not signing in or out with the school office when late or leaving early

TWO DEMERITS will be issued for the following rule violations:

- Uncooperative
- Littering
- Minor disturbance in the building, shouting, screaming, running, etc.
- Use of elevator without a pass
- Unauthorized use of technology/Cell phone/Smart Watch/Headphones
- No uniform
- Any other minor action that is disruptive to the proper operation of the school

THREE DEMERITS will be issued for the following rule violations:

- Inappropriate behavior
- Obscene/inappropriate gesture

- Obscene/inappropriate language

ACCUMULATION OF DEMERITS will result in the following:

- 5 demerits = One hour detention
- 10 demerits = Email notification to parent/guardian. Meeting with counselor, parent and Administration. Saturday School is assigned.
- 15 demerits = Two hour detention and a one week suspension from clubs and activities.
- 20 demerits = Parent/Guardian conference and expulsion point. Removal from Extra Curricular Athletics and Activities. Saturday School is Assigned.
- 30 demerits = Parent/Guardian conference, in-school suspension and expulsion point • 40 demerits = Possible expulsion

The school reserves the right to impose additional consequences if demerits prove not to change behavior.

All demerits accumulated during the school year count toward possible expulsion or request to leave Mercy.

VIOLATIONS RESULTING IN DETENTION

A. Demerit Detention. Penalty = One Hour Detention

Accumulation of 5 demerits results in detention. Accumulation of 5 tardies.

B. Class "B" Infractions. Penalty = One Hour Detention PLUS suspension after accumulating four (4) within a school year.

- Skipping of class, study hall, homeroom, class meeting, or any all-school event: Mass, Assembly, Picnic, Pep Rally, etc.*
- Serious disrespect or disobedience to any school authority.
- Willful damage to school property or personal property of others in the school. • Failure to report to detention.
- Forgery and/or possession of school forms.
- Leaving school without permission.
- Any other action that is disruptive to the proper operation of the school or that threatens the physical or moral well-being of any person in the school. ***NOTE:** skipping school all day will result in two (2) Class "B" detentions.

Saturday School

Saturday School, when assigned, will be held from 8am to 12pm at Mercy High School. Students will need to bring their iPad, however they will not be permitted use of headphones, cell phones, or smart watches during this time. Students will be asked to perform light housekeeping in service to our community in addition to school work.

EXPULSION POINTS

Accumulation of 5 expulsion points during your time at Mercy High School may result in expulsion or request to leave. For probationary/conditional enrollment status students, accumulation of 3 expulsion points may result in expulsion or request to leave Mercy High School. A student accumulates expulsion points when her parent/guardian is contacted by the school administration for discipline issues on such matters as, but not limited to, cheating, stealing, plagiarizing, demerits, detentions, possession of prescription and non-prescription

medications, hostile encounters, threats, etc.

NOTIFICATION OF DEMERIT AND CLASS B DETENTIONS:

When a student is issued a Demerit Detention or a Class B Detention she will receive a Detention Notification Form through the school office. The student must take the Detention Form home, have her parent/guardian sign it, and present it to the Assistant Principal when reporting to detention. No further reminder will be given. **NOTE:** Failure to return the Demerit Detention Notification Form with parent/guardian signature will result in 3 demerits. Failure to return the Class B Detention Notification Form with parent/guardian signature will result in an additional Class B Detention. Failure to attend detention at the designated time will result in a Class B Detention.

SUSPENSIONS, REQUESTS TO LEAVE AND POSSIBLE EXPULSIONS

On occasion students can be suspended, requested to leave or expelled. Reasons for suspending, requesting the student leave or expelling a student include but are not limited to:

- 1) Behavior of the student which presents a moral danger to other students
- 2) Behavior that is incorrigible*
- 3) Chronic Cheating
- 4) Criminal vandalism
- 5) Extortion
- 6) False fire alarms and/or bomb threat
- 7) Four (4) semester F's in a semester or academic year
- 8) Frequent absences
- 9) Parental lack of cooperation with school officials
- 10) Stealing
- 11) Any other major misconduct which the school feels warrants suspension or expulsion

*(Incorrigible means the student has been corrected a number of times but refuses to change her behavior.)

Suspension is a withdrawal from school classes and school activities. Suspension may be in-school or out-of-school. A conference will be held with the student, parent/guardian of the suspended student and the Principal before suspension begins. A suspended student will remain at home until the conference is held.

A student serving an in-school suspension will be required to be in uniform and to bring her books to the main office. All class assignments due on the day of in-school suspension must be submitted at the beginning of the school day. A student serving in-school suspension will be given special assignments to work on during the day. She may make up missed tests/quizzes after school on the day of suspension. Assignments due in class the next day will be given to the student at the conclusion of her in-school suspension.

A student serving an out-of-school suspension has the responsibility of obtaining her class assignments via Canvas. Assignments will only be accepted on the day the student returns to class after the suspension. The student may not attend any school activities while in suspension. The length of suspension will be determined by the school administrators.

Continual misbehavior is ground for expulsion or request to leave. The administration decision will be final.

IMMEDIATE EXPULSIONS OR REQUESTS TO LEAVE

Students may be immediately expelled or requested to leave for the following reasons: 1)

Possession, use and/or sale of alcohol or illegal drugs at a school event, prior to coming to a school event, on school property or prior to arriving on school property.

2) Fighting is defined as striking another student, teacher or staff member.

3) Possessing or storing dangerous objects, chemicals or weapons.

4) Any other major misconduct which the school feels warrants expulsion or request to leave.

If evidence exists school officials will immediately remove the student from the activity and notify the Assistant Principal and other appropriate authorities. A conference will be scheduled as soon as possible with the Principal, Assistant Principal, the parent(s) and the student.

DISCIPLINE POLICY FOR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Since good citizenship is of primary importance at Mercy High School, all girls involved in extra-curricular activities must demonstrate compliance to school rules and regulations. If it is felt that a girl is not following Mercy's rules and regulations and therefore shouldn't be representing Mercy in extra-curricular activities, the following procedure will take place:

1. A complaint form is filed with or by the Assistant Principal.

2. The sponsor of the activity is informed of the complaint through the Assistant Principal.

3. The Assistant Principal will meet with the student to discuss her behavior. At this meeting the student is given a warning. The student has a stated period of time to improve her behavior. If there is little or no improvement at the end of the stated period of time, the student will be placed on probation. Probation means she is out of the activity for a stated period of time. If there is no immediate improvement at the end of the probationary period, the student must completely withdraw from the activity.

4. Activities Governed by this Policy include:

1) Cheerleading

2) Class Officers

3) Dance Team

4) Music Groups

5) Pastoral Council

6) Speech Team

7) Sports

8) Student Ambassadors

9) Student Council

10) Theater Productions

11) Any other activities deemed by Administration

STUDENT AUTOMOBILES

Students who drive vehicles to school must obey the following rules:

1. Students may park on the neighboring streets around the school and specially assigned parking spaces.

Students are NOT to park in the following areas:

a. in front of the school.

- b in the east parking lot.
- c. in the north parking stalls
- d. in front of Holy Cross Church or Holy Cross School
- e. in Holy Cross Parking lots.

PARKING IN THESE AREAS WILL RESULT IN THREE DEMERITS.

- 2. Sitting in cars during school hours is not permitted.
- 3. Students should leave their cars immediately after arriving at school.
- 4. Students should be careful to avoid trampling the lawns or otherwise disturbing home homeowners.
- 5. Honking horns during school hours is not permitted.
- 6. Students should not be expected to be permitted to run errands for parents or teachers during school hours.
- 7. Students will be required to provide their vehicle details to the school office.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

iPads are the **only** school approved electronic devices that may be used throughout the school day. The Mercy High School Technology and Computer Use Policy AND guidelines for iPad use provided by each classroom teacher must be followed. Failure to follow the guidelines/policies results in disciplinary action.

Cell phones are **NOT** a school approved device. Students may have their cell phone in their possession, but **MAY NOT** use the phone during the school day. Cell phones must be off and not connected to Wi-Fi.

Failure to follow the cell phone and other non-school approved device policy results in the following:

1st offense: 2 demerits pick up phone/device in the office

2nd offense: 2 demerits parent/guardian pick up phone/device in the office

3rd offense: 2 demerits parent/guardian pick up and meeting with Administration.

AFTER the 3rd offense, students will not be permitted to have their phone/device at school. If the phone/device must come to school, it will be checked in to the school office at the beginning of the school day.

STUDY HALL REGULATIONS

Each study hall proctor may make special regulations for his/her study hall. However, the following regulations will be observed by all study halls.

- 1. Each student (except seniors) must report promptly to her study hall room any time she does not have a scheduled class.
- 2. A student who wishes to go to a classroom to work during her study hall must obtain in advance (before school or during the noon hour) a pass from the teacher to whose room she will be going. At the time of her study hall, that student will take the pass to study hall and present it to the proctor. The student can then go immediately to the room specified on the pass. She may not stop in the restroom, in the

office, at her locker or any other place except the room indicated on the pass.

3. Only one student's name may be on the pass.

4. Students are free to use the library/media center and academic success center during their study periods after reporting to study hall and attendance has been taken. 5. If a student needs to run any errands such as paying tuition in the office, going to the restroom, etc. she must approach the study hall proctor and ask permission. The proctor may give or deny permission. At no time may a student leave the study hall room without express permission from the study hall proctor.

6. There are no permanent passes from study hall.

7. **Seniors** not assigned to a monitored study hall must report to the Senior Lounge. Senior Lounge rules must be followed as posted in the room or administration reserves the right to revoke this privilege.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AT SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES AND RELIGIOUS SERVICES

The student body often gathers together for special assemblies that furthers the educational mission of the school, such as guest speakers or fine arts presentations. We celebrate Mass and Suscipe on a regular basis. At these gatherings, respectful attention to the speaker and reverent manner are expected of all students.

PARENT AND STUDENT BEHAVIOR AT EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students and parents are expected to represent Mercy in a positive manner when present for all extracurricular activities. Failure to comply with the expectations may result in the student or parent being banned from all Mercy home and away extracurricular activities.

VISITING THE CAMPUSES OF OTHER SCHOOLS

Mercy students are to avoid the buildings and campuses of other schools outside the times when such are open to the general public for specific events. Complaints from the school administrators about the behavior of Mercy students will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

PART VIII – FINANCIAL POLICIES

Mercy High School strives to be a good steward of its financial resources. In turn, the school requires parents and students to take their financial obligations with the school seriously. This includes timely payments of fees and tuition, fulfillment of fundraising obligations, maintaining scholarship requirements and participating in full with the negotiated tuition plan.

ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

All academic scholarships are endowed in the Sister Mary Brendan O'Malley Endowment Fund. Academic scholarships are issued each year to incoming first-year students on the basis of placement test scores. These academic scholarships are annually renewable with the maintenance of a B+ average.

At the end of each school year, special scholarships and tuition awards may be awarded.

These are based on GPA and/or donor preferences. Some of these are one-year and some are renewable. Renewable scholarships require the maintenance of a B+ average.

TUITION AWARDS

All tuition awards are endowed in the Sister Mary Brendan O'Malley Endowment Fund. Tuition awards are distributed at the discretion of the administration at the time of the tuition conference. They are based on financial need and donor preferences.

MERCY GRANTS

Mercy Grants are an integral part of negotiated tuition. Forms are emailed to families each Spring in preparation for tuition agreements for the following year. Mercy Grants are awarded on the basis of need as demonstrated by the family adjusted gross income (AGI) reflected on the most current income tax return. Mercy Grants are funded by money donated and fundraising activities.

TUITION

Tuition agreements are binding between the parent and Mercy High School. All families will enroll in FACTS tuition, which will allow the parent or guardian the opportunity to select a tuition payment option that suits their financial needs. Contact the Mercy Business Office for instructions on how to set up your online account.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Parents are expected to fulfill their volunteer obligations to Mercy High School. FIESTA, Golf Fest and the Plant Sale are three major events that need parent assistance.

WORK STUDY PROGRAM

Students receive tuition remission (\$500) grants for school year work study. Students are expected to approach this job as they would any type of employment, through thorough and reliable performance of assigned duty. Credit amount may be adjusted due to absence or neglect of duty; students are required to pay any unworked portion of the grant. A student may be terminated from the program for excessive absence or neglect of duty.

A. Should work study be terminated, or no job be available, tuition contracts will be revised to show the amount due to the school.

B. Work study requires families to complete the tuition aid form and to submit tax information.

STUDENT FUNDRAISING

All Mercy students agree to participate in student fundraising. Any unmet goal becomes part of the student's tuition account and must be paid prior to final academic assessments in May.

SEMESTER ASSESSMENT ELIGIBILITY

Tuition accounts must be current at the end of each semester. Included are the following: 1. Tuition and fees for the semester.

2. Work study owed.

3. Course fees owed.

4. Student fundraising owed.

Students may not participate in the semester assessment until all accounts are cleared.

GRADUATION ELIGIBILITY

All senior tuition and fees must be paid in full prior to the ceremony. Seniors will not receive a diploma nor participate in graduation ceremony until all accounts are paid in full. Transcripts of student records will not be prepared nor sent until accounts are settled. No exceptions.

TUITION REFUND

The Registration Fee is non-refundable. Full-pay tuition is refunded on a pro-rated basis based on the time of withdrawal, provided all accounts are current.

PENALTY FOR RETURNED PAYMENTS OR LATE PAYMENTS

A \$35 fee will be charged to your tuition account for any payments that are returned due to non-sufficient funds in your bank account or tuition payment and fees not paid by the due date. These payments include monthly automatic tuition payments and all check payments.

PART IX – OTHER INFORMATION

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A wide variety of extra-curricular activities are offered at Mercy. Some activities require a try-out or audition and others are open to all girls interested in the activity. All qualified students may try out for membership on sports teams and in extra-curricular activities. The school is committed to providing everyone a fair chance to participate. Unfortunately, not everyone who tries out can be accepted. The decision of the coach, in conjunction with the athletic director or the decision of the moderator, in consultation with the principal, is final. Ordinarily, the principal will not intervene in non-selection decisions, unless the decision is arbitrary and capricious. Parents are encouraged to help their children understand that not everyone will be selected.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are provided to enhance classroom learning. All students participating in a field trip must submit the signed Field Trip Permission Form to her teacher/sponsor by the designated deadline. Failure to submit the form results in forfeiture of the opportunity to participate in the field trip.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Students will be photographed at the beginning of the school year for an I.D. Card. It is recommended that students carry their I.D. at all times, as it is often necessary to present this card for Mercy functions or for other schools' functions in order to receive a student admission price. I.D. cards must be submitted when checking out computer materials or reserve books from the library. There is a fee to replace a student I.D. card. Replacement of a student I.D. Cards can be requested through the school office at the expense of the student. Cost for each replacement card is \$10.

LOCKERS

Each student is assigned a locker. All personal possessions must be stored **INSIDE** the locker and **NOT OUTSIDE** the locker. Locker doors must remain **CLOSED** and **LOCKED** at all times. Students may not change lockers without permission of the Assistant Principal. Lockers will be checked at the year's end. Students will be responsible for those lockers assigned to them. If a student fails to follow the locker check-out procedures all items left in the locker become property of Mercy High School. The locker remains the property of the school, and school officials have the right to search/or investigate any locker which may be thought to contain illegal or dangerous goods. Students are not permitted to sit on the floor by the lockers or in the other halls before, during or after school.

Students may rent a second locker for \$15.00. This is paid at the time of issuance. Availability of a second locker may not always be on the same floor as the originally assigned locker.

VISITORS

All visitors must register in the School Office and receive a pass at the time of entry into the building, whether they intend to remain just a few minutes or for some time. Students wishing to bring visitors must ask permission of the School Office and each teacher whose class the visitor will attend. This should be done two days in advance of the visit. On the day of the visit, a visitor's pass must be obtained in the School Office. As a rule, students should not bring visitors to the school unless the visitor is interested in attending Mercy. Permission to bring other visitors may be refused. Younger sisters and brothers are not to be brought to school for any part of or all of any day. Parents wishing to visit classes must make arrangements with the Principal at least 24 hours in advance of the visit. Visitors may be asked to leave at any time by any school authority if the visitor is in violation of school policies or causes any disturbance.

FIRE AND TORNADO DRILLS

Fire and tornado drills at regular intervals are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone obeys orders promptly and clears the building by the prescribed route as quickly as possible. The teacher in each classroom will give instructions.

STUDENT DINING HALL

The student dining hall provides a pleasant place to eat breakfast or lunch. Vending machines supply a variety of food. Most students choose to bring their own food from home and supplement it with vending machine items. Outside caterers are contracted for lunch three times per week for those who wish to participate. Microwave ovens are available. When the student is finished eating, she should always clear all waste from the table and properly dispose of it in the baskets provided.

NO FOOD ITEMS OR DRINKS ARE ALLOWED OUTSIDE THE STUDENT DINING HALL **unless** the student has special permission from a teacher. Therefore, students should never be in the cafeteria between or during classes. Students eating or drinking between or during classes are subject to demerits. The only exception to this policy is the use of a water bottle. Students may only have water in their water bottle, and it must have a spill proof lid. Failure

to comply will result in demerits and other disciplinary action. Students are not allowed to have any other beverage containers in their possession during the course of the school day. Students possessing non-approved beverage containers with any liquids in them are subject to demerits.

Students who are finished eating lunch must remain in the dining hall. Students should not go to their lockers or be on any of the classroom floors unless they have teacher permission. A bell will ring at the end of the lunch period. Students have five minutes after that bell to go to their lockers and get ready for the next class.

POLICY FOR BAD WEATHER

School will be in session every school day if possible. In case of severe weather, the local television and radio stations announce closings. If an announcement is made that Omaha Schools and Omaha Catholic Schools are closed, this will automatically include Mercy High School. In other words, Mercy will do whatever the Omaha Catholic Schools are doing. Mercy will NOT be named separately. Please do NOT attempt to call the principal or the school office. Mercy High School administrators reserve the right to make judgment calls regarding after school athletics and activities regardless of school cancellations.

SCHOOL HOURS

The school day begins at 7:40am and ends at 3:00pm. On Late Start Days and Faculty Meeting Days classes begin at 8:55am and conclude at 3:00pm. Prior to the start bell, student presence is limited to the office, library (at 7:15) or student dining hall.

At the conclusion of the school day, students should leave the school grounds as soon as possible. Unless students are working directly with a teacher or coach they must be off the floors at 3:50pm and out of the building by 5:00pm. On days when after school activities are cancelled due to inclement weather or other circumstances, student must be out of the building by 3:30pm. Authorized areas after 3:50pm are limited to the student dining hall. Students may wait in the front lobby only if they expect their ride in five minutes or less. Failure to comply results in three demerits.

TRANSPORTATION

Mercy High School does not provide any transportation to and from school. If you need carpool information, Mercy will provide zip code lists for you to arrange your own carpools.

PARENT DIRECTORY

Parents may access a family directory by logging on to [parentsweb>school information>directory](#).

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

The State Department of Education requires that all public and private schools have a crisis management plan. Mercy's plan, developed in cooperation with local authorities, addresses student safety issues. A copy of Mercy's Crisis Management Plan is on file in the Principal's office.

ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) regulations require all public & private school districts to inventory all asbestos containing materials in the school building and to develop a management plan for handling the asbestos containing materials in each building. The asbestos management plan for Mercy High School is on file with the Nebraska Department of Health. The plan is available for public inspection. Copies of the Management Plan will be provided to requesting parties for the cost of reproduction only. Requests for copies of the Management Plan should be sent to Mercy High School's principal.

APPENDIX A

CIRCLE OF GRACE

Safe Environment Program *Grade 9 through Grade 12* *"Respecting All God's People"*

Dear Parent,

Out of concern for all God's people and in response to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, we have a program for the safe environment education of children and young people (Kindergarten through Grade 12) supported and mandated by Archbishop George J. Lucas.

Diocese/eparchies will establish 'safe environment' programs. They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children. Dioceses/eparchies will make clear to clergy and members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to sexual abuse.

Article 12 – Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

This program is called **Circle of Grace**. It is meant to supplement and be integrated into the excellent programs and curricula for the formation of children and young people in our schools and religious education programs. Circle of Grace aims to equip our children and young people by arming them with essential knowledge and skills grounded in the richness of our faith. This program helps children and young people to understand their own (and other's) dignity in mind, body, and spirit.

What is a Circle of Grace?

The Catholic Church teaches that God has created each of us as unique and special. Genesis 1:27 tells us that we are created "male and female in God's image" and that God saw this as "very good." In that goodness, we are meant to respect ourselves and everyone else as persons created and loved by God.

Adults assist children and young people to recognize God's love by helping them to understand that each of us lives and moves in a Circle of Grace. You can imagine your own circle of grace by putting your arms above your head then circle down in front of your body including side to side. This circle, front to back, holds who you are in your body and through your senses. It holds your very essence in mind, heart, soul, and sexuality.

Why is it important to help our children understand the Circle of Grace? God intends our relationships in life to be experiences of divine love. Respectful, nurturing, loving relationships increase our understanding of our own value and help us to love others. It is never too early to help children and young people understand how very special they are and how relationships in life are called to be sacred. Understanding this can help them to protect the special person they are and to be respectful of others.

Adults, especially parents, as they strive to provide a safe and protective environment, hold the responsibility to help children and young people understand and respect their own dignity and that of others. A truly safe and protective environment is one where children and young people recognize when they are safe or unsafe and know how to bring their concerns, fears, and uncertainties to the trusted adults in their lives.

How is the Circle of Grace Program different from other protection programs?

According to research, one in four girls and one in seven boys will be sexually abused by age eighteen.¹ Many protection programs focus on “stranger danger”; however, up to ninety percent (90%) of the time the perpetrator of abuse is known to the child or young person such as a relative or family friend. **Circle of Grace** goes beyond just protection by helping children and young people understand the sacredness of who they are and how to seek help through their relationships with trusted adults.

What are the topics of the high school curriculum?

Grades 9-12 curriculum is formatted to be used in two ways. The traditional way, in which the lessons are taught to the identified grade. The second way is to use the Grades 9-11 alternate lessons for any grade or setting. We encourage you to have a conversation with your youth about these important lessons below:

Grade 9 - Lesson 1: Communion of Saints,
Lesson 2: Mary and Joseph say “Yes”
Lesson 3: When the Circle is Broken
Lesson 4: Action PLAN- How Safe are your relationships?

Grade 10 - Levels of Intimacy and Influence

Grade 11 - N.O.T.I.C.E.: When Boundaries Go Wrong

Grade 12 - Love and Theology of the Body, How Healthy are your relationships? **Lesson is only for seniors**

Alternate Lessons 1. What is your Motto?

2. A.C.T.I.O.N.: Steps Needed When Concerns Don’t Go Away
3. Modesty: A Thing of the Past or Not?
4. Tech Savvy or Tech Safe?
5. Circle of Grace Again... Really?
6. Human Trafficking: Modern Day Slavery

Please feel free to contact your school or parish office if you have questions or want more information.

¹ www.usccb.org or <http://nccanch.acfhhs.gov>



I have read and understand the 2025-2026 Mercy High School Handbook

Parent Signature _____

Student Signature _____

** Administration reserves the right to adjust/update the handbook as needed in the interest of student/school safety. **