

MOUNT SAINT JOSEPH ACADEMY 2026-2027 STUDENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK



MOUNT SAINT JOSEPH ACADEMY

120 West Wissahickon Avenue

Flourtown, PA 19031

Telephone: (215) 233-3177

CEEB CODE: 393390

Established by the Sisters of Saint Joseph, 1858

SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION:

School closings are announced on:

- Mount Messaging Text System and Email
- MSJA Website: www.msjacad.org
- Social Media: <https://www.instagram.com/mountsaintjosephacademy>

TO REPORT ABSENCES OR TO REQUEST AN EARLY DISMISSAL:

Before 8:05 am, please:

- call: (215) 233-3177 x320
- or email: attendance@msjacad.org

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OUR LEGACY AND CULTURE

Mount Saint Joseph Academy Mission Statement

Mount Saint Joseph Academy, a college preparatory School, empowers young women to realize their fullest potential. Imbued with a spirit of unity and reconciliation, the charism of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, Mount Saint Joseph Academy fosters excellence tempered by gentleness and compassion.

Enriched by the values of the Catholic Church, and as a Sponsored Ministry of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, Mount Saint Joseph Academy offers academically rigorous programs, which challenge students to shape the future. In a student-centered, collaborative environment, Mount Saint Joseph Academy provides a holistic education with an emphasis on global responsibility.

Faithful to “educating founders,” Mount Saint Joseph Academy enables students to be agents of transformation in the face of moral and ethical challenges in an ever-evolving society.

Trusting in the wisdom echoed by the Constitution of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, the mission asserts, *“On the education of women largely depends the future of society.”*

Our Shared Community Agreement

When you choose to become part of the Mount, you're joining a community built on mutual respect and shared values. Our guidelines outlined in this handbook exist to create a safe, nurturing environment where every student can thrive. When you and your family complete registration at Mount Saint Joseph Academy, you're agreeing to embrace these community guidelines as part of your Mount experience. These expectations are the framework that helps each of us reach our fullest potential. The systems detailed below are designed to support students through their journeys, with a focus on community responsibilities and growth.

Our School Song

The Mount's School song was written by Josephine Munday Weymann, Class of 1927, with music composed by Sister Regina Dolores. The song captures the spirit of our School colors and motto.

School Song

Let us pledge today to our M.S.J. That we'll true to Alma Mater be forever. See her banner fair waving in the air, Come and rally round the purple, white, and gold.

Chorus

Purple is nobility of spirit, White is for ideals high and pure, Gold typifies staunchness that lies In every heart steady and sure. May we all be worthy of its colors. Noble, pure and loyal for aye With this motto e'er before us in life “Spes messis in semine.”

Students one and all hearken to the call And to Alma Mater give the best that's in you. To her glory hail, for she'll never fail So remember then the purple, white, and gold.

School Seal

The seal of Mount Saint Joseph Academy is highlighted by the campanile, symbol of the School. To the right of the campanile is the carpenter's awl, symbol of St. Joseph, patron of the School, of the religious community which staffs it and the universal Church. The upper right-hand corner of the shield contains a fleur-de-lis, flower of France, country of origin for the Sisters of Saint Joseph. A banner under the shield presents the School motto: SPES MESSIS IN SEMINE and the year in which the Academy was founded. Encircling the shield is a disc engraved with the words Mount Saint Joseph Academy, Flourtown, Pennsylvania.



School Profile

PRESIDENT: Sister Charlene Diorka, SSJ

PRINCIPAL: Dr. Melissa Sullivan, PhD

HISTORY: Established at Chestnut Hill in 1858, Mount Saint Joseph Academy is a Catholic day School for girls, grades 9 through 12. The Mount is a college preparatory School fully accredited by the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS) and approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

LOCATION: The School is situated on 78 acres in Springfield Township, Montgomery County, at 120 West Wissahickon Avenue in Flourtown, PA.

ENROLLMENT: 485 students

FACULTY & STAFF: 85 Lay Teachers and Staff, and 2 Sisters of Saint Joseph

PROGRAM FEATURES:

- Block schedule - 4 periods a day
- Advanced Placement and Advanced Topic courses in Computer Science, English, French, Latin, Spanish, Mathematics, Social Studies, Music, Art and Science.
- Opportunity for Diocesan Scholar Program.

Non-Discriminatory Policy

Mount Saint Joseph Academy admits students of any race, religion, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School.

Acknowledgment of Responsibility for Personal Property

As part of enrollment at Mount Saint Joseph Academy, students and their families acknowledge and accept that the School is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of personal property brought onto campus or to School-sponsored activities. This includes, but is not limited to, electronics, athletic equipment, jewelry, designer items, and other valuables. Students and families assume full responsibility for any personal property brought to School, and understand that such items are brought at their own risk.

SECTION 1: DAILY ESSENTIALS FOR STUDENTS

All students are expected to remain in good standing as defined in Section 3 of this Handbook. Good standing impacts participation in all aspects of student life, including privileges, activities, and enrollment.

Your School Day Schedule and Attendance

Ruvna: Our Campus Safety and Accountability System

Mount Saint Joseph Academy uses Ruvna, a campus safety and accountability platform, to track student arrivals, departures, and status throughout the School day. Ruvna allows the School to know in real time who is on campus. This information is critical both for daily operations and for student safety during emergencies and drills.

How students use Ruvna: Students check in and out by scanning the barcode on their Mount Saint Joseph Academy ID badge at a Ruvna kiosk located at the designated entry and exit points in the building.

Students are required to scan in or out whenever they:

- Arrive to School
- Leave the building for any reason
- Leave campus early for any reason
- Return to the building for any reason
- Depart under 4th Block Study dismissal privileges

Scanning is a School requirement, not optional. Failure to scan in or out when required will be treated as a failure to follow check-in/check-out procedures and will result in a demerit. Parents and guardians with questions about Ruvna may contact the Student Life Office. Students with technical issues should report them to the Main Office. Please do not attempt to resolve app or kiosk issues independently.

Understanding Types of Absences

We believe that students learn best alongside their peers and teachers, while also recognizing that absences are sometimes unavoidable. To help you and your family plan effectively, here's how we work together to categorize different situations that might require time away from School:

Excused Versus Unexcused Absences

To ensure clarity, the following categories define excused and unexcused absences:

EXCUSED ABSENCES:

- Bereavement (coordinated with Dean of Student Life and Formation)
- College visits (a maximum of two excused days for seniors and one excused day for juniors).
- Participation in School-sponsored events.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:

- Illness that does not require medical leave
- Personal trips or vacations taken during the School year.
- Attendance at non-Mount Saint Joseph Academy conferences or events.
- College visits exceeding the allotted excused days.
- Participation in non-MSJA activities.

Medical Leave

Medical leave refers to an extended, documented absence from School required for a diagnosed physical or mental health condition, procedure, recovery, or course of treatment that prevents a student from attending School for an anticipated period of four (4) or more consecutive School days. Medical leave is distinct from ordinary short-term illness and is coordinated formally through the School.

To initiate medical leave, parents/guardians must notify the School nurse, the Dean of Student Life and Formation, and the Dean of Studies and Instruction as soon as the need is identified, and must submit written documentation from the treating provider to the School nurse indicating the anticipated duration of the absence, any relevant academic, physical, or activity restrictions, and the conditions for clearance to return. For mental health leave, documentation must come from a licensed mental health provider (psychiatrist, psychologist, or licensed clinical professional) actively involved in the student's care and should address the student's readiness to reengage academically and socially upon return. Submission of documentation does not constitute approval.

Medical leave is granted only upon formal approval by the Dean of Student Life and Formation, in consultation with the School nurse and the Dean of Studies and Instruction (the Studies Office). The School reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to approve, deny, modify the scope or duration of, or revoke medical leave based on the documentation provided, the student's overall standing with the School, and the School's ability to support the student's needs within the context of its academic program.

Absences taken without prior approval, or that exceed the scope or duration of approved leave, will be recorded as unexcused and will count toward the thresholds outlined under Excessive Absences. Retroactive approval may be granted only in cases of emergency hospitalization or other unforeseen medical circumstances, at the School's sole discretion and upon submission of appropriate documentation. Once approved, the student's counselor, in partnership with the Studies Office, will coordinate with teachers to develop a comprehensive academic support and make-up plan, consistent with the guidelines outlined under Extended Absence.

Absences covered by approved medical leave are recorded as excused. Upon return, the student must present written clearance from the treating provider to the School nurse before resuming full participation in academics, athletics, and co-curricular activities; the School may require a reentry meeting with the School nurse, counselor, and Dean of Student Life and Formation to confirm an appropriate transition plan. Medical leave does not modify course content, grading standards, or academic expectations, and a student's eligibility for privileges, activities, and re-enrollment remains conditioned upon her being in good standing with the School.

Absence Due to Vacation/Outside Activities

Vacations and outside activities on School days disrupt learning and focus; they should coincide with School holidays in order to prioritize students' educations and community connections.

The Dean of Student Life and Formation and the Studies Office must be notified in writing at least one week in advance of a scheduled vacation. The written notification from parents/guardians should clearly state the duration of the trip, including the departure and return dates.

- Absences due to vacations will be recorded as unexcused.
- Prior to taking a student out of School for a vacation or other reason, it is essential to understand and agree to the following conditions:
 - All assignments will be completed the day the student returns; when necessary, assessments will be completed at the teacher's convenience.
 - Please note that this expectation applies to required coursework and assessments only. Extra credit assignments or opportunities are not guaranteed and may not be made available to students who are absent. The availability, timing, and grading of extra credit are at the sole discretion of the teacher.
 - Teachers are not responsible for reteaching material or recreating missed laboratory experiences.

College Exploration Support

We're excited to be part of your college journey:

- Seniors: We support you with two (2) excused absence days for college visits
- Juniors: We provide one (1) day for college exploration
- Additional college visit days will be considered part of your unexcused absences

Short-Term Absence (1-3 Days)

- In the event of a short-term absence, a parent or guardian must notify the Attendance Office before 8:05 am.
- Please call (215) 233-3177 extension 320 or email attendance@msjacad.org.
- Students are not permitted to report their own absences.
- For planned absences, students must proactively make arrangements with each teacher regarding missed coursework.
- Students are responsible for checking Canvas, communicating with classmates, and consulting with each of their teachers upon their return to obtain updates on missed assignments and learning materials.

Extended Absence (4+ Days)

- Parents/guardians must notify the Dean of Student Life and Formation and the Studies Office to provide an estimated duration of the absence and to inquire about the possibility of having assignments sent home.
- For critical circumstances, the Studies Office and the student's counselor will coordinate with teachers to develop an action and support plan.
- For planned absences, students must proactively make arrangements with each teacher regarding missed coursework.
- Upon the student's return, it is their responsibility to meet with their counselor to discuss a comprehensive plan for making up all missed work, including assignments, homework, and tests.
- All missed work must be completed according to the comprehensive plan designed by the counselor and teachers, typically within two weeks of the student's return to School.

- The School may require private tutoring, particularly when mastery of foundational material is essential for the student's continued academic progress.

Excessive Absence (7+ Days Per Semester)

- Students and their parents/guardians will be required to meet with the Dean of Studies and the Dean of Student Life and Formation to determine the student's eligibility for course credit.
- Summer School may be mandated for students with chronic attendance issues.
- Any student who accumulates seven (7) or more absences in a semester may be required to complete make-up time as determined by the administration. This may involve a formal plan and a discussion regarding the student's re-enrollment for the following academic year.
- Re-enrollment is conditioned upon a student remaining in good standing, including with respect to attendance, academic performance, disciplinary record, and satisfaction of tuition and other financial obligations to the School.
- The Dean of Studies may also require private tutoring to ensure the student can demonstrate the required mastery of course content to earn credit.
- Students with excessive absences or temporary academic accommodations (such as those related to medical needs) may not be eligible to participate in co-curricular activities, including athletics, until they have been cleared by the administration.

Lateness to School

Beginning each day on time helps you feel prepared and ready to engage fully in your learning. The following guidelines apply to lateness:

- Students must be in class for at least 50% of the class period to be considered present.
- As students are expected to be in their first block classroom and ready to start the School day by 8:15 am, the student entrance door will be closed and secured at 8:12 am. After that arrival time, students will need to report to the Main Office and will be considered late to School.
- Students arriving late must scan into the Ruvna System upon arrival and check in at the Main Office to receive a late slip before proceeding to class.
- Late buses are considered excused. All other instances of lateness are unexcused.
- Doctor's appointments are considered unexcused lates or absences unless the appointment is pre-planned and confirmed with a doctor's note upon the student's return to School. If a student is out of School until the following day due to a doctor's appointment, the note must be submitted to the Main Office before first block the next School day.
- Accumulation of more than five (5) unexcused late arrivals in a semester will necessitate a meeting with the Dean of Student Life and Formation and will result in an assigned detention.
- Eight (8) late arrivals to School will be recorded as one unexcused absence.
- A student must arrive before the end of second block in order for the student to be marked present for the day.
- Excessive lateness or absences may be a factor in decisions regarding re-enrollment for the following academic year.

- Re-enrollment and continued access to student privileges may also depend upon the student remaining in good standing, including with respect to attendance, academics, conduct, and satisfaction of tuition and other financial obligations.

Early Dismissal Requests

- Early dismissal requests must be submitted to attendance@msjad.org before 8:05 am the morning of the early dismissal.
- The student's name and time of dismissal will be recorded on the daily absentee list. Upon return to School the student must present a note from the doctor's office indicating the date and time of the appointment.
- All parents/guardians who come to pick up a student during the School day must sign the student out in the Main Office.
- Any student leaving the School early must report to the Main Office and scan out of the Ruvna system.
- No student may leave without permission from the nurse or an administrator.
- Doctors' visits during the School day should be avoided whenever possible.

Leaving Campus During the School Day

Student safety is our top priority. Therefore, the following guidelines have been established:

- Once a student arrives on campus in the morning, she may not leave the building without official permission from the administration.
- All students are required to use the Main Office entrance when entering or leaving School for any reason after 8:15 am until dismissal.
- Students may not exit the building, including to get something from the parking lot, without a teacher accompanying them or permission from an administrator.

4th Block Study Arrival/Dismissal Privileges

- Juniors and seniors who have a study block as their final period of the day may be granted permission to leave campus early, provided a signed permission form, completed by their parents/guardians, is on file in the Student Life Office.
- Seniors may sign out immediately following announcements in the afternoon. Juniors are permitted to sign out mid-way through Block 4. All students, regardless of departure time, must scan out of the Ruvna system as they leave the building.
- Students will not be permitted to leave if there is scheduled programming, a special schedule, or an afternoon liturgy/assembly.
- The privilege of early dismissal may be revoked, particularly in cases of policy violations or concerns regarding a student's academic standing or attendance.
- Freshmen and sophomores are not permitted to leave campus during the School day without direct administrative permission granted on a case-by-case basis.

What to Wear: Uniform and Attire Policy

The Mount Saint Joseph Academy uniform represents our shared community spirit, celebrates our rich tradition, and reflects our commitment to Catholic values. We encourage students to wear the complete uniform with pride at all times while on campus and at School-sponsored events.

Fall/Spring Uniform

- ID Badge on Mount Lanyard is required to be worn all day whenever School is in session.
- Khaki kilt or Flynn & O'Hara khaki dress slacks
- Spandex shorts (must be worn under the kilt)
- White long- or short-sleeve golf shirt with the official Mount logo
- Navy blue blazer for School events
- Plain white ankle socks, white knee socks, or white tights
- Any solid dark-brown comfortable closed-heel and closed-toe shoe with a dark sole is permitted, including sneakers
- No boots, heels, Ugg-type slipper or shoe, patterned shoes, light-soled, or open-back/open-toe shoes are acceptable.

Winter Uniform

- ID Badge on Mount Lanyard is required to be worn all day whenever School is in session.
- Plaid skirt or navy blue Flynn & O'Hara navy blue dress slacks
- White turtleneck or white golf shirt with the official Mount logo
- Navy blue Mount ¼ zip sweatshirt (this is the only sweatshirt permitted to be worn during the regular school day)
- Navy blue blazer for School events
- Navy blue tights
- Any solid dark-brown comfortable closed-heel and closed-toe shoe with a dark sole is permitted, including sneakers
- No boots, heels, Ugg-type slipper or shoe, patterned shoes, light-soled, or open-back/open-toe shoes are acceptable.

Gym Uniform

- Gray Mount Saint Joseph Academy t-shirt
- Mount Saint Joseph Academy sweatpants or plain black leggings (shorts are not permitted for gym)
- Mount Saint Joseph Academy sweatshirt
- Athletic sneakers

School Bag

Backpacks are the required bag for all students and are intended for the transport of educational materials. Tote bags and other bag styles are not permitted as a substitute for a backpack.

- Backpacks should be used primarily for carrying textbooks, notebooks, and other educational supplies.
- Backpacks may be any color or pattern, provided they do not display messaging, images, or symbols that are offensive, discriminatory, or contrary to the teachings and values of our Catholic faith and community.

- Wheeled backpacks are generally not permitted unless their use is specifically required for documented medical reasons. In such cases, appropriate medical documentation must be provided to the School nurse and the Dean of Student Life and Formation.

ID Badge and Lanyard

The Mount Saint Joseph Academy ID badge is an essential part of daily School life. It serves as your official School identification, your access credential for the Ruvna campus safety and accountability system, and your primary means of making purchases in the cafeteria and School store. Students are required to wear their ID badge on their Mount lanyard at all times while on campus.

Wearing Your ID Badge

- Your ID badge must be worn on your Mount lanyard and displayed visibly at all times during the School day.
- Students who arrive without their ID badge should report to the Student Life Office before the start of the School day.
- Failure to wear your ID badge will result in the assignment of a demerit.

Using Your ID Badge

Students must scan their ID badge at a Ruvna kiosk upon every arrival, departure, and return to the building. See the Ruvna section for full check-in and check-out requirements.

Students are required to present their ID badge to make purchases in the cafeteria. Students without their ID will be asked to wait until all other students have made their purchases.

ID badges are non-transferable. Students may never share, lend, or allow another student to use their ID badge for any purpose.

Replacement

- Students who have lost or damaged their ID badge must obtain a replacement through the Student Life Office.
- A replacement fee of \$10 will be charged per replacement ID badge and lanyard.
- Students are responsible for keeping their ID badge in good condition at all times.

General Uniform Guidelines

- Only a plain white t-shirt may be worn underneath the uniform shirt for layering.
- There should be no writing, drawings, or other marks on any part of the uniform, including socks and shoes.
- All uniform clothing must be purchased from Flynn & O'Hara School Uniforms.
- Skirts or kilts must be the wearer's fingertip length or longer. Skirts that do not meet this length requirement will need to be replaced at the family's expense.
- Consistent adherence to the uniform policy is expected at all times while on School grounds and at School events.
- Consequences for uniform violations may include the assignment of demerits, parental contact, assigned detention, and possible service to the School community.

Hair Styles and Accessories

Personal expression through hair styles, jewelry, and accessories is welcomed within our community guidelines:

Hair Styles

- Head scarves or ribbons that match the colors of the School uniform are permitted
- Styles should allow you to fully participate in all our opportunities, from labs to sports
- Professional hair color, headbands, clips, and hair accessories are welcome

Jewelry & Accessories

- Choose pieces that allow for safe freedom of movement during all our hands-on learning experiences.
- Select jewelry, accessories, and tattoos that do not display messages, symbols, or images that are offensive, discriminatory, or contrary to the teachings and values of our Catholic faith and community values.
- Remember that, for safety reasons, jewelry with sharp edges, points, or spikes is not permitted.

Uniform Supplier Information

- Flynn & O'Hara School Uniforms, 901 North Bethlehem Pike, Springhouse, PA 19477
- Phone: 215-793-9436 | Toll-Free: 1-800-441-4122 | Website: www.flynnohara.com

Dress Down Days

Periodically, the School may designate “dress down” days, which may involve a voluntary donation to a specific cause. On these days, students must still dress according to our general guidelines to support our community cohesion and values.

ID Badge on Mount Lanyard is required to be worn all day whenever School is in session.

The following items are specifically not permitted on dress down days:

- Pajama pants or other sleepwear.
- Pants with rips, tears, or holes (including jeans with intentional distressing).
- Shorts of any kind.
- Bare midriffs and/or shoulders.
- Clothing that does not comply with the theme announced for the particular dress down day.

Dress at School-Sponsored Functions

Students are trusted to dress in a manner that reflects the values of Mount Saint Joseph Academy at all School-sponsored events, including dances, performances, and other gatherings.

- For all School-sponsored functions, students should make wise choices regarding clothing that are appropriate for the event or venue. Students may be asked to wear alternative forms of dress if necessary.

Technology and Device Use

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Our technology guidelines help us minimize distractions, support focused learning, and encourage the meaningful face-to-face connections that make our Mount community special. Therefore:

- Cell phones and other electronic devices are to be kept securely stored during all class times and in the School hallways, unless a teacher grants permission for their use for a specific educational purpose.
- Students may be asked by an adult at any time to put their cell phone, iPad or any other device away and are expected to follow that request.
- Violations of this policy may result in the temporary loss of technology use privileges or the assignment of detention.
- Students are representing the Mount whether on campus or off campus. At any time or place, use of any device, social media, or any digital platform to engage in harassment, bullying, or the making of threats is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

When Phone and Other Electronic Device Guidelines Need Support:

First Violation

- The teacher will address the student directly regarding the violation and issue a demerit.

Second Violation

- The teacher will confiscate the phone/device and the student can retrieve it from the Dean of Student Life and Formation at the end of the School day.

Further Violations

- Subsequent violations will result in an assigned detention and the student being required to relinquish their phone/device to the Dean of Student Life and Formation at each School day.
- The Dean may also require a parent or guardian to come to the School to pick up the phone/device.

Communication During the School Day

To support students' focus and community engagement during the academic day:

- All communication for students must be made from adult to adult. Parents/guardians may not communicate early dismissals to their daughters using cell phones/devices.
- Students may not communicate illness to their parents/guardians through their phones or devices. Students who need to leave School due to illness must be sent home by the School nurse.
- Parents or guardians who need to communicate with their daughter during School hours must contact the Student Life Office.

Technology and Digital Citizenship

At Mount Saint Joseph Academy, we believe technology is a powerful tool that enhances learning, fosters growth, and connects our community. This comprehensive policy guides all students in using technology responsibly, ethically, and in alignment with our Catholic values.

Our Digital Community Agreement

When you use any technology at the Mount, whether it's your personal iPad, the School's WiFi, or any digital platform, you're representing our community. Just like our uniform policy reflects our shared identity, our technology use should reflect our values of respect, integrity, and service to others.

Students should exercise discretion when bringing personal devices or accessories to School and should avoid bringing high-value or non-essential technology items.

This Policy Covers:

- Your personal iPad and any devices used at School
- School-owned technology and WiFi network
- All online interactions, including social media
- Use of AI tools and digital resources
- Communication through School platforms

Your Responsibilities as a Digital Citizen

Respect Everyone's Dignity

- Treat others online with the same kindness you show in person
- Never engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or hate speech
- Be inclusive and supportive in all digital interactions
- Remember: screenshots last forever, but so does kindness

Act with Integrity

- Submit only your own original work
- Give credit to sources you use (including AI tools when permitted)
- Be honest in all digital communications
- Your online character should reflect your real character

Represent the Mount Positively

- Your social media and online presence reflect on our entire community
- Protect the privacy of classmates, teachers, and School information
- Use only the secure MSJA WiFi network while on campus
- Think twice before posting – would you be proud to show this to Sister Charlene?

Keep Everyone Safe Online

- Guard your passwords and report suspicious activity immediately
- Don't download unauthorized apps or visit harmful websites
- Report cyberbullying or security concerns to a teacher or administrator
- Help create a safe digital space for everyone

Prioritize Learning

- Keep your iPad charged, updated, and ready for class each day
- Use technology for educational purposes during School hours
- Follow teacher directions about device use immediately

Use AI Responsibly

- Only use AI tools according to teachers' guidelines and expectations
- Always cite when you've used AI assistance
- Be ready to explain and defend any AI-assisted work
- Never use AI to create inappropriate content, generate unassigned images, or to cheat
- Remember: AI should enhance your learning, not replace your thinking

Take Care of Your iPad

- Your iPad is a significant investment – treat it with respect
- Install required apps and updates promptly
- The Mount is not responsible for theft, damage, or loss of personal devices
- Personal use shouldn't interfere with learning or violate School policies

Communicate Appropriately

- Use only official School platforms (MSJA email, Canvas, Zoom) to communicate with teachers
- No social media during School hours unless specifically permitted for class
- Don't share photos or personal information about others without permission
- Keep all online interactions positive and professional

What's Not Allowed

These activities are strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. Any damages to MSJA's assets, digital or tangible, will be the financial responsibility of the student and her family.

Academic Dishonesty

- Using AI to complete assignments without permission
- Copying and pasting without proper citation
- Submitting work that isn't your own original effort

Harmful Behavior

- Cyberbullying, harassment, or hate speech in any form
- Creating, sharing, or accessing inappropriate content
- Recording or photographing anyone at School or during a class activity without explicit consent **and teacher approval.**
- Creating or sharing AI-generated images of real people without the **consent of everyone portrayed.** Such conduct is treated as a serious violation subject to severe discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion. See the AI-Generated Content and Deepfakes policy in Section 6.

Security Violations

- Attempting to bypass School network security

- Use of VPNs/other interfaces not through MSJA's firewall during School hours
- Downloading unapproved software or apps
- Sharing login credentials or accessing others' accounts
- Distributing malware or harmful digital content

Misrepresentation

- Impersonating others online
- Sharing false information or spreading rumors
- Using technology in any way that harms the Mount's reputation or community members

Network Abuse

- Accessing blocked websites or content
- Using excessive bandwidth for non-educational purposes
- Disrupting network traffic or wasting resources
- Utilizing Virtual Private Networks (VPNs), anonymous proxies, or any other tools or services designed to hide online activity or bypass network restrictions.

Consequences

We believe in learning from mistakes, but technology violations have serious consequences:

Our Response Process:

- Investigation: We'll review the situation with all involved parties
- Family Contact: Your parents/guardians will be informed
- Appropriate Consequences: Based on the severity and your overall record

Possible Consequences Include:

- Formal warnings and reflection opportunities
- Parent/guardian conferences
- Temporary or permanent loss of technology privileges
- In-School or out-of-School suspension
- For serious violations, including security breaches and non-consensual AI-generated content: expulsion from the Mount

Privacy and Monitoring

Important: Your iPad is your personal device. However, when you use the Mount's network or are on campus, your digital activity may be monitored.

The School can:

- Inspect devices and browsing histories
- Log or restrict access to inappropriate content
- Review digital communications on School platforms

This monitoring helps keep everyone safe and ensures our technology is used appropriately.

Reporting Technology Issues

Your voice matters in keeping our digital community safe! Report immediately if you see or experience:

- Cyberbullying or harassment
- Inappropriate content
- Security concerns or suspicious activity
- Technology violations

How to Report:

- Tell a teacher, counselor, or administrator right away
- Use official School communication channels
- Don't try to handle serious situations alone

Remember: Reporting isn't "tattling" – it's protecting your community.

Technology at the Mount should enhance your learning, strengthen our community, and help you develop into the leader and founder you're meant to be. When you use technology responsibly, you're not just following rules, you're practicing the digital citizenship skills you'll need for college and beyond.

Questions about this policy? Ask your teachers, counselors, or administrators. We're here to help you succeed in our digital world while staying true to our Mount values.

By being permitted to use technology at Mount Saint Joseph Academy, all students agree to follow this policy. The most current version is always available on the Mount's website.

Technology Quick Reference

Always Allowed:

- Using iPads for class activities as directed
- Accessing educational websites through School WiFi
- Communicating with teachers via official School platforms
- Using approved apps for learning

Sometimes Allowed (with teacher permission):

- AI tools for specific assignments
- Social media for educational projects
- Personal use of iPad during appropriate times

Never Allowed:

- Cyberbullying or harassment (see Anti-Bullying/Cyber Bullying policy)
- Social media during class time
- Bypassing network security
- Recording or generating images of others without required consent
- Using AI to cheat or plagiarize (see Academic Integrity section)

Your Personal Space and Belongings

Personal Property and Valuables

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing expensive, valuable, or irreplaceable personal items to School. This includes, but is not limited to, high-value electronics, athletic equipment, jewelry, designer or luxury items, large amounts of cash, and other costly personal belongings.

Mount Saint Joseph Academy is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of any personal property brought onto campus or to School-sponsored activities. Students and families assume full responsibility for any such items. Students who choose to bring valuable items to School do so at their own risk.

The School does not provide insurance coverage for personal property.

Lockers

Individual lockers are provided for student convenience, but please remember that they remain School property for safety reasons.

- Lockers are allocated to support student learning, executive functioning, and responsibility. The School is co-tenant of lockers and reserves the right to search them at any time.
- Mount Saint Joseph Academy is not responsible for any valuables that are left in student lockers. Students should not store or leave valuable or expensive items in lockers at any time. Lockers are not secure storage for high-value personal property.
- Students who bring valuable items to School are encouraged to leave them in the Student Life Office for safekeeping during the School day.

Backpacks

Backpacks are intended for the transport of educational materials:

- Backpacks should be used primarily for carrying textbooks, notebooks, and other educational supplies.
- Wheeled backpacks are generally not permitted unless their use is specifically required for documented medical reasons. In such cases, appropriate medical documentation must be provided to the School nurse and the Dean of Student Life and Formation.

Food and Beverages

We all benefit when we maintain a clean and focused learning environment:

- Food and beverages are generally not permitted in classrooms, gym, science laboratories, the library, computer rooms, Clement's Crossing, or the auditorium.
- Exceptions may be made with explicit permission from a teacher for a specific instructional activity or if a student has a documented medical need supported by a doctor's note on file with the School nurse.

Behavioral Expectations and Consequences

Student Regulations and Behavior

Please trust that our community guidelines and agreements are designed to foster a sense of community, build a rich learning environment, and develop student agency whenever possible. When our community guidelines need attention, we will work together through the following steps. A student's disciplinary record directly impacts their standing within the School community. Students who engage in significant or repeated violations of School policies may be determined to be not in good standing, which may affect their eligibility for privileges, participation in activities, leadership roles, and continued enrollment.

Demerits, Detentions, and Disciplinary Actions

- Demerits will be assigned for violations of School regulations that inhibit the learning experience or environment of our community. The number of demerits issued may increase with repeated offenses. Think of demerits as a reminder to pay closer attention to community guidelines.
- Demerits will be issued by faculty and administration. Students will be sent or given a demerit receipt of the infraction.
- Accumulation of multiple demerits may result in formal warnings, assigned detention, in-School or out-of-School suspension, placement on probation, or other disciplinary actions as deemed appropriate by the administration.
- Students with unsatisfactory conduct will be given a warning and the parent/guardian will be contacted.

Please note that all accumulated demerits are cleared at the end of each School year.

However, major behavioral instances are taken into consideration should repeated behavior occur. No conduct grades will appear on report cards, but letters will be sent to parents/guardians of students who accumulate excessive demerits or are involved in repeated behavioral incidents.

Detentions

Detention is a means of correction/restoration and reflection for students who are struggling to uphold School regulations.

- Detentions may be assigned as a consequence for violations of School policies and regulations.
- Students assigned detention are required to report to the Dean of Student Life and Formation for detention.
- Morning detentions are to be served from 7:15 am – 8:10 am. Afternoon detentions are to be served from 3:05 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. on the scheduled day, unless otherwise directed.
- The Dean or other assigned colleague will serve as moderator for the detention and the date and time will be communicated to the student so she may plan accordingly.
- Failure to attend a scheduled detention session will result in the scheduling of a subsequent mandatory session.
- Assigned detention takes precedence over all co-curricular and other extracurricular commitments, including work responsibilities.

- Students who consistently have detention will have conversations with the Dean of Student Life and Formation and/or Principal, and when necessary, families will be called to discuss next steps.
- Five (5) demerits will result in a detention.

In-School Suspension

When students need further intensive support, in-School suspension will be assigned. Students assigned to in-School suspension must report to the Dean of Student Life and Formation by 8:15 am instead of going to class. The student may not attend classes. The assignment of in-School suspension will automatically initiate a period of probation. During this period, the student will be considered not in good standing and will be subject to all associated restrictions on participation, privileges, and eligibility as determined by the administration.

During a period of in-School suspension, the following conditions apply:

- Students will be immediately removed from any leadership positions or offices they hold in any class, club, sport, or other co-curricular activity.
- Students are prohibited from participating in any co-curricular activities, events, games, performances, or other School-sponsored gatherings.

The duration of the separation from co-curricular, leadership, and athletic activities will be determined by the administration. Any additional infractions committed during this period may lead to expulsion from Mount Saint Joseph Academy.

Automatic Suspension

The following offenses will typically result in automatic out-of-School suspension, although the administration reserves the right to determine the specific consequence based on the circumstances:

- Use, possession, or distribution of alcohol or illegal drugs, misuse of over-the-counter medications or substances, or misuse or unauthorized possession of prescription medications, on School premises or at School-sponsored events (see Substance Use Policies, Section 6).
- Acts of stealing.
- Vandalism or intentional damage to School property.
- Serious violations of the Acceptable Use and Technology Policy, including but not limited to attempts to bypass School network security, distribution of malware, and the creation, possession, or sharing of AI-generated or manipulated images (deepfakes) of any person without consent.
- Violations of the Anti-Bullying/Cyber-Bullying/Anti-Racial Harassment Policy.

Students whose behavior demonstrably contradicts School policy or the core mission of Mount Saint Joseph Academy may be required to withdraw from the School at any point during the academic year.

SECTION 2: CAMPUS LIFE AND ACTIVITIES

Supervision and Access

Morning Arrival

- Students who arrive prior to the warning bell (8:08 am) may wait in the Cafeteria, Fontbonne, Library, and soft spaces outside of the gym.
- Unless a colleague is present, no student should be in a classroom, lab, or office before scheduled class time.

Afternoon Access

- Fontbonne remains open after the School day concludes.
- Students who are remaining at School after the School day should report to Fontbonne, Clement's Crossing or the soft spaces outside the gym and remain until transportation arrives.
- No student should be in a classroom, lab, office, or other gathering space without a colleague present.
- Students may not use the Faculty Room or any office equipment at any time during the day but especially outside of School hours.

Classroom Supervision

- For safety and security reasons, students are not permitted to be in any classroom at any time unless they are under the direct supervision of an adult.

Meals and Campus Spaces

Our meals and campus spaces are designed as opportunities to recharge, connect, and help enhance our sense of community.

Personal Beverages

Students may have a reusable or plastic water bottle in all classrooms, dining areas and hallways, unless otherwise stated by the teacher. No beverages are permitted in the auditorium, gym, library, or Clement's Crossing.

Outside Food

Commercially-delivered food may not be delivered within the School day. After School hours, a teacher, coach, or administrator must approve all commercially-delivered food.

Cafeteria

The Cafeteria provides breakfast and lunch service for students each School day, as well as beverages, salad options, fresh fruit, and desserts. As a matter of courtesy, respect and safety, all students:

- are expected to keep the cafeteria and all adjacent areas clean and orderly.
- must clean up their own tables and dispose of trash properly.
- must conduct themselves with mature and courteous behavior at all times in the cafeteria, Fontbonne, courtyards, and the School Store.
- should never bring food and beverages to any science laboratories, classrooms, computer rooms, gym, Clement's Crossing, the auditorium, or the Library Media

Center without explicit permission from a teacher or documented medical necessity approved by the School nurse.

- are required to present their Mount Saint Joseph Academy student ID card to purchase food in the cafeteria. Students who do not have their ID will be asked to wait until all other students have made their purchases.
- should never use someone else's ID for purchases, with or without permission of the other person.

School Store

Located in the Fontbonne Lounge, the School Store offers a variety of items for purchase by students, including stationery supplies, snacks, and Mount Saint Joseph Academy spirit wear and products.

Visitors and Campus Security

After-School Visitors

Students from other Schools who are visiting after School hours for specific events (e.g., athletic games in the gym, performances in the auditorium) must:

- enter the building via the Student Entrance and remain in the designated area for the event.
- remain in their designated areas of the School building.
- adhere to all Mount Saint Joseph Academy rules and regulations.

Building Security

For the safety and security of all students and colleagues, access to the School building by visitors and students outside of arrival and dismissal times will be limited to the front entrance/exit at the Main Office doors only. All visitors will be admitted by office staff and receive a visitor's pass.

The safety and security of our entire School community are of utmost importance. To ensure a safe environment for everyone, it is essential that all students, faculty, staff, and visitors comply fully and respectfully with the reasonable requests and directives of our Security Officers while on School grounds or at School-sponsored events.

Student Safety Responsibilities

- Students are expected to cooperate fully and respectfully with all Security Officers. This includes providing identification when asked, following instructions promptly, and refraining from any behavior that could compromise the safety or security of others.
- Any concerns or questions regarding security procedures should be directed to the Dean of Student Life and Formation or the Principal.
- Students are required to wear their ID on their lanyards at all times on MSJA's campus.
- Students are reminded that they play a vital role in maintaining a safe School environment. If you see something suspicious or have any safety concerns, please report it immediately to a teacher, administrator, or a Security Officer.
- Students should not prop open exterior doors or allow unauthorized individuals to enter the building. All visitors must enter through the Main Office and sign in.

- In the event of an emergency or security-related incident, students must follow the directions of faculty, staff, and Security Officers calmly and promptly.

Activities, Events, and Engagement

Participation in Co-Curricular Activities

Active participation in co-curricular activities enriches the student experience, and we encourage all students to seek out those activities that are meaningful and enjoyable to them. In all circumstances, academic responsibilities take precedence.

- Students must be in School by the end of second block on a given day to be eligible to participate in any co-curricular activities scheduled for that day (including practices, games, auditions, concerts, dances, proms, events, and shows).
- Excessive absences or lates from School may result in exclusion from participation in co-curricular and other School-sponsored activities, including but not limited to athletics and School field trips.
- Any assigned detention must be completed in full before a student is eligible to participate in any co-curricular or other School activities.
- In addition, participation in co-curricular activities, leadership opportunities, dances, prom, trips, performances, and other School-sponsored events is conditioned upon the student being in good standing with the School, including with respect to academic performance, disciplinary record, attendance, and satisfaction of tuition and other financial obligations.
- Students are expected to exercise sound judgment when bringing personal belongings to School-sponsored events, including dances, performances, trips, and other activities. The School is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of personal property at any time, whether on campus or at School-sponsored events.

Assemblies and Liturgies

Assemblies and co-curricular events are an opportunity for students to connect with each other and connect with the mission of Mount Saint Joseph Academy as a cohesive community.

- All students are required to be present at assemblies, unless otherwise directed.
- Backpacks and coats are not to be taken into the auditorium.
- If an assembly runs over time and the bell rings before leaving the auditorium, students should remain seated and engaged until dismissed from the auditorium.
- When dismissed, students should collect their belongings and proceed directly to the next period class.

Senior Traditions

The senior year is a time for the celebration of student journeys and the creation of positive memories; Mount Saint Joseph Academy recognizes the importance of senior traditions. Please remember:

- Senior class officers are encouraged to plan activities that foster class spirit in a respectful and appropriate manner and are required to contact the Dean of Student Life and Formation to obtain permission for any planned events or activities.
- Any action undertaken as part of a “senior prank” or on an unapproved “cut day” that violates the personhood or property of any individual or entity, and/or causes

scandal by not representing the values of Mount Saint Joseph Academy, will result in significant disciplinary actions.

- These actions may include, but are not limited to, exclusion from participation in senior class-related activities and/or the official Graduation Exercises.
- Participation in senior privileges and events, including prom, senior activities, retreat, and graduation-related exercises, is conditioned upon the student remaining in good standing with the School, including with respect to academic performance, attendance, disciplinary record, and satisfaction of tuition and other financial obligations.
- Final participation in graduation exercises is subject to administrative review and confirmation of good standing, including academic, disciplinary, attendance, and financial obligations.

Emergency Procedures

Fire Drills and Other Emergency Plans

Fire drills are required by law and are an important safety precaution. When the fire bell rings, everyone is to move quickly and in silence from the building by routes that are posted in every room. When outside, students are to stand at least 50 feet from the building, clear of the driveways. They will return in silence to the building when given the signal.

Crisis and Emergency drills also occur throughout the year. Crisis and Emergency plans and drills are kept on file and are accessible throughout the building.

Distribution of Printed Materials

Distribution or posting of flyers, hand-outs, invitations, announcements, etc. on campus must be with the approval of the Dean of Student Life and Formation and be removed in a timely manner. Please use appropriate tape for the surface on which the material is posted. USE ONLY BLUE OR GREEN PAINTER'S TAPE.

Lost and Found

The Lost and Found is located in the Main Office. At the end of each month, the unclaimed articles are given to charitable organizations.

SECTION 3: ACADEMIC LIFE

Academic Policies and Standards

The Mount's teachers and students co-create the academic foundations of our School. We trust that our students value their educational opportunities and understand that our teachers strive for fairness and equity in all grading.

Good Standing

For purposes of enrollment, re-enrollment, continued attendance, participation in privileges, and participation in School-sponsored activities and events, a student is considered to be in good standing only when the student and family are meeting the School's expectations in the following areas: tuition and other financial obligations to the School; academic performance and academic integrity; attendance and punctuality; and compliance with School rules, behavioral expectations, and disciplinary requirements.

A student may be found not to be in good standing if tuition or other financial obligations are delinquent, if the student is not meeting academic expectations, if the student has excessive absences or lateness, or if the student has a significant or repeated disciplinary record.

The School reserves the right to determine, in its sole discretion, whether a student is in good standing and whether that student is eligible for enrollment, re-enrollment, privileges, leadership roles, participation in activities, athletics, trips, dances, prom, retreats, field trips, and graduation-related events.

All determinations regarding good standing and resulting eligibility or consequences are made at the sole discretion of the Mount Saint Joseph Academy administration.

Grading

Grading at MSJA is designed to help students and families measure growth and progress, to offer feedback, and to strengthen student self-awareness when goal-setting.

- Grades and GPAs are rounded to three decimal points. For example, a grade or GPA of 93.766 does not round up to a 94 on the report card or transcript.
- Report cards and transcripts include both letter and numerical grades.
- Student GPAs use a 100-point GPA scale that directly correlates with the set numeric value of the letter grade for each course. They are weighted according to the level of the course. Some courses are not factored into the GPA calculation. These courses are marked with an asterisk on all grade reports. The weighting system is detailed in the table below:

Grade	Scale	College Prep GPA	Honors GPA	AP/AT GPA
A	94 - 100	95.5	98.5	101.5
A-	91 - 93.999	92.5	95.5	98.5
B+	88 - 90.999	89.5	92.5	95.5
B	85 - 87.999	86.5	89.5	92.5

Grade	Scale	College Prep GPA	Honors GPA	AP/AT GPA
B-	82 - 84.999	83.5	86.5	89.5
C+	79 - 81.999	80.5	83.5	86.5
C	76 - 78.999	77.5	80.5	83.5
C-	73 - 75.999	74.5	77.5	80.5
D	70 - 72.999	71.5	74.5	77.5
F	0 - 69.999	0	0	0

Extra Credit

The assignment or offering of extra credit is at the sole discretion of the teacher and is not guaranteed in any course. Extra credit, if offered, is designed to support or extend learning and will be applied in a manner determined by the teacher.

Requests for extra credit, or disagreements regarding the availability, structure, or grading of extra credit opportunities, will not be considered.

Student Progress and Family Partnership

- Parents/guardians are encouraged to monitor student progress using PowerSchool.
- Grades are updated at least twice a month, on the 1st and the 15th.
- A mid-quarter progress report will be sent for all students half-way through each quarter.
- Official report cards will be sent for all students at the end of each quarter.
- All progress reports and report cards will be archived on PowerSchool for students and families to access at their discretion.

Financial Obligations and Release of Student Records

- The release of official student records, including but not limited to transcripts, report cards, letters of recommendation, and other academic documents, is contingent upon the student and family being in good standing with the School, including the full satisfaction of all tuition and financial obligations.
- Mount Saint Joseph Academy reserves the right to withhold official records and documentation until all financial obligations have been fulfilled.

Academic Progress: Supporting Every Student

Academic progress varies significantly among individuals, and the Administrative Team considers numerous factors when supporting a student's academic success. A student's academic performance is a core component of good standing. Students who are failing, at risk of failure, or not complying with academic action plans may be determined to be not in good standing, which may impact eligibility for activities, privileges, and continued enrollment.

- Any student receiving a grade of C- or lower for any quarter, semester average, term, or final grade on either a progress report or a report card will be identified as requiring an academic action plan. In such instances, parent(s) or guardian(s) are expected to contact the relevant teacher to discuss strategies for academic improvement.

- Students who receive a D or Incomplete on any progress report or report card for any quarter, semester average, term, or final grade may be restricted from participating in co-curricular activities. This decision rests with the Studies Office, the Principal, the Athletic Director, and the moderator of the relevant major activity.
 - Co-curricular activities include all major club activities, publications, trips, sporting events and practices, honor societies, service societies, and student leadership organizations.
- Any student receiving an F on any progress report or report card for any quarter, semester average, term, or final grade may be suspended from co-curricular activities until significant academic improvement is demonstrated, as determined by the Studies Office, the Principal, the Athletic Director, and the moderator of the relevant major activity.
 - The duration of this suspension will be determined collaboratively by the Studies Office and the Principal, in consultation with the teacher, moderator, and/or Athletic Director.
 - During this suspension, the student is not permitted to attend practices or rehearsals and will not be allowed to participate in games, meets, or any other major event. Academic progress will be rigorously monitored.
- At the end of each week, the Studies Office (Dean of Studies and Instruction) will conduct a review of student performance. Any student with two failing grades (“F”) recorded on the end-of-week Academic Record Review will be ineligible to participate in all practices, service opportunities, rehearsals, tryouts, competitions, and other co-curricular activities for the entirety of the following week (Sunday through Saturday).
 - The Studies Office and the Dean of Student Life and Formation will notify the family and appropriate moderators.
- In addition to communicating with teachers, any student who is failing or at risk of failing a course at the midpoint of the quarter or later will be required to meet with the Studies Office to develop a mandatory academic action plan. Students and their parents are expected to adhere to this plan.
 - Failure to comply with the action plan may result in the student being required to transfer from Mount Saint Joseph Academy for the subsequent academic year, regardless of final grades. Families will receive weekly progress reports for the remainder of the quarter. These reports will require an electronic signature.
- Any student who has failed, is failing, or is at risk of failing a course at the midpoint of the quarter or after the first semester must meet with the Dean of Student Life and Formation if they are signed up to attend a multi-night field trip. Eligibility to attend multi-night field trips may be revoked if a student has failed, is failing, or is at risk of failing a course.
- If a student fails a course, successful completion of a make-up course during the following summer, as directed by the Studies Office, will be required. The highest

possible final grade awarded for a remediated course is a D. If the failed course is not made up before the start of the next academic year, the original failing grade will remain a permanent part of the student's transcript.

- Any student who fails two (2) or more courses will be required to transfer from Mount Saint Joseph Academy for the subsequent academic year.
 - If a senior fails a course, her diploma will be awarded upon successful completion of the course as stipulated by the Studies Office. The student's report card or transcript will not reflect a graduation date until the course is retaken, passed, and all necessary documentation is submitted to the Studies Office. Transcripts from summer sessions must be received by the Studies Office by August 15th.

Homework

- To support information retention, reinforce learning, and provide opportunities for practice, we expect meaningful daily study and homework from all students.
- We encourage submitting all assignments according to teacher guidelines as part of your commitment to academic excellence.

Tests and Exams

Tests and exams are designed to support students organize, synthesize, and demonstrate knowledge gained over time. To help manage students' academic workloads thoughtfully:

- Students will not have more than two (2) tests scheduled on any given day. They are expected to communicate any scheduling conflicts in advance of the test date.
- Cumulative final exams are mandatory for all full-credit courses, including Advanced Placement (AP) and Advanced Topics (AT) courses, at the end of the course.
- There are no exemptions from taking Advanced Placement (AP) Exams. If a student does not sit for their AP exam, they will lose the AP credit and their transcript and GPA will reflect an Honors course in its place. If this happens in 12th grade, as with any withdrawal, any colleges that have received a student's transcript will be notified of the change.
- Seniors who take Advanced Placement (AP) Exams are required to participate in all graduation rehearsals and activities.

Postsecondary Planning and FAFSA Requirement

In alignment with Pennsylvania Act 47 of 2025, all students in the graduating class of 2027 and beyond are required to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as part of their postsecondary planning process.

Students may be exempt from this requirement if a parent or guardian, or the student if 18 years of age or older, submits a signed opt-out form in accordance with state guidance. Mount Saint Joseph Academy will provide students and families with information regarding the FAFSA, including its purpose and the financial aid opportunities it may provide. The School will also make reasonable efforts to support students and families in understanding and completing the FAFSA or opt-out process.

In accordance with Pennsylvania Department of Education guidance, students will not be denied graduation or otherwise penalized solely for failure to complete the FAFSA. The intent of this requirement is to ensure that all students and families are informed of available financial aid and are able to make thoughtful postsecondary decisions.

Prior to graduation, each senior must have one of the following on record:

- A completed FAFSA, or
- A signed opt-out form

The School will maintain appropriate documentation to demonstrate compliance with state requirements.

Students and families are encouraged to work closely with the College Counseling Office throughout this process.

Learning Support and Accommodations

Mount Saint Joseph Academy is committed to supporting each student's ability to learn and demonstrate understanding in a manner that reflects her individual strengths and needs. Students experiencing academic challenges are encouraged to work proactively with their teachers, School counselor, and the MSJA Learning Team to identify appropriate strategies and supports that promote growth, confidence, and independence.

In certain cases, students may be eligible for formal academic accommodations. To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the whole student, including cognitive, academic, and social-emotional functioning, the School requires a current psychoeducational or neuropsychological evaluation, completed within the past three (3) years, prior to the consideration of School-based accommodations. This evaluation must be conducted by a qualified professional and include specific, relevant recommendations for support.

All documentation is reviewed by the Learning Team, which determines, in its sole discretion, whether accommodations are appropriate within the context of Mount Saint Joseph Academy's academic program. Recommendations from outside providers are considered; however, the School is not obligated to implement all or any recommendations. If accommodations are approved, an Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP) is developed to outline the specific supports to be provided. Teachers are informed of approved

accommodations and work in collaboration with the Learning Team to implement them in a consistent and appropriate manner.

Students are expected to utilize approved accommodations consistently, appropriately, and in accordance with the terms outlined in their Individual Accommodation Plan.

Accommodations are intended to support access to learning and to foster increasing independence over time. Accommodation plans may be introduced, modified, or discontinued at any time based on updated documentation, changes in student need, or ongoing review by the Learning Team.

Accommodations are designed to provide equitable access to learning and assessment and do not modify course content, grading standards, or academic expectations.

Examples of accommodations that may be provided include:

- Extended time for quizzes, tests, and exams (up to 50%)
- Small-group testing
- Testing in a quiet setting
- Preferential classroom seating
- Structured classroom breaks
- Access to audiobooks

The following are not provided as accommodations:

- Curriculum modifications
- Changes to grading standards or assessments
- Audio or video recording of classes

Failure to appropriately utilize approved accommodations or to comply with the expectations outlined in an Individual Accommodation Plan may impact a student's academic progress and overall standing within the School.

A student's engagement with and adherence to her Individual Accommodation Plan may be considered as part of the School's determination of good standing.

Academic Integrity

Aligning with its Mission Statement, Mount Saint Joseph Academy is committed to an environment where students confront moral and ethical challenges. Mount Saint Joseph Academy defines Academic Integrity as the practices and ethics that have to do with respecting intellectual property (words, images and ideas) of others.

Mount Saint Joseph Academy defines Academic Dishonesty as representing another's work as one's own, sharing one's work with others for such a purpose, or giving/seeking information about assessments.

- All instances of alleged academic dishonesty are reported to the Studies Office, which will determine the appropriate disciplinary action. The Principal will also be informed, as will the parent(s) and guardian(s).

- Assignments found to be the result of academic dishonesty will receive a grade of 0. Students may be allowed to redo the assignment for a maximum score of 60.
- Repeated offenses of academic dishonesty will result in additional consequences, to be determined by the Teacher and the Mount Saint Joseph Academy Administration.
- Students should ensure that all smart devices are carefully stored away during any and all in-class assessments (including but not limited to phones, watches, and glasses).

Academic Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Storing, checking or swapping information from calculators, cell phones, smart watches or smart glasses, or other electronic and smart devices
- Looking at someone else's paper
- Allowing a student to look at your paper
- Plagiarism (inclusion of someone else's work or thoughts) whether it be copying directly from another source or paraphrasing another source without acknowledging the source
- Resubmitting of a project or report for another class without prior approval and authorization by the teachers
- Sharing test information before and after a test or quiz
- Cutting and pasting information from one source to another, including AI resources, without teacher permission and attribution
- Sharing or copying workbooks, assignments, labs, homework, tests, activities, etc. from person to person, from class to class, etc.
- Providing or comparing answers or reading answers from a book for another to copy
- Swapping/giving/sharing/borrowing answers via any means
- Leaving data in a place available for another to copy
- Buying information from the internet or any other source
- Citing information from a source not actually used in the research
- Unauthorized use of a textbook, notes or other material during a test, quiz, or exam, etc.
- Taking a test, etc. for someone or allowing the student to take a test, etc. for you
- Stealing, bribing or pressuring another student to get information on tests, etc.
- Changing an answer as a test or quiz is being collected
- Leaving a digital assessment/application, opening another window, enabling notifications, etc. is considered academic dishonesty. All apps and windows must be closed, and the iPad must be connected to the Mount Saint Joseph Academy Student Network. If a student is found to have left Canvas or other platform during a digital assessment, they will receive a 0 on the assignment and the Studies Office will be notified.
- Assignments that have been developed or created with AI (Artificial Intelligence) will not be accepted as original student work unless they are in accordance with Mount Saint Joseph Academy's Acceptable Use and Technology Policies and have teacher approval.

Additional Information

- Students may not distribute or share information for a graded assignment without a teacher's approval.
- Both the passer of work and the one receiving are equally guilty of cheating.

- Lying is a form of cheating.
- Any assignment that is given an individual grade is not considered cooperative learning unless the teacher identifies it as such.
- Students may not work together on an assignment, share notes and/or computer files and then submit individual copies of the assignment as one's own individual work.
- Student tests may not leave the classrooms.
- Teachers will not return tests for keeping, but rather for student review only. Students will be given time in classrooms to look over tests and review tests for exams.
- Students are prohibited from using any Teacher's computer, iPad®, desk, Resource or Faculty room, printer, or copy machine. This permission is needed for each time of use.
- Altering a grade on an academic record is cheating.

AI Policy

We understand that AI is an emerging technology and that guidelines can vary in each class. To that end, we encourage all students to rely on their teacher's guidance and aim for open discussions on the topic.

When seeking to use AI as a learning tool:

- Students should employ AI tools only when authorized and guided by a teacher or administrator, adhering strictly to the AI Policy outlined in the relevant Course Syllabus.
- Students should properly acknowledge and cite any use of AI in your work and be prepared to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the generated material.
- Students should utilize AI and other digital tools to enhance comprehension and learning, not as a means to circumvent effort or compromise academic expectations.
- Students must never use AI to generate inappropriate content, engage in plagiarism, or disseminate misinformation.

Honors and Recognition to Celebrate Achievement

Semester Honors

Each semester, students have the opportunity to earn First or Second Honors. These honor rolls take into account the grades from that semester, alone. Rotation courses, and certain others, are not used in the GPA calculations.

First Honors: Semester GPA of 95.5+, no course below a C, no more than 8 absences.

Second Honors: Semester GPA of 90.5+, no course below a C, no more than 8 absences.

Graduating with Honors

- Graduation honors are distinct from semester honors and are based on a Cumulative GPA through the first semester of 12th grade.
- Graduation with Honors: Cumulative GPA = 93.0+ through first semester of 12th grade.
- Graduation with Distinguished Honors: Cumulative GPA = 98.0+ through first semester of 12th grade.
- Only courses taken at Mount Saint Joseph Academy will count towards Student GPA.

National Honor Society

- **Eligibility**

To be eligible for the national honor society (NHS), students must have a GPA of 93.5+ by the time they enter 11th or 12th grade.

- **Membership Requirements**

Once inducted, NHS members are required to complete a minimum of 8 service hours each year to maintain good standing within the chapter.

SECTION 4: SPIRITUALITY, HEALTH, WELLNESS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

The Mount recognizes that some of our most significant learning experiences occur outside of the classroom; we encourage students to take full advantage of our spirituality, health, wellness, and support services.

Student Spirituality and Enrichment Opportunities

Religious Services

- The School chapel, currently located adjacent to the Convent, is available for students to visit the Blessed Sacrament for personal prayer and reflection, as well as for scheduled class use.
- Major liturgical feasts are celebrated with School-wide Liturgy in the auditorium. All students are expected to attend these celebrations.
- Throughout the academic year, priests may be available on campus to administer the Sacraments. Information regarding these opportunities will be communicated to the student body.
- All students are required to participate in their class retreat each year.
- Participation in religious services and retreats is not optional and is considered an integral part of the Mount Saint Joseph Academy experience.

Field Trips and Retreats

These activities are integral to the Mount experience:

- Attendance at the annual class retreat is an expected and required component of the curriculum for all students.
- A student's eligibility to participate in optional field trips, travel, and similar School-sponsored opportunities will be determined based on whether the student is in good standing with the School, including with respect to academic performance, attendance, disciplinary record, and satisfaction of tuition and other financial obligations.
- Students are responsible for all missed coursework and assignments that occur during their absence due to School-sponsored trips or retreats. It is their responsibility to proactively communicate with their teachers to understand and fulfill these obligations.

Health Services

During the School Day

- If a student feels unwell during the School day, she should report to the nurse's office. The School nurse will assess the student's condition and determine the appropriate course of action.
- Parental permission via telephone is required before a student can be sent home due to illness.
- Students who are not feeling well may rest in the nurse's office for one class block. If more rest is deemed necessary by the nurse, the student will be sent home due to illness.
- If the School nurse is not available, students who are feeling unwell should report to the Student Life Office for assistance.

- Parents/guardians are asked to notify the School nurse of any special health problems or conditions that may affect their daughter's social, academic, or physical activities while at School.

Health History

- An Annual Health History Update form and a Medication Consent Form are sent home with the final report cards each year and are also accessible on the Mount's website under the Parent Portal.
- Both of these forms should be completed thoroughly and returned to the nurse's office by the start of the new School year.
- All student immunizations must be current and comply with the requirements set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.
- All 11th-grade students are required to have a physical examination completed and the report submitted to the School nurse.

Medications

- To receive any medication from the School nurse, including over-the-counter medications, each student must have a completed and signed medication consent form on file. This form requires the signatures of both a parent/guardian and the student's physician.
- Verbal permission for medication administration will not be accepted.
- Any prescription medication that a student needs to take during the School day must be given directly to the School nurse to be properly administered to the student.
- No student is permitted to take any medication, whether prescription or over-the-counter, without the School nurse being informed and a signed medication consent form being on file in the nurse's office.

Counseling and Support

School Counseling

The mission of the Counseling Department is to foster the social, emotional, educational, personal, career, and spiritual development of each student within a Christian framework.

- Counselors strive to create a supportive and confidential environment, building strong rapport with their students.
- While counselors will schedule regular appointments with their assigned students, students are encouraged to proactively seek out their counselor whenever they have a need or concern.
- Counselors work collaboratively with students and their families to identify and connect them with appropriate outside support services when necessary.
- In addition, the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit provides on-site personal counseling and academic support services for students.

College Counseling

Our College Counseling Department prioritizes partnership with students and families to highlight student achievements, help identify student goals, and collaborate with families to support students as they prepare for their future.

Students will be introduced to their assigned college counselor during their sophomore year.

- Discussions about potential colleges and career paths begin in the sophomore year through a dedicated Counseling curriculum course.
- Students are provided with various resources and tools, such as SCOIR, to facilitate informed decision-making.

These discussions and planning continue throughout junior and senior years as students refine their college choices, complete applications, explore career interests, and ultimately make decisions about their future education.

- College counselors provide juniors and seniors with small group and one-on-one meetings on college essays, college lists, and the discernment process, in order to guide both students and parents/guardians throughout the college application process.

Athletic Regulations

Anyone interested in trying out for a sport must have a current PIAA CIPPE form on file. The form can also be found on the Family ID page on the Mount website. The form must be uploaded to Family ID as a .jpeg or .pdf. Team schedules can also be viewed on the website.

Student athletes are responsible for the security of their personal belongings, including athletic equipment, uniforms, electronics, and other valuables brought to practices, games, or events. The School is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items. Students are strongly discouraged from bringing unnecessary or high-value personal items to athletic facilities or events.

- PIAA Physical form, parental/guardian permission, insurance and emergency forms must be on file in the Athletic Office via Family ID prior to tryouts for each sport season.
- All student athletes must abide by athletic policies in the athletic handbook. A signed copy by the student athlete and parents/guardians must be handed in to the Athletic Director at the beginning of each sport season.
- A student athlete who tries out for a team is appointed to varsity or junior varsity status, depending on the decision of the coach. The student athlete must be willing to change status if the coach deems the change advantageous for the team or for the individual athlete's development.
- A student athlete must be in School by the end of second block on the day of a game in order to be eligible to play that day. Attendance as specified here also holds for eligibility to practice. This standard is consistent with the general co-curricular eligibility requirement described in Section 2. Unavoidable appointments or other complications may be considered as exceptions at the discretion of the Dean of Student Life and the Athletic Director.
- Student athletes are expected to maintain good academic grades. Student athletes whose grade is lower than a C- will be subject to the guidelines under Academic Progress.
- Participation in athletics is also conditioned upon the student being in good standing with the School, including with respect to disciplinary record, attendance, and

satisfaction of tuition and other financial obligations, in addition to compliance with academic and athletic requirements.

- Student athletes who have excessive absences and/or are receiving temporary academic accommodations (e.g., medical-related) may not participate in athletic practices and events until deemed so by administration.
- Team members travel to and from a game in a bus provided by the School. If a student athlete utilizes alternate means of transportation to go home, a travel release form must be completed and on file with the Athletic Director.
- Any student athlete who quits a team is ineligible for her next sport.
- All uniforms are due 1 week after the last scheduled competition. Students will be charged the cost of the item for unreturned uniforms.

Library Media Center

Hours

The Library Media Center is open from 7:45 am to 3:15 p.m. on regular School days. Please note that these hours may be adjusted for special events and on days with modified schedules.

- Students are welcome to visit the library before the start of 1st block, during scheduled Study Halls, during their lunch periods, and after the School day concludes.
- Teachers may also schedule class time in the library for research and other academic activities.
- Access to a wide range of online resources, including web pages, subscription databases, virtual libraries, and other digital resources, is available to all students. Please see the Librarian for lists of these resources and any necessary passwords.
- The Power Library database, formerly known as Access PA, facilitates interlibrary loans, allowing students to access materials from other libraries within the consortium, of which Mount Saint Joseph Academy is a member. Please ask the Librarian for assistance with interlibrary loan requests. Late fines may be assessed for the overdue return of interlibrary loan materials.

Circulation

The Library's loan policy is detailed on the Library's web page for student reference. A maximum of 5 books can be checked out for two weeks. Magazines and Videos/DVDs can be checked out for one week. There is a limit of two per person for these items. There is a small selection of books/items that are listed as Overnight Materials/Reference. These materials are to be returned the next day.

Overdue Materials

- The Library does not charge fines for overdue general circulation books, magazines, or videos owned by the Mount.
- As a courtesy reminder, students will receive overdue notices once a week during their advisory period.
- Students are asked to respond to these overdue notices within the first two weeks. If materials remain overdue after the third notice, a detention may be assigned.
- If a borrowed book is lost or damaged while in a student's possession, the student will be responsible for paying the replacement cost of the item.

- For Reference books, a fine of \$1.00 per day will be assessed for each day the item is overdue.
- Fines for overdue Reference books should be paid promptly. Weekly notices will be sent to students with outstanding library fines.

Use of the Color Printer

- Color Printers are generally available to students until 8:08 each morning.
- Desktop Apple computers are available for student use in the Library and in the Computer Lab (Room 220).
- The Library also has Apple Laptops available for student borrowing. Students may sign out a laptop from the Network Administrator.
- For color printing needs during the remainder of the day, please ask the Network Administrator or the Librarian to turn on the color printer.

Library Etiquette

- ALL students must sign in upon arrival in the Library.
- No food is allowed in the Library at any time.
- All water bottles must have a securely screwed-on cap or lid.
- Students are expected to be respectful of others using the Library.
- If a student needs to step out of the Library to use the restroom, they should write the letter “B” next to their name on the sign-in sheet and cross it out upon their return. If they are going to another location, they should note that room as well. This helps the Library staff with attendance tracking in case of emergencies.
- All borrowed items, such as textbooks, supplies, etc. must be signed out at the circulation desk.
- Students using electronic devices in the Library are responsible for ensuring their devices are fully charged and for bringing their own charger cords and power adapters.

SECTION 5: TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

Parking

- The speed limit on all School grounds is 10 miles per hour. All posted signs directing traffic flow and indicating designated parking areas must be observed.
- On a first-come, first-served basis, beginning with seniors.
- Seniors and juniors students may register for a parking spot on campus, as availability permits.
- Due to the limitations of our facilities and parking capacity, Mount Saint Joseph Academy cannot guarantee on-campus parking for all upperclassmen.
- A new parking tag must be purchased for a fee of \$25.00 at the beginning of each School year through the Student Life Office.
- Parking spaces are limited to one per family. On-campus parking is a privilege extended to seniors and juniors, and is not guaranteed.
- Parking privileges are conditioned upon the student being in good standing with the School, including with respect to academic performance, attendance, disciplinary record, and satisfaction of tuition and other financial obligations. The School reserves the right to revoke parking privileges at any time if a student is not in good standing.
- Students who are granted permission to park on campus must display their valid parking tag prominently on their car at all times while on School grounds.
- The back driveway, which belongs to the Villa, is NOT TO BE USED as an entrance or exit by Mount Saint Joseph Academy students.
- Parking in the back parking lot (without explicit permission) or in any areas designated for the Villa is strictly prohibited.
- Violations of these guidelines in any way will result in the loss of parking privileges. Repeated or serious parking violations may also incur demerits, detentions, or other disciplinary actions as deemed appropriate by the Dean of Student Life and Formation.

Busing

- As the number of early dismissal days permitted per year can vary by School district, students who ride the School bus are responsible for checking with their bus driver regarding pick up times on early dismissal days.
- Mount Saint Joseph Academy offers a shuttle bus service for students who use SEPTA public transportation. The shuttle runs to and from the Chestnut Hill East station, which is served by SEPTA bus routes 23, L, and 94, as well as the Chestnut Hill East Regional Rail line. The designated pickup and drop-off location for the shuttle is at the loop outside Primo's Hoagies on 51 Bethlehem Pike.
- Parents/guardians will receive additional information regarding transportation, including any special announcements or updates, throughout the School year.

Parent/Guardian Pick-Up

- Students being picked up after School or dropped off in the morning by their parents or guardians must use the Student Entrance, which is located by the main parking lot.
- Students are not permitted to be picked up by car in the designated bus lane or by the Main Office entrance.

- Students who are being picked up for early dismissal or who are arriving late to School (after 8:15 am) must be signed in or out by a parent or guardian in the Main Office.

SECTION 6: MAJOR POLICIES AND SAFETY

Substance Use Policies

The health, safety, and well-being of our students are paramount. Therefore:

- The possession, use, or distribution of alcohol or illegal drugs, on School premises or at any School-sponsored event is strictly forbidden.
- This policy also expressly prohibits the following, on School premises or at any School-sponsored event:
 - The possession, use, or distribution of prescription medications that were not prescribed to the individual student in possession of them
 - The use of any prescription medication in a manner other than as directed by the prescribing provider, regardless of whether the medication was lawfully prescribed to the student
 - The possession, use, or distribution of over-the-counter (OTC) medications or substances for purposes other than their intended use
- Any instance of the distribution, the use, or the possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription medications, or any controlled substance will result in immediate notifications of parents/caregivers, and immediate disciplinary action by Administration, up to and including suspension or expulsion.
- Being knowingly in the company of individuals who are in possession of or using alcohol, illegal drugs, or any of the above-described substances on School premises or at School events is also grounds for suspension.
- In cases involving the possession or distribution of illegal substances or controlled substances, the local police authorities will be notified.
- The suspected involvement of a senior in any of the above violations is subject to further investigation and may result in non-attendance at senior-related events, including prom and graduation.

Note: All prescription and over-the-counter medications that a student needs to take during the School day must be given directly to the School nurse and administered in accordance with the School's completed Medication Consent Form. Proper medical management of a legitimately prescribed medication through the nurse's office is not a violation of this policy.

Smoking/Vaping

Mount Saint Joseph Academy is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and respectful learning environment for all students. In alignment with this commitment and in accordance with local and state laws, the use of tobacco products and electronic cigarettes (vaping devices) is strictly prohibited on all School property, including buildings, grounds, athletic fields, and School-sponsored events, regardless of the individual's age. This policy is in place to promote the health and well-being of our community, prevent exposure to harmful substances, and comply with legal requirements. The use of these products poses significant health risks and can create an unhealthy environment for others.

Prohibition

- The possession or use of any tobacco product (including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, tobacco products) and any electronic cigarette or vaping device is strictly forbidden on campus at all times.
- Any student found in possession or using tobacco products or vaping devices on School property will face disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to:

First Offense

- Parental notification, confiscation of the prohibited item(s), and detention or other appropriate disciplinary measures as determined by the Dean of Student Life and Formation.
- Educational interventions regarding the health risks associated with smoking and vaping may also be required.

Subsequent Offenses

- Parental notification, confiscation of the prohibited item(s), more significant disciplinary consequences such as in-School suspension, out-of-School suspension, loss of privileges (including participation in co-curricular activities).
- Mandatory counseling or educational programs will be required.

Reporting

- Reporting such incidents helps maintain a healthy and safe environment for everyone.
- Students who witness others using tobacco products or vaping devices on campus are required to report this information to a teacher, counselor, or administrator.

Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policies

Sexual Harassment Policy

Mount Saint Joseph Academy is deeply committed to fostering a community where every member feels safe, respected, and empowered to learn, work, and grow in an environment free from sexual harassment. Inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature undermines these fundamental rights. It is the unequivocal policy of Mount Saint Joseph Academy that no member of our community shall sexually harass another.

This Sexual Harassment Policy aims to educate our students, faculty, and staff about what constitutes sexual harassment, encourage open communication about offensive conduct to prevent escalation, and provide a clear framework for addressing and stopping any harassing behavior that may occur.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's academic standing or employment.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions affecting an individual.
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance.
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or demeaning environment for living, learning, or working.

Sexual harassment can manifest in many forms, including but not limited to: repeated sexual or offensive jokes and remarks; unwelcome physical contact such as patting, hugging, or touching; unwanted requests or demands for sexual activity; and coerced sexual activity. The use of technology, including electronic communication and social media, to perpetrate sexual harassment is strictly prohibited.

It is important to understand that sexual harassment can encompass behavior that is subtle and ambiguous as well as conduct that is direct and overt. While it can occur between peers, it is especially serious when it involves an imbalance of power or a relationship of authority.

Under no circumstances will a sexual relationship between an adult member of the community (someone over 18 who is not a student) and a Mount Saint Joseph Academy student in grades 9-12 be considered consensual, regardless of civil law.

Reporting and Response Procedures

Mount Saint Joseph Academy is committed to responding promptly and effectively to all reports of sexual harassment.

Reporting: Any student who believes she has experienced or witnessed sexual harassment should report it immediately to a teacher, counselor, the Dean of Student Life and

Formation, or the Principal. Reports may be made verbally or in writing. Students are encouraged to report concerns as soon as possible, even if they are uncertain whether the conduct meets the definition of sexual harassment.

Investigation: Upon receiving a report, the administration will:

- Take immediate steps to separate the individuals involved if necessary for safety.
- Meet with the student(s) involved to gather information about the situation.
- Conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of the allegations.
- Notify the parents/guardians of the students involved.

Determination and Consequences: The administration will determine what disciplinary action is warranted based on the investigation. Consequences for a substantiated violation may include, but are not limited to, formal warning, probation, suspension, or expulsion, and may include a required educational component addressing appropriate conduct.

Non-Retaliation: Retaliation against any student for reporting sexual harassment in good faith, or for participating in an investigation, is strictly prohibited and will itself be treated as a violation of this policy subject to disciplinary action.

Follow-Up: The administration will follow up with the reporting student and other appropriate parties to confirm the situation has been addressed and to prevent recurrence or retaliation.

Legal Compliance: Mount Saint Joseph Academy will comply with all applicable state and federal laws regarding sexual harassment, including reporting obligations to the appropriate authorities where required.

Anti-Bullying/Cyber Bullying and Anti-Racial Harassment Policy

Bullying is a type of harassment that involves some sort of force, whether overt or subtle. Bullying can come in many forms such as verbal, mental, or physical abuse or harm, or the threat of harm. Bullying can also be the intentional ostracizing of another student. Bullying conveys a message without intent of legitimate communication or address by oral, nonverbal, written or electronic means; is composed of more than one act over a period of time, however short, evidencing a continuity of conduct; and causes temporary or permanent emotional and/or physical distress.

Cyber Bullying is a form of Bullying that occurs in an electronic format, often on social media platforms, through text messaging, and through AI-generated content. Under Pennsylvania law, Cyber Bullying falls under harassment and stalking laws. Cyber Bullying is a criminal offense and may be charged as harassment if the bully communicated with the victim in a threatening way with the intent to alarm or annoy the victim. (18 Pa. Con. Stat. Ann. § 2709.) Cyber Bullying may also be charged as stalking when the underlying behavior includes repeated acts that show an intent by the bully to put the victim in fear of bodily injury or serious emotional distress. (18 Pa. Con. Stat. Ann. § 2709.1.) A person commits the crime of cyber harassment when the person engages in a continuing course of conduct by electronic means or by publication through an electronic social media service.

Racial Harassment is unwelcome verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, ethnicity, or cultural customs. Racial Harassment creates a hostile or abusive environment. Racial harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.

Bullying/Cyber Bullying and Racial Harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Making a seriously disparaging statement or opinion about a person's race, ethnicity, cultural customs, physical characteristics, socio-economic status, sexuality, sexual activity or mental or physical health or condition
- Communicating to or about a person using any lewd, lascivious, threatening or obscene words, language, drawings of caricatures
- Threatening to inflict harm
- Using epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs or making/posting/sharing racist remarks or racist visual materials

The Mount Saint Joseph Academy Community will not tolerate any forms of Bullying/Cyber Bullying or Racial Harassment. If a student at any time feels afraid or threatened by another student, immediate action will be taken, even if the Harassment does not occur on campus. *Our number one concern is the safety and well-being of each and every student.* If a student is involved in a Harassment incident the following steps will be taken:

- Students will immediately be removed from any threatening situation.
- The administration will meet with all students involved to ascertain the details of the situation.
- Allegations of Bullying/Cyber Bullying or Racial Harassment will be investigated.

The administration will contact the parents/guardians of the students to advise them of the situation.

- The administration will determine what disciplinary action will be taken. A student involved in bullying, racism, or harassment of any kind may be immediately suspended, placed on probation, and expected to participate in an educational program which includes the consequences of any form of bullying.
- The administration will follow-up with all the appropriate parties to make sure that the situation has been corrected; to prevent recurrence; and to ensure that no one is subjected to acts of retaliation.
- If the bullying/cyber bullying, racism has not stopped, the administration will conduct a further investigation.
- If bullying is found to have continued, the Mount reserves the right to dismiss or ask the student to leave.
- Mount will comply with all state anti-bullying laws, including reporting the bullying to the proper authorities.

AI-Generated Content and Deepfakes

The creation, distribution, or possession of AI-generated images, videos, or audio content (deepfakes) depicting any person without the consent of everyone portrayed is a form of bullying and absolutely prohibited. This includes any digitally manipulated content using AI tools that creates realistic but false depictions of real individuals, regardless of intent or whether it is shared.

Any AI-generated explicit or sexual content depicting minors constitutes child sexual abuse material under federal and state law. AI-generated explicit content of adults without consent may violate state harassment, privacy, and cybercrime laws.

Such violations will result in serious disciplinary consequences, up to and including **suspension or expulsion**, immediate involvement of law enforcement when appropriate, and potential legal action. Students who encounter such content must report it immediately to administration.

Anti-Hazing Policy

Hazing involving students, student groups or any individuals at Mount Saint Joseph Academy, is strictly prohibited. The State of Pennsylvania (Act 175) defines hazing as “any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a person or which willfully destroys or removes public or private property for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in, any organization. The term shall include, but not be limited to, any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug or other substance, or any other forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical health and safety of the individual, and shall include any activity which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual, or any willful destruction or removal of public or private property. Any activity as described in this definition upon which the initiation or admission into or affiliation with or continued membership in an organization is directly or indirectly conditioned shall be presumed to be ‘forced’ activity, the willingness of an individual to participate in such activity notwithstanding.”

All students, faculty, and staff are responsible for abiding by this policy, both on campus and off campus, including on privately owned facilities and/or property. Responsibility will apply equally to situations in which one or more members knew or should have known of the activity, did not report the activity to the Principal, and failed to make every reasonable attempt to prevent or stop it.

Anyone who witnesses or suspects that hazing has occurred shall immediately report what was witnessed, or the basis for the suspicion that hazing has taken place, to the Principal. If the hazing has occurred in connection with a School club, organization or sport, then the incident shall also be reported to the person or coach responsible for the club, organization or sport.

The Mount administration shall have discretion to impose any discipline deemed appropriate for an incident of hazing against both the individual who engaged in the conduct and the School organization of which they were a member. Discipline and penalties shall include, but not be limited to, withholding diplomas or transcripts, the imposition of fines, restitution, probation, suspension, dismissal or expulsion. In the case of Mount organizations or sports' teams, penalties may include withdrawal of permission for the

club, organization, or team to continue to operate on campus or other School property or to otherwise operate under the recognition or sanction of the Mount.

Imposition of discipline by the Mount does not preclude any criminal penalty which may be imposed for violation of criminal laws and the Mount will fully cooperate, and share information, with law enforcement as part of any investigation.

Technology/Internet Access Policies

Mount Saint Joseph Academy prides itself on being able to offer its students a wide variety of technological services. We believe that the use of technology is a privilege. Students are expected to conduct themselves according to the guidelines set forth in the “Acceptable Use Policy.”

Mount students are expected to use the technology available for educational pursuits. Students are not to access any sites that may be considered lewd or pornographic or access personal, non-Mount email accounts. Social networking sites must be used for educational purposes only.

- Mount Saint Joseph Academy has filtering software to help prevent our students from accidentally, and perhaps intentionally, gaining access to internet sites that we would consider harmful or that may go against our educational mission.
- A student who gains access to these “blocked sites” by disabling the School's filter is in violation of School policy. Students will be held accountable for any inappropriate use of technology.

Acceptable Use Policy

Purpose and Scope

Mount Saint Joseph Academy (“MSJA” or “the School”) provides students access to School technology resources, including but not limited to the School network and WiFi, internet access, email accounts, learning platforms, software, and School-managed systems (“School Technology Resources”).

This Acceptable Use Policy (“AUP”) governs student use of School Technology Resources:

- on campus and at School-sponsored activities;
- off campus when using School Technology Resources; and
- off campus when conduct using technology materially impacts the School community, School operations, or student safety.

Use of School Technology Resources is a privilege and must support the School's educational mission, Catholic identity, and community standards. This policy works in conjunction with the Student & Parent/Guardian Handbook and other School policies, including Academic Integrity and Anti-Bullying/Cyberbullying. Where the handbook provides more specific day-to-day procedures (for example, cell phone rules), the handbook procedures govern.

Definitions

For purposes of this policy:

- **School Technology Resources** include, but are not limited to, the School's network, WiFi, servers, internet access, School-issued or School-managed accounts (including email and learning platforms), School-owned devices, and any digital platform, software, application, or service provided, licensed, or approved by the School.
- **Personal Devices** include student-owned phones, tablets, laptops, smart watches, wearables, or any other electronic or internet-capable devices.

- **Use** includes accessing, creating, viewing, possessing, storing, transmitting, sharing, recording, posting, or distributing digital content by any electronic means.
- **School Community** includes students, faculty, staff, administrators, families, volunteers, and participants in School-sponsored activities.
- **On Campus** includes all School property, School transportation, and School-sponsored activities or events, whether held on or off School grounds.

Ownership, Privacy, and Monitoring

All School Technology Resources are the property of Mount Saint Joseph Academy. Students have no expectation of privacy when using School Technology Resources. This includes files, emails, messages, images, recordings, browsing activity, cloud storage, and content created, accessed, transmitted, or stored using School Technology Resources.

The School reserves the right, with or without prior notice, to monitor, access, review, copy, disclose, restrict, or remove information on School Technology Resources when necessary to:

- maintain system security and functionality;
- protect the safety and well-being of the School community;
- investigate potential policy violations;
- comply with legal obligations; or
- enforce School policies and community standards.

Use of personal devices on campus or at School-sponsored activities does not create an expectation of privacy when those devices are connected to or interacting with School Technology Resources.

Internet Filtering and Online Safety

Mount Saint Joseph Academy uses technology protection measures designed to reduce student access to content that is inappropriate, harmful, or inconsistent with the School's mission and applicable law.

No filtering system is perfect. Students must immediately report accidental access to inappropriate material to a teacher, administrator, or other trusted adult.

Students may not attempt to bypass, disable, or evade School filtering, monitoring, or security systems, including through the use of virtual private networks (VPNs), anonymous proxies, or similar tools.

Social Media and Digital Communication

Students may not use social media, messaging platforms, or other digital communication tools during the School day except when expressly permitted by a teacher or administrator for educational purposes.

Students may not use digital platforms to:

- harass, threaten, intimidate, or bully others;
- create, share, repost, amplify, or possess harmful, misleading, or inappropriate content;

- impersonate others or misrepresent identity;
- damage the reputation of the School or members of the School community; or
- otherwise violate School policies or community standards.

Online conduct, whether public or private and whether occurring on or off campus, that materially impacts the School community, student safety, or the learning environment may result in disciplinary action.

Personal Devices and Network Access

Students may use personal devices at School only in accordance with the Student & Parent/Guardian Handbook and teacher or administrator direction.

While on campus or at School-sponsored activities, students must access the internet through School-provided network connections as directed. Students may not use personal hotspots, cellular data, or other methods intended to bypass School monitoring, filtering, or security systems.

The School may temporarily or permanently restrict or revoke a student's network or technology access independently of device confiscation.

Mount Saint Joseph Academy is not responsible for the loss, theft, damage, or maintenance of personal devices brought to School or School-sponsored activities.

Device ownership does not limit the School's authority to enforce this policy.

Academic Integrity and Use of Artificial Intelligence

Use of School Technology Resources must comply with Mount Saint Joseph Academy's Academic Integrity Policy and all course-specific expectations.

Students may not use technology, including artificial intelligence tools, to misrepresent another person's work as their own, gain unauthorized assistance, or circumvent academic expectations.

Artificial intelligence tools may be used only when expressly permitted by a teacher or administrator and must be disclosed and cited as required. Unauthorized use of AI on graded work constitutes academic dishonesty and will be addressed under the Academic Integrity provisions of the Student & Parent/Guardian Handbook.

Students are also expected to respect copyright and intellectual property laws when using digital resources.

Recording, Images, and AI-Generated Content

Students may not photograph, record, film, screenshot, livestream, or otherwise capture or distribute images, audio, or video of any person on campus or during a School-sponsored or instructional activity without the required consent and teacher approval, whether shared publicly or privately and whether created through traditional or digital means.

The creation, possession, or distribution of digitally manipulated or AI-generated content (including “deepfakes”) depicting any individual, on or off campus, without the consent of everyone portrayed is strictly prohibited. Such conduct is treated as a serious violation subject to severe discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Violations of this section may also constitute violations of state or federal law and will be addressed in accordance with School policy, including potential referral to law enforcement.

Violations and Consequences

Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the Student & Parent/Guardian Handbook and other applicable School policies.

Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- loss, restriction, or revocation of technology or network access privileges;
- demerits or detention;
- suspension or expulsion/required withdrawal;
- restitution for damage to School property or systems; and
- referral to law enforcement when required or appropriate.

The School reserves the right to respond based on the severity of the conduct, disciplinary history, and impact on the School community.

Enforcement Authority

Administrators and designated staff are authorized to enforce this policy, investigate violations, and take appropriate action consistent with School policy and applicable law. Nothing in this policy limits the School's authority to take immediate action when student conduct poses a risk to safety, security, or the well-being of the School community.

Policy Updates and Version Control

This Acceptable Use Policy is a Board-approved policy of Mount Saint Joseph Academy. Administrative procedures related to technology use may be updated as needed. Any revision to this policy itself requires Board approval.

The most current and controlling version of this policy is maintained by the School and made available through the Parent Portal and/or the School website. Continued enrollment constitutes acceptance of this policy. The School may also require annual acknowledgment.

Acknowledgment

As a condition of enrollment, students and parents/guardians are required to acknowledge and agree to comply with this Acceptable Use Policy and all related School policies. By agreeing to adherence to this Handbook, parents/guardians and student/s are agreeing to all terms and conditions within this policy as well.