



Student Handbook
2019-2020

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Introduction

Merion Mercy Academy students and parents partake in the shared effort and obligation to understand, embrace, and follow School policies and rules governing life at MMA. It is the responsibility of students and their parents/guardians to be aware of the information contained in this Student Handbook.

This document is mission-based, reviewed, updated, and published each year as a means of engendering community, school pride, and a safe, nurturing setting for academic learning and personal growth.

The principles underlying Merion Mercy's policies, procedures, and guidelines are rooted in our core values and expectations of respect for self and others, common courtesy, integrity and the implicit agreement when a student is admitted to the school that she will strive to the best of her ability to fulfill the requirements of being a student in good standing – elements that should guide all student actions, decisions, and behaviors.

In an ever-changing environment, it should be noted that no print document will address every potential issue related to student conduct and comportment.

The Administration of Merion Mercy Academy retains the right to revise or expand upon these policies, procedures, and regulations whenever the administration deems necessary. For the most up-to-date version, please visit www.merion-mercy.com.

Merion Mercy admits qualified students without regard to race, color, religion, sexual orientation or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to the students by the School and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sexual orientation, ethnic or national origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and aid programs, athletic, and other school-administered programs.

Section I - School Information

History

Founded in 1884 by the Sisters of Mercy, Merion Mercy Academy is an all-girls independent Catholic secondary school. Rooted in Catholic values and the charism of mercy, MMA furthers the mission of the Church and the Sisters of Mercy through its commitment to spiritual development and excellence in all programs, activities and services. As a premier secondary school offering a college-preparatory curriculum to a diverse student body, the MMA curriculum stresses Mercy spirituality, global awareness and social responsibility.

Mission Statement

Merion Mercy Academy, an independent, Catholic, college preparatory school sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, offers a holistic education which encourages academic and personal excellence. Its curriculum stresses Mercy spirituality, global awareness, and social responsibility. Within a nurturing community, Merion Mercy Academy educates leaders: young women who live mercy and seek justice.

Belief Statement

- We believe in a college preparatory education that emphasizes Catholic values, faith development, and academic excellence.
- We believe that single-gender education empowers each young woman to discover and develop her individual talents and gifts.
- We believe in the value of each person – respecting her traditions, celebrating her uniqueness, and challenging her to develop and act from a multicultural, international perspective.
- We believe that Mercy education promotes strong witness and active service to those in need.
- We believe in educating women to be globally aware citizens who in their everyday choices and decisions demonstrate compassion, justice, collaboration, and commitment to social issues.

Diversity Statement

Merion Mercy Academy will strengthen our community and broaden our vision and understanding of living mercy and seeking justice. We commit to:

- Growing in our awareness and our understanding of diversity and inclusion issues;
- Expanding our appreciation for the rich diversity in our school community and in our world;
- Fostering a school culture of inclusion this is open, respectful, and appreciative of the diversity among us that enables all to participate and contribute to our Mercy community;
- Creating opportunities for dialogue that deepen our understanding of realities and perceptions which may inhibit a culture of inclusion so we can intentionally promote a more inclusive culture;
- Ensuring that policies, procedures, practices and behavior are consistent with our Mission and Core Values and reflect the inclusive community we aspire to be;
- Taking action to break down barriers.

Core Values of a Mercy Education

Animated by the Gospel, and Catherine McAuley's passion for the poor, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, who sponsor Merion Mercy Academy, are impelled to commit their lives and resources to act in solidarity with the economically poor of the world. They are committed especially to women and children: women seeking fullness of life and equality in church and society; one another as they embrace their multicultural and international reality. This commitment also impels Merion Mercy Academy to:

- Develop and act from a multicultural, international perspective;
- Speak with a corporate voice;
- Work for systemic change;
- Practice non-violence;
- Act in harmony and interdependence with all creation;
- Call ourselves to continual conversion in our lifestyle and ministries.

Upholding this commitment and as a result of a collaborative dialogue at the Mercy Secondary Education Association Conference XIX, 1990, Mercy educators affirmed the following Core Values of a Mercy Education:

- Collaboration with others;
- Compassion and service;
- Concern for women and women's issues;
- Educational excellence;
- Global vision and responsibility;
- Spiritual growth and development.

Catholic Identity

Merion Mercy is a Catholic independent secondary school located within the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. As a Catholic school within the Mercy tradition, the school forms students in the message of the Gospel and the teachings of the Catholic Church; creates a community of faith that is open and inclusive; encourages students in service to the Church and the global community; and provides through liturgy and prayer the opportunity for students to grow in their relationship with God. Catholic liturgy, sacraments, spirituality, traditions and prayers are integral to the faith experience of the school community where all participate in daily prayer, regular liturgical celebrations and the celebration of Catholic traditions according to the liturgical season.

As a school sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, students are encouraged to “live mercy and seek justice” through growth in Mercy spirituality, response to the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy, service to others and advocacy for a more just world.

The Theology curriculum and the services of Campus Ministry support students in their faith development and spiritual growth. Course content and materials used conform with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Theology teachers must be practicing Roman Catholics.

While respectful of the diverse faith traditions among the members of the school community, all students take a theology course offered by the school each semester. All students and faculty are

expected to attend and participate respectfully in daily prayer, school liturgies and prayer services. Annual retreat days are offered for students, faculty and staff. In addition, the Kairos three-day retreat is offered to seniors.

School Traditions

Mercy Day - Mercy Day (September 24th) is an annual, worldwide recognition of the foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, Catherine McAuley, and her mission to serve those in need and her commitment to education. Mercy Day also connects to an annual project called the "The Mercy Girl Effect," which is a student-run program that benefits women and girls in need throughout the world. The MMA community has been involved in "The Mercy Girl Effect," a project combining the efforts of Mercy schools across the nation, for several years. Together, a group of Mercy-sponsored schools collaborate to improve the quality of life for females in developing nations with a special emphasis on girls and education.

Harvest Moon - More than 85 years ago, Merion Mercy Academy—then known as Mater Misericordiae Academy—began holding a Harvest Moon Ball. Originally, the Harvest Moon Ball raised money for the Missions, and it was held off campus with an orchestra and patrons. A few decades after its origin, the Harvest Moon Ball became known as simply the Harvest Moon, and it started to take place in Merion Mercy's gymnasium with a band (then eventually switching to a DJ). The Harvest Moon has taken a few years off from time to time when students decided to hold a Ring Dance and, most recently in 2003, the Winter Ball, but it seems that the Harvest Moon always makes a triumphant return and has secured its place as an annual tradition. It is estimated that Merion Mercy Academy has enjoyed approximately 75 Harvest Moons!

Weenie Roast - A tradition for more than 50 years, MMA's Weenie Roast provides a fun-filled day for the students to show off their Halloween best and to enjoy lunch with their friends and the entire school community. Usually, each homeroom creates a skit based on the school year theme to perform for the entire community. The skits are voted on and the winners enjoy some treats and bragging rights. Lunch is, you guessed it, grilled hot dogs that the faculty/staff make for the students.

Carol Night - Merion Mercy Academy rings in the holidays with Carol Night. When the school was smaller, all students attended; the event is now just for seniors. Our musicians and vocal groups perform and all seniors are in red robes and sing carols. This festive evening includes the nativity tableau, songs, dance, and music. The program always concludes with alumnae (who are also invited) taking the stage and singing the perennial Carol Night favorite "O Holy Night." The nativity tableau includes a "Baby Jesus"—a baby from the MMA community.

Ring Night - This important rite-of-passage and school tradition in the name of Sisterhood and Mercy features a special Mass, ceremony, and reception in honor of the junior class. At this event and liturgical celebration, to which parents and faculty are invited, juniors are called to upper class leadership and receive unique MMA school rings. Once blessed, the students always shine even brighter than the gem stones on their fingers. Joining in a bond of unity and the Circle of Mercy, literally and figuratively, the juniors have occasion for fellowship and picture taking during a light reception, which closes out the evening.

Section II - Academic Policies and Procedures

Graduation Requirements

Merion Mercy Academy is accredited by the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools. The academic year is divided into two semesters. One unit of credit is given for a year-long course and a half credit offered for semester-long courses.

Students are required to earn the following 24 credits for graduation:

Theology	4.0 Credits
English	4.0 Credits
Social Studies	3.0 Credits
Mathematics	3.0 Credits
Science	3.0 Credits
Foreign Language	2.0 Credits
Writing	0.5 Credit
Health/Physical Education	1.0 Credit
Electives	3.5 Credits

Many students take six academic classes each semester (i.e. English, Math, History, Science, World Language, Theology), although under certain circumstances, a student may take seven academic classes if she is on track to complete her graduation requirements and has the approval of the Interim Assistant Head of School for Affairs.

Physical Education

Two years of physical education are required for all students. During the sophomore year, a student may elect not to take physical education class if the student is an active member of an MMA sports team or participates in a qualified sport of physical activity outside of MMA for at least six hours per week during the qualifying semester. This must be approved by the Athletic Director prior to the start of the semester.

Grading Scale

MMA reports grades as letters A to F, with A designating excellent work and F designating failing work.

The school's current grading system is as follows:

Grade	Range	Grade Points (GP)
A+	97 – 100	4.3
A	93 – 96	4.0
A-	91 – 92	3.75
B+	88 – 90	3.5
B	83 – 87	3.0
B-	81 – 82	2.75
C+	78 – 80	2.5
C	73 – 77	2.0
D	70 – 72	1.0
F	69 & below	0.0

Grade point average

Grade point average is calculated by dividing the sum of the grade points by the number of credits. Courses that use an evaluation system of satisfactory or unsatisfactory do not enter into the calculation of the GPA nor do chorale and applied music courses. Students receive a .2 bump in their GPA for each A level course successfully completed and a .4 for each AP level class.

Class Rank

Merion Mercy Academy does not rank its students. This decision stems from the philosophy which encourages care for the individual, not necessarily in comparison to others. Merion Mercy Academy offers a rigorous college preparatory curriculum. Therefore, class rank is not an accurate measure of individual achievement.

Honors Distinction

Distinguished Honors is awarded at the end of the semester to students who have a GPA of 4.0 with no subject grade point below 3.5, who carry at least six credits and earned satisfactory grades in every minor subject.

Reports Cards

Report Cards are distributed after each semester. Interim grades are distributed to all students in October and March.

Transcripts

The official transcript is a formal academic record of credit-bearing courses completed at Merion Mercy Academy. In addition, courses completed for credit at other accredited high schools and colleges will be reflected as part of the official record after a signed, original transcript has been received by Merion Mercy.

Official transcripts are not released directly to students or parents. Student academic records are released only for use by faculty and professional staff for authorized school-related purposes. The release of student records for off-campus use (most commonly college applications) occurs only by the written request of the student or parent.

Academic Probation

A student who has failed two academic courses or has a cumulative GPA below 2.0 at the end of January is considered to be on academic probation. The Guidance Team led by the Interim Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs and the student's counselor will meet to guide the student and her approach to learning so she experiences academic success. If the student still has two failures at the end of the school year, she will not be eligible for re-enrollment until her record has been evaluated and found to warrant re-enrollment.

Advancement to the Next Level/Grade

A student who receives a final grade below a 70 in any course may require administrative and departmental approval to take the next level course in that discipline. Approval for advancement may be conditional upon successful completion of summer work or other requirements as determined by the Interim Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs.

Testing

Test days are assigned for each subject area. Major papers and projects follow the same schedule as test days. Examinations are given at the end of each semester according to a prescribed schedule. Students may not make changes to the exam schedule without the permission of the Interim Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs. Exams count as 20% of the students' semester grades. Exams and final assessments are not returned to students, but are kept by the classroom teacher.

Add/Drops

The add/drop period for a semester course is four weeks and for a year-long course is eight weeks. When a student drops a course after the add/drop period, her transcript will show withdrawn passing (WP) or withdrawn failing (WF), depending on her academic standing at that time. Some flexibility in meeting requirements is allowed for those who enter as students in the junior or senior year.

Summer School Credit

MMA rarely accepts for-credit summer courses taken at other institutions for classes that are required for graduation. Students must submit a summer school application form to MMA for approval prior to taking a course. It is the student's responsibility to have the transcript of work completed in summer submitted to the academic office in order to receive credit. Summer school courses are not averaged into the GPA. Courses taken as preparation for the same course at MMA will not be awarded credit by the School.

Many students take enrichment courses over the summer. These courses are valuable experiences for a student's overall development, and the student should submit a copy of any certificates of completion to her advisor. These courses are not recorded on the MMA transcript, but a copy of the transcript from the summer program may be sent to colleges with the MMA transcript.

Homework

Teachers may assign up to 30 minutes of homework for high school level courses each school day. Teachers in AP level courses may assign 45 minutes of homework each school day.

The amount of time students spend on homework will vary from student to student based on several factors, including the number of courses she is taking and the level of those courses, whether or not she has a free period in the day during which she can complete homework, and how she utilizes her weekends. It is not unusual for students to have several hours of homework each night and over the weekend. If a student has a concern about how long it takes to complete her nightly homework, she should speak with her teachers or her counselor. Working with her teachers, a student can become more efficient in completing her assignments as well as learn new study skills to help her transition to the demands of college-level course work.

Learning Differences

Parents of students with documented learning differences and educational testing will inform the school and share educational testing so the school can determine how best to meet the educational needs of the student. School counselors will share this information with the student's teachers. Teachers and learning specialists from the MCIU (when appropriate) will work with teachers to provide accommodations to facilitate learning and help students develop skills to manage their course load, and learn to become self-advocates.

Academic Honesty

Each student has the responsibility to submit work that is uniquely her own. When a student is suspected of committing an offense involving academic integrity, the teacher must report the incident to the Department Chair and the Interim Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs. This team will consult with the teacher to help determine an appropriate consequence.

When serious or repeated violations occur, the Head of School might become involved. In addition to an academic penalty, for serious violations, a student may face suspension, probation, and/or dismissal as decided by the Head of School.

Academic Dishonesty also includes:

- Cheating, which includes inappropriately assisting or collaborating with other students or using material, including submission of the student's own work that has already been used for another assignment, without explicit permission from the teacher;
- Plagiarism, which presents the words, ideas or research of others as the student's without citing the source or improperly citing the source and/or copies or paraphrases words from a source (with or without citing the source);
- Lying, which misrepresents the truth with the intention of falsifying, inventing, or deceiving.

Academic Dishonesty includes all acts listed below:

- Submitting classwork or homework that is not her own;
- Sharing classwork or homework with another student ;
- Using information inappropriately obtained from others;
- Copying words and or ideas from another source (with or without citing the source) ;
- Paraphrasing to an extent that the thought is too similar to the source (with or without citing the source);
- Failing to acknowledge all sources used.

Attendance

Though homework can be made up, notes copied and tests taken at a later time, a student can never recapture lost classroom interaction. Additionally, making up assignments while keeping current with new material is challenging for most students. Unless there is a genuine emergency, students and families are expected to observe vacation dates, neither leaving early nor returning late from holidays. The School provides a major date calendar well in advance of the school year to assist parents with planning. The School recognizes that there are some rare exceptions to this expectation, which must be approved in advance by the Assistant Head of School for Academics.

Planned Absences

Planned absences need to be approved at least three days for administrative approval. The assistant to the Office for School Life will communicate this absence to the teachers. The student is responsible for obtaining assignments from teachers.

Attendance procedures for sick students

Parents must call the attendance office (610-664-6655 x 119) before 8:30 a.m. if their daughter is sick and will remain at home for the day. When the student returns to school, she must bring a signed note with her name, date(s) of absence, and reason for absence. The School Code of Pennsylvania requires a reason for absence. Students who are absent for three or more

consecutive days must submit a doctor's note. Students who accumulate 16 absences may jeopardize promotion at the end of the school year and may be asked to attend summer school or complete packets of work from courses.

Participation in school activities and attendance

Students who have an extended stay in the infirmary, who arrive at school after 9:00 am or who are absent from school may not participate in any athletic or extra-curricular activities that day unless approved by the Assistant Head for School Life.

Missed Assignments Due to Absences

Teachers want to help students who miss time due to illness and welcome parent support in collecting make-up work due to extended illnesses. During high school, students are expected to assume primary responsibility for communicating with their teachers about completing make-up work.

Tardy Policy

A student is late if she is not in class before the first bell rings. If a student is late, she must report to the attendance office, where tardy is marked on her attendance record, and a late slip given to her to be admitted to class. Students are given four tardies per semester which can be used for doctor's appointments, weather problems, or unexpected transportation problems. Students with persistent tardiness will be assigned disciplinary consequences by the Assistant Head of School for School Life.

Procedures for Early Dismissal

A student needing to leave school early must bring a note signed by a parent or guardian to the attendance office requesting permission. Students who need to leave school after the day has started should have their parents or guardians email or call the school attendance office.

Procedures for Absence for College Visit/Interviews

- A senior is permitted two full day or four half day vouchers to visit college campuses and/or have interviews.
- A student's voucher days must be used before the first Friday in May of senior year.
- A form from the college counseling office must be signed by a college counselor and the student's parent/guardian, and registered with the attendance office one day prior to the absence.
- A student who fails to follow these procedures will be marked absent. The absence may be treated as a truancy with demerits or detention given.
- A student should inform her teachers beforehand of her absence.
- A student is responsible for all academic work missed.
- The student may participate in athletic or extracurricular activities.

Section III - School Safety and Security

School Hours of Operation and Student Supervision

Students have access to the school building from 7 a.m. until 6 p.m. on days school is in session. Students may not remain in the building unsupervised after 5:30 p.m. If students remain for an activity that dismisses after 5:30 p.m., moderators are responsible for waiting until all students in the activity are picked up.

Security Policy

While Mercy hospitality is a defining characteristic of Merion Mercy Academy, the sad realities of the present day require screening of visitors to ensure the safety and security of students, faculty and staff. During school hours, visitors will enter through the front door (facing Montgomery Avenue) and sign in through the Raptor security system with their driver's license. Students are urged to report immediately any unknown or suspicious persons or activities on or near school property, in or out of the building. In addition, security cameras are located throughout the school and record the movements of people in the building and cars around campus.

Faculty and Student Identification Badges

Students, faculty and staff are issued identification badges to wear that are programmed to have key code access to the building. If students lose their cards, they must see the Business Office immediately for a replacement card. There is a \$10 fee for a new card.

Emergency Response Protocol

Merion Mercy Academy collaborates with the Lower Merion Police Department on an ongoing basis regarding all aspects of school safety and security. With their cooperation, we currently practice and employ the A.L.I.C.E. Protocol (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate). A.L.I.C.E. is based on the philosophy that in an emergency, being able to quickly assess the situation and determine your safest course of action is the best hope of a safe outcome. We have regular drills throughout the year to ensure our readiness. Should there be an emergency at school, parents would be notified via the AlertNow system.

Emergency Drills

Merion Mercy practices the following drills during the school year:

- Fire Drills: All classes exit the building as quickly as possible to a designated area outside. The school is "swept" to be sure all are evacuated.
- Safety Drills: The school will practice a safety protocol known as a "lockdown drill" two to three times during the school year. This procedure is to be used in the event of an incident that requires students and staff to remain in classrooms or offices until the building is deemed by law enforcement officers to be clear of potential intruders.

Section IV - Health and Wellness

Approach to Student Health and Wellness

Merion Mercy seeks to care for the physical, emotional, and spiritual health of each student to advance her well-being, academic success, and lifelong achievement. To that end, school nurses and counselors facilitate positive student responses to normal development; promote health and safety; intervene with actual and potential health problems; and actively collaborate with others to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self-management, self-advocacy, and learning.

Health Records

Prior to the start of school, each student must have the required health forms on file with the school nurse and/or athletic trainer. All students are required to have immunizations and physicals as mandated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. No student is able to participate in any preseason sport or preseason leadership activity, begin classes, or join any other school activity until all forms are properly completed.

School Nurses

An RN is available during the school day to care for the health needs of students. Students who need to visit the nurse should receive a Health Room pass from their teacher/study or lunch moderator to be presented to the nurse. After treatment the student will return to class with a late pass signed by the nurse. If the health situation warrants a student's dismissal from school, the nurse will contact a parent/guardian to make arrangements for an early and safe dismissal. In cases where the student is not well enough to drive home, alternative transportation arrangements will have to be made. If a student is injured at school, the nurse will report any student accidents or injuries to the affected student's parent/guardian.

Medication Policies

All medication, whether over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription, must be administered by the school nurse. Prescribed medications are kept in the infirmary and dispensed by the school nurse according to the directives of the physician and parental consent. All medication brought to school must be in the original prescription bottle or original container. Prescription medication requires a Permission for Medication form signed by the parent and healthcare provider. Parents are responsible for communicating with the school nurses and developing a plan for administering medication during the school day. The student is responsible for going to the infirmary at the appropriate time to receive medication.

Students are not allowed to carry medication with them. As an exception, students may carry inhalers, insulin pumps, Epi-Pens, or other emergency medications with them. Students who need to carry emergency medicines must have an individualized care plan from the prescribing doctor and a form has been signed by the parent and a healthcare provider on file in the infirmary. Students for whom emergency, self-carry medications have been prescribed are expected to have them in their possession at all times. This includes field trips, athletic events, and after-school activities. Parents are responsible for making sure their daughter self-carries her emergency medication. Parents also are responsible for ensuring that students' medications at school are replenished and not expired.

OTC medications can be administered in the school infirmary according to prescribed standing orders and require a signed parental consent on the MMA Emergency Card. Sharing of medications (prescription or over-the-counter) is strictly prohibited. Providing prescription medication to someone other than to whom it is prescribed is illegal and will result in disciplinary action.

Confidentiality

Administrators and teachers will keep confidential information entrusted to them so long as no one's life, health, or safety is at stake. When someone's life, health, or safety is not in danger but there is a need to discuss information of a confidential nature in an effort to best meet the needs of the student it may be discussed at a Student Support Team Meeting, Department Meeting, or Faculty Meeting.

Faculty, staff and administrators must also report any instance where a student's life, health, or safety is in jeopardy. As mandated reporters, school personnel must also follow Pennsylvania law and notify authorities of cases of suspected child abuse.

Safe-2-Say Something Help Hotline

Any member of the Merion Mercy community is able to call the Safe-2-Say Something Helpline confidentially if they or another member of the community are in danger at 1-844-SAF-2SAY (1-844-723-2729). The online tip submission resource can be accessed at www.safe2saypa.org.

Counseling

School and college counselors are available to meet individually with students and as needed with their parents during the school day. The counselors assist students in current academic and postsecondary planning, in the use of self-advocacy, interpersonal, and stress management skills, in the development of wellness practices and if needed with referrals for long-term support.

Students must notify their teachers of their counseling appointment prior to leaving class, return to class promptly at the end of the appointment and are responsible to make up any work missed during the appointment.

Section V. Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation & Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Introduction

The following policies outline the School's policies against Harassment, Discrimination, and Retaliation and for accommodations for students with disabilities. The policies set forth and compliance and investigation procedures pursuant to the School's obligations under the terms of its SBA Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) Loan. For more information on the School's obligations, please review the SBA Non-Discrimination Compliance Policy on our Website. These policies will be in effect until the SBA PPP Loan has been satisfied in full.

No Harassment Policy

The School is dedicated to fostering an environment that promotes kindness, acceptance, and embraces differences among individuals. Therefore, the School will not tolerate any type of harassment by a student, employee, or any third party (including vendors, contractors, donors, volunteers, parents, and visitors). Students should be aware that their off-campus behavior is also covered under this policy, regardless of when and where the conduct occurred or who was affected by the student's inappropriate behavior. Harassment is broadly defined to include unreasonable conduct or behavior that is personally offensive or threatening, impairs morale, or interferes with the educational environment of students and includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, comments, teasing, and other offensive conduct relating to race, color, age, sex, national origin, handicap or disability. Harassment can take place between individuals of the same gender or different genders. Harassment also includes sexual harassment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- Demanding sexual favors
- Requests for pictures of a sexual nature. Sexual nature includes but is not limited to nude pictures or pictures showing one's genitalia or private body parts.
- Taking, sending, or posting images of a sexual nature without consent
- Spreading lies or information about another individual's sexual activity
- Coercing sexual activity by threat of punishment or offer of reward
- Forced sexual activity
- Obscene or sexually suggestive graffiti
- Displaying or sending pornographic pictures or objects
- Offensive touching, pinching, grabbing, kissing or hugging
- Restraining someone's movement in a sexual way
- Sexual or lewd jokes, remarks, leering, whistling, brushing against the body, or other suggestive or insulting gestures or comments about another's body
- Intimidating or suggestive remarks about an individual's gender, gender identity, or gender expression whether actual or implied.

Examples of other forms of harassment based on race, color, age, sex, national origin, handicap or disability include, but are not limited to:

- Offensive, intimidating, or inappropriate comments, postings, or conduct relating to race, ethnicity, or color (using racial slurs, racial or ethnic jokes, comments, name calling based on race or ethnicity, etc.)

- Offensive, intimidating, or inappropriate comments, postings, or conduct teasing or joking about another person’s disability, failure to speak English clearly, religious background, practices, clothing, or beliefs, or similar behaviors.

Harassment can occur through any type of communications method, including face-to-face communications, phone, text, email, postings on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat GroupMe, etc.), camera phones, or other forms of technology. The communications can be direct or indirect, such as through friends or others. Any such offensive conduct, whether on or off campus, on a school bus, or at a school-related event, can constitute harassment.

It is the responsibility of all members of the community to ensure that their words, actions, and interactions with others always reflect the intent to promote respect and trust. Attempts to justify behavior as a “prank” or “joke” do not change its harassing nature if the object of the joke or prank is not a willing participant. Whatever the basis for the harassment, it is prohibited.

In addition, no faculty member, coach, or other employee is authorized to engage in any of the conduct prohibited in this policy, to engage in overly-friendly personal interactions with you, text or email with you about non-school related matters, enter into a sexual or romantic relationship with you, or ask you to meet with them off campus or in unsupervised areas of campus. Faculty members, coaches, and other employees are also not allowed to make any academic or disciplinary decision based in any way on a student’s submission to or rejection of sexual or romantic conduct or advances. No faculty member, coach, or other employee has the authority to suggest to any student that the student’s continued attendance or future advancement will be affected in any way because the student enters into or refuses to enter into a form of sexual or other personal relationship with the faculty member or other employee.

All concerns relating to harassment (or if bullying is on the basis of one of the basis set forth in this policy) should be reported immediately to one of the School’s Compliance Officer: Maria Carini, School Counselor, Merion Mercy Academy, 511 Montgomery Avenue, Merion Station, PA 19066, 610-664-6655, ext. 155, or email her at mcarini@merion-mercy.com. It is preferred but not required that complaints be made in writing. A complaint form is available from the individual listed above. We also expect that anyone, whether student, faculty, staff or family member who witnesses, or has knowledge of an incident of harassment, will report the incident to the appropriate individual identified above.

When the School administration becomes aware of harassment, the situation will be promptly investigated as confidentially as reasonably possible. Any student found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from school for serious violations, even in the case of a single expression, act, or gesture. Conduct need not meet the legal definition of harassment to violate the School’s expectations for appropriate behavior and be actionable. No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of harassment. Retaliation in any form against anyone for making a complaint under this policy

or for participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Any retaliation should also be reported pursuant to this policy and is itself a cause for disciplinary action.

Sexual Misconduct

We are committed to creating a learning environment characterized by safety, trust, and respect for all. Sexual misconduct whether between students or adults and students is contrary to the standards and ideals of our community and will not be tolerated. Sexual misconduct includes any of the following types of activities:

- Any sexual activity between students and adults;
- Any sexual activity between age appropriate students for which clear and voluntary consent has not been given in advance or in which consent has been exceeded;
- Any sexual activity with someone who is incapable of giving valid consent because, for example, that person is under the age of consent, sleeping, or otherwise incapacitated or impaired;
- Any act of sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, or stalking;
- Any digital media stalking and/or the nonconsensual recording of sexual behavior and the nonconsensual sharing of any recording; or
- Non-consensual sexual advances and propositions, or other undesirable verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. (See the School's Harassment/Bullying policy for additional information on sexual harassment).

Consent is defined as an affirmative, unambiguous, informed, and voluntary agreement to engage in specific sexual activity. Consent can be revoked at any time. However, sexual conduct between or among students that is unwanted, offensive, or makes a student uncomfortable, whether it occurs on or off campus, and affects the student's ability to be comfortable in the school environment is a violation of our School values.

All concerns relating to sexual misconduct should be reported immediately to the School's Compliance Officer: Maria Carini, School Counselor, Merion Mercy Academy, 511 Montgomery Avenue, Merion Station, PA 19066, 610-664-6655, ext. 155, or email her at mcarini@merion-mercy.com. It is preferred but not required that complaints be made in writing. A complaint form is available from the individual listed above. We also expect that anyone, whether student, faculty, staff or family member who witnesses, or has knowledge of an incident of harassment, will report the incident to the appropriate individual identified above.

Reports of sexual misconduct or sexual assault are taken seriously; the safety and well-being of our students is our first priority. Parents and students who become aware of any form of sexual misconduct, whether on or off campus, should also immediately report the information to the appropriate Division Head or the Head of School. In accordance with Pennsylvania state law, the School reports suspected instances of sexual misconduct to ChildLine and/or local law enforcement.

Upon a report of student-to-student sexual misconduct, including harassment, the School will provide interim support and reasonable protective measures to support the complainant and/or the accused party and the safety of the community. Until all procedures have been completed, the

complainant and the accused must avoid all unnecessary contact. If the School determines at any stage that a student poses a threat of harm or disruption to the school community, the School may take immediate action, including removing the student from School, restricting the student's movement on campus, and so on.

As stated elsewhere, the School expects that students will treat all persons with dignity both at School and beyond. The School reserves the right to take action if it learns that a student's actions violate the School's rules and expectations, regardless of when and where the conduct occurred or who was affected by the student's inappropriate behavior.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The School does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, participation in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color, age, national origin, sex, or disability/handicap. The School further does not discriminate on the basis of a person's citizenship status or genetic information.

Discrimination occurs when the School's actions, procedures, policies or employees treat an individual adversely in an educational context solely on the basis of the individual's race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability or handicap.

To file a complaint alleging discrimination by the School on the basis of race, color, age, sex, national origin, handicap or disability, please contact: Maria Carini, School Counselor, Merion Mercy Academy, 511 Montgomery Avenue, Merion Station, PA 19066, 610-664-6655, ext. 155, or email her at marini@merion-mercy.com.

Investigation and Anti-Retaliation

When the School administration becomes aware of harassment or discrimination, the situation will be promptly investigated. Any student found to have violated the School policies prohibiting harassment or discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal from school for serious violations, even in the case of a single expression, act, or gesture. Conduct need not meet the legal definition of harassment or discrimination to violate the School's expectations for appropriate behavior and be actionable. No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of harassment or discrimination. Retaliation in any form against anyone for making a complaint under the School's policies or for participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Any retaliation should also be reported pursuant to this policy and is itself a cause for disciplinary action.

Services for Students with Disabilities

We understand that there may be circumstances in which a parent may request that the School provide an adjustment or accommodation for a student's medical needs or physical, mental, or learning disability. As the range of requests has grown over the years, the School believes that it is appropriate at this time to outline the School's policy and general guidelines for addressing such requests.

General Policy: In general, it is our School's policy to provide accommodations or adjustments for a student's minor needs in circumstances in which the administration determines, in its sole discretion, that doing so is within the reasonable ability of the School and/or its staff and will not result in a significant disruption to the teacher's ability to instruct other students, to classroom or school order and discipline, will not result in a threat of harm to the safety of other students or employees, will not require a fundamental change to our educational environment or mission, and will not impose responsibilities on school employees for which they are not trained or could not reasonably become trained. We also ask parents to realize that, given the size of our school and our available resources, we may not be able to provide all requested accommodations. To the extent we agree to provide accommodations, we may require a sharing of responsibility for the accommodation.

Interactive Process and Accommodation Plan: Once a request for accommodation is received, the School will enter into the interactive process with the parent (and possibly student) to discuss the need and information that the School will need (discussed below). Once the documentation is provided, the appropriate personnel at the School will assess the accommodation requests and determine what accommodations can/should be provided at school, at home, and through third-party providers. After discussing these issues with the parent and coming to an agreement on the terms, the School will set forth the agreement in an Accommodation Plan, which will be signed by the School and the parent and will be distributed to those persons needing to implement the accommodations.

Request and Documentation: For any type of accommodation (including administration of medication at school), the parent must contact the Section 504 Compliance Officer: Maria Carini, School Counselor, Merion Mercy Academy, 511 Montgomery Avenue, Merion Station, PA 19066, 610-664-6655, ext. 155, or email her at mcارين@merion-mercy.com, to discuss the need. The Compliance Officer will then assemble the appropriate persons to work through the process. The School will advise the parent of the type of medical documentation needed, which generally will state the student's diagnosis, how the condition limits the student, the recommended accommodations, and the length of time that the accommodation(s) will be needed.

Release for Communications with Physician: Sometimes, the documentation received from the physician may raise questions or be unclear as to the recommendations. In that case, the School will request that the parent(s) sign a Release of Information form, permitting the School to contact the medical professional, when necessary. In addition, if there is any cost

associated with the physician's cooperation (i.e., to answer a set of questions submitted, etc.), the parent must agree to bear the cost of such a process.

Assessment of Request: Once the parent's request and medical documentation has been received by the School, appropriate persons within the administration will meet with the parents to clarify information and to discuss whether the School will be able to implement the accommodation requested. In some cases, the parent may be asked to provide (at the parent's cost) any special or personal equipment needed, training for the school's staff, or other associated matters. In addition, the School may advise the parent that the School will allow a particular accommodation, but the full responsibility for doing so will rest with the parent. For example, if the student needs to do medical testing or have certain types of medicines administered during the day that the School believes are beyond the scope of the School's responsibility, the School may allow the parent to make arrangements to visit the campus for the purpose of testing and administering.

Limitations on Requests: Please understand that the School is not a medical facility and does not have the personnel, training, or equipment to handle certain types of medical procedures best left to the student, parent, or physician. Examples of accommodations made for students include appropriate classroom locations, extended time on tests, use of computers, and/or dispensing with medication through the Clinic.

Concerns or Complaints. If a parent believes that the accommodation request has not been handled properly or that the Accommodation Plan has not been implemented properly, the parent should contact the Section 504 Compliance Officer set forth above for further assistance. The parent may also make a complaint to the Office of Civil Rights and/or the Small Business Association as set forth in the SBA Non-Discrimination Policy on the School's website.

Section VI - Student Discipline

Discipline Code

Merion Mercy Academy's disciplinary procedures, directives, and guidelines are grounded in the principle of respect and dignity for all members of the school community. The Head of School is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at her discretion.

Disciplinary rules and regulations are enforced by the administration, faculty, staff and student leaders. The absence of a rule does not constitute approval. A student may be subject to consequences for behavior not mentioned in this handbook.

A student enrolled at Merion Mercy Academy is considered a student at all times and the School reserves the right to discipline, suspend, or expel a student for an act, committed on or off campus, if, in the School's sole judgment, such an act discredits the School or indicates that the student may be a detrimental influence to the School and/or others.

Discipline Guidelines

Merion Mercy students are expected to exercise common sense and maturity about living respectfully together in community. Disciplinary process and disciplinary actions are the means by which we regulate behavior so students can create a community of caring and trustful community of sisterhood. Disciplinary responses should be progressive as faculty and staff strive to educate students with dignity.

Student Code of Conduct

As a student who "lives mercy and seeks justice" I agree to:

- Abide by the rules of Merion Mercy Academy, knowing there are fair and appropriate consequences if these standards are not met;
- Extend kindness, be inclusive and contribute to the success of the whole sisterhood;
- Act truthfully, and with integrity, knowing that my character matters most;
- Participate in open and respectful communication with other students, faculty, staff, and parents;
- Learn to handle success with grace and acknowledge failure with dignity, appreciating the many challenges and opportunities provided;
- Commit to achieving my utmost potential as a student in the pursuit of learning, not for school but for life;
- Possess a positive attitude, knowing best efforts for continuous improvement will build my competence and confidence;
- Work to strengthen my skills through dedication and diligent preparation, seeking support and input when needed;
- Take care and respect the campus environment and follow all campus and security/safety procedures;
- Be aware of my own needs for self-care and wellness for my peers.

Behavioral Expectations

Students are expected to be punctual and to come prepared for classes, to care for personal possessions and for school property, to clean up common areas, and be in compliance with the dress code. Consequences may be assigned for infractions such as: tardiness; failure to sign in and out appropriately; cell phone, dress code and driving and parking violations; vandalism; offensive language or communication; violence; and use of drug, alcohol, tobacco, and vaping products.

Disciplinary Process

Accusations of misconduct that are brought to the attention of the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs will be investigated thoroughly and expediently. Every effort will be taken to maintain student confidentiality.

For minor infractions, teachers and/or administrators will address the matter directly with the student and issue demerits, accordingly. Penalties include work hours, loss of free period, and/or after-school detention, or Saturday detention. Students may not attend athletic practices or rehearsals if serving after-school detention.

In the case of major infractions, parents and guardians will be contacted and invited to speak with their daughter and the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs, as the administrator handling the case. Penalties for major infractions include in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension or expulsion.

Fair Hearing

For major infractions a student may expect to have a fair hearing telling her side of the story before disciplinary action is taken by an administrator. In cases involving suspension, the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs will notify a parent. Longer suspensions will involve the Head of School. Expulsions are always the responsibility of the Head of School. In a case involving expulsion, the parent will be notified in writing by the Head of School.

Substance Abuse

The school recognizes that substance abuse is an illness. A student who identifies herself a having problems with substance abuse will be directed to a treatment program with no penalty.

Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Use

Merion Mercy promotes the full development of each student's potential and helps students to build an understanding of personal integrity and respect for civic responsibility. The school prohibits the possession, distribution and use of alcohol, tobacco, vaping materials, and other illegal drugs by our students as an integral component of this common mission.

Procedures for Student Drug and Alcohol Abuse

- The possession and/or use of alcoholic beverages and/or illicit drugs are strictly prohibited.
- instances of student use of alcohol or illicit drugs during school time or during an official school function, a parent will be notified immediately and asked to come to school. A school official meets with the student and her parent(s) before she is readmitted to classes.

- If an administrator, faculty member, or staff member suspects a student of abusing drugs or alcohol, the member will inform a school guidance counselor. The counselor will interview the student and notify a parent.
- The Head of School may mandate a professional assessment by a school approved agency or licensed professional.
- A report from the professional is shared with the Head of School.
- If the student is found to be abusing substances, the Head of School shall devise a list of expectations for the student and her parent to comply with in order for the student to continue at MMA.
- In order for the student to continue at MMA, she will demonstrate progress on the Head of School's list of expectations. Perceived lack of cooperation may lead to dismissal.
- A student who sells, trafficks or distributes drugs or alcohol on the school campus or at a school sponsored event is liable for dismissal.
- The proper legal authorities will be notified as required by law.

Smoking and Vaping

Smoking is forbidden throughout the entire MMA building. Smoking is defined as the use of any tobacco or nicotine product, whether electronic, vapor-based, or otherwise. Students may not smoke on field trips, or at other school-related functions. Smoking is also forbidden on the property of the Sisters of Mercy and in the surrounding neighborhood. Students may not loiter on the convent's property, neighbors' properties, or nearby corners. Possession by students of smoking products and/or paraphernalia on their person or in their belongings while at school or at a school-related function is prohibited.

Weapons

The possession of firearms, explosives, all types of fireworks, ammunition, knives, and weapons are prohibited at school and is a violation of Pennsylvania law. This includes anything that can be mistaken for a weapon. Violations of this rule will result in disciplinary action and may be referred to the appropriate authority for further review and possible action.

Lockers/Searches

Lockers are school property assigned to students for their convenience. The School Administration reserves the right to search persons, lockers, and any other places or articles of property on the School premises at any time. Any items prohibited by law or by School regulation will be confiscated.

Guidelines for Locker Use

The Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs is responsible for lockers and locker keys. Locker keys are distributed at the beginning of the year. If a student loses her key, she must pay to have it replaced; if she forgets her key, she must pay \$.50 a day to borrow the master key. All lockers must remain locked when not in use, and students may not use another student's locker. Quiet must be maintained in the locker areas whenever classes are in session. The school assumes no responsibility for items stored in lockers. Students may not leave personal belongings outside or beside their lockers. Large amounts of money and small items of value may be secured in the main office.

Students must check with the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs before decorating lockers. Decorations may only be 8 1/2 X 11 sheets of paper. No food, bows or excess tape is

allowed. Decoration may only be up for a one week period including birthdays, holidays and senior dedications.

Cell Phones

At no time should cellphones be an interruption to the school day. Cell phones must be turned off during classes and assemblies. Cell phones should be placed in backpacks during class. Students may listen to music with headphones during study halls.

Section VII - Acceptable Use of Technology

The use of technology at Merion Mercy Academy must be consistent with the ethical and personal principles of our community. Members of our community are acting as representatives of the School and are expected to behave in a lawful, responsible and respectful manner when using technology.

There is no expectation of privacy when using the school's computer network, systems or devices. All communications over the network are legally accessible by the network administrators in the performance of their duties. If a violation of this policy is suspected, subject to applicable law, private files or correspondence may be investigated, and social media sites may be monitored. It is important to recognize that behavior both on and off campus reflects on the reputation of the school and the safety and order of the school environment.

Merion Mercy Academy will cooperate with any law enforcement agency in the event of suspected illegal or inappropriate activities as required by applicable law.

Merion Mercy recognizes the value and potential of technology and the Internet in fostering engagement and collaboration; however, discretion should be exercised in any posting or publishing in media or on the Internet regardless of the computer or network that is being used.

It is an expectation that members of the Merion Mercy community will not use the school name, its nickname, or symbol in any media content that is in conflict with the school's policies and standards for responsible behavior. Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to, drug and alcohol references; prejudiced or discriminatory speech; reference to violent or illegal behavior; obscene pictures or language; assuming another person's identity; or language that is unsportsmanlike, unethical, demeans, libels, bullies, threatens, or harasses another individual or group.

Online communication must adhere to the same standards of respect, honesty, integrity and courtesy that govern other forms of communication. Threatening, harassing, obscene, or derogatory communication is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This behavior may include that which is reasonably perceived by another to be threatening, intimidating, or violent, including practical jokes or pranks. Postings on the Internet are public and permanent, regardless of privacy settings, so at no time are students to provide identifying or incriminating information that could put the school community at risk. In general, students should not be posting any material on social media sites that they would not want their parents, teachers, college admissions officers, or potential employers to see.

In order to maintain a positive and safe learning environment, students are expected to observe and adhere to the following policies:

- Practice responsible, balanced, and healthy use of technology both at school and at home.
- Be solely responsible for the use of the student's own account both on and off campus, before, during or after the school day.
- Use only the student's Merion Mercy email account to communicate with faculty, and do so only in an appropriate manner.
- Always treat others in a respectful, positive and considerate manner.

- Represent the School in a positive light.
- Honor school, grade level, and classroom rules about inappropriate games, software, and instant messaging.
- Adhere to copyright laws, licensing agreements and terms and conditions of use.
- Report misuse of the technology of others and the Merion Mercy network and technology equipment.
- Abide by further guidelines set by individual faculty for technology use in classes and public spaces.
- Students must keep all personal information (passwords, address, etc.) off public spaces.
- Students may not attempt to subvert network security, nor may they alter network software or hardware without the direct permission of the network administrators.
- It is prohibited to use the School's network for illegal, commercial or wasteful activities; personal devices not used for schoolwork may not have access to the school's Wi-Fi network.
- Students must manage their time well at school, including minimizing digital distractions (games, social networking, etc.) especially during class.
- No member of our community may send what is considered to be a "sexting" message, be it on a phone, computer, or other device. It is illegal.

Students are not permitted, at any time, to:

- Change the name of the laptop (for example, US—jdoe24, Student);
- Use laptops or other electronics to share or distribute information that was intended to be individual work (e.g., homework, projects, answers to questions);
- Change or delete browser or history preferences, or otherwise disable tracking of browsing history in any way;
- Illegally use or transfer copyrighted materials;
- Share files unless approved and directed by the teacher;
- Record class/teacher/students unless permission is granted by the teacher or student;
- Reconfigure the preloaded software, or use the computer for hacking, and/or electronic trespass or download/install software on any school-owned device;
- Share personal passwords or other private information about the student's account;
- Use another person's account, files, or passwords with or without their permission.
- Share personal or identifying information about any member of the School community without appropriate permission;
- Use inflammatory, unsportsmanlike, derogatory, threatening, obscene, or pornographic language or pictures;
- Engage in cyberbullying, including harassing, denigrating, outing, tricking, excluding and cyberstalking;
- Impersonate others or re-post comments without permission of the original sender;
- Access or post information to inappropriate sites from devices on the wired or wireless Merion Mercy School network;
- Attempt to circumvent any web filters or safety measures blocking access to any sites;
- Alter, destroy, or obstruct the settings, configurations or resources of the network;
- Engage in activity using school equipment, networks or services that are illegal or for personal profit.

Potential Consequences: Students are expected to observe and adhere to the policies outlined above. Potential consequences for not following the Technology Responsible Use Policy will be determined by the administration,

Failure to act responsibly may result in disciplinary consequences such as: loss of email privileges; loss of network and Internet access; detention; suspension from athletic participation; suspension from school; or, in extreme cases, expulsion; or any other action the school deems appropriate.

Section VIII - School Life

Dining Commons

The school Dining Commons functions as a place for dining, meetings, and socializing. The room must be maintained in good order so that it is available throughout the day and evening for students, faculty, and parents. Requests to use the Dining Commons by groups are submitted to the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs.

Students may not take or consume food or beverages elsewhere in the building. Gum chewing is not permissible anywhere in the building. As a sign of respect for one another, students using the Dining Commons at any time must clean up after themselves before leaving the room. Backpacks are not permitted inside the Dining Commons during lunch periods.

Students must remain in the Dining Commons until the bell rings at the end of the period. They may use only the ladies room near the Dining Commons and must then return promptly to the Dining Commons. Students wishing to use the library or computer lab or who need to see a teacher must receive permission from the Dining Commons moderator and sign out in the log book provided.

Juniors and seniors have the privilege of eating lunch at the picnic tables on the terrace outside the Dining Commons only. In compliance with administrative policy, Dining Commons moderators will determine if this privilege may be granted.

Dress Code

The dress code at Merion Mercy fosters a sense of community pride and helps to maintain a safe, secure, and productive learning environment. A dress code helps promote school pride, self-respect, an awareness of equality among individuals, regardless of economic background, ethnic or cultural differences, or social environment and encourages a focus on academics, not personal style and fashion.

Students are required to wear school uniforms during the normal school day. When in uniform, students must wear it with dignity and respect. Students attending or participating in school liturgies, assemblies, or activities are expected to be in full uniform, including the school blazer. When students leave campus for field-trips, they will be given dress-code requirements.

It is the duty of each student to have all uniform and personal articles properly identified with her name. Blazers must be worn for all school Masses/prayer services or assemblies.

Teachers and administrators check for dress code violations and take the appropriate action. Students with repeated violations will be sent to the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs.

A student may only wear sneakers if they have written permission from a doctor stating injury and time period for recovery. Sneakers must be white, black, grey, or navy. No exceptions.

Seniors are permitted to wear Merion Mercy or college sweatshirts on Fridays. They are not permitted to wear other high school sweatshirts or gear advertising professional sports.

Winter Uniform

- The winter uniform consists of the MMA blazer or navy MMA sweater or MMA fleece, plaid kilt, brown Oxford type or Sperry tie shoes, and yellow or white golf shirt.
- Students may wear gray flannel slacks purchased from Flynn O'Hara.
- Students must wear navy tights (with the skirt) and navy MMA sweaters or navy MMA fleece vest.
- Brown, unpatterned shoes with laces and a tie must be worn. The shoes must have a full back and should not have heels higher than one inch. A brown leather Oxford, a brown Sperry, or brown suede buck style shoe is recommended. Moccasins, boots and sneakers are prohibited.

Fall/Spring Uniform

- The fall/spring uniform consists of the khaki skirt and a yellow or white golf shirt.
- If a tee shirt is worn under the school shirt, it must be all white and not show below the sleeve hem.
- The school sweater or blazer may also be worn.
- Brown, unpatterned shoes with laces and a tie must be worn. The shoes must have a full back and should not have heels higher than one inch. A brown leather Oxford, a brown Sperry, or brown suede buck style shoe is recommended. Moccasins, boots and sneakers are prohibited.
- Socks with cuffs must be worn with shoes.

Posters and Printed Material

All posters, flyers, or other printed announcements to be posted throughout the building must be approved by the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs. Materials must be dated and removed in a timely fashion. Flyers and posters should not be placed in the vicinity of class pictures, Head of Schools' pictures, on glass, in the new building, on lavatory doors, or in the lavatories.

Elevators

Students are not permitted to use elevators without permission from the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs.

Student Identification Cards

Student identification must be worn at all times. Student identification cards are used to provide student access to the building and are necessary to borrow books or a computer from the media center. It is therefore important that students report lost cards immediately to the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs. There is a small fee to replace lost cards.

Lost and Found, Personal Property

The lost and found is located in the attendance office. Students are responsible for their books, clothes, and other personal property. All items should be marked clearly with the student's name. Lost books and personal property should be turned into the Office of Student Affairs. Students can retrieve lost items in that office for a \$1.00 fine. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity at the end of each marking period.

Media Center

The media center is open during the school day from 7:30 a.m. until 4:15 p.m., and the staff is available to assist the students in any way possible. Students may come to the center during their study periods, at lunch periods, and before and after school. Books have a two-week lending period after which a fine will be charged. Periodicals and reserved materials circulate overnight with a fine for each day overdue. Fines are posted in the library.

Out of Class

During class time, students may not leave the room except with the teacher's permission or for a serious medical reason. Students needing medical assistance should receive teacher permission and must report immediately to the infirmary. A signed pass is necessary for any student to be readmitted to class. Trips to the ladies room should be limited to between classes, during study periods, or at lunchtime. No student may miss class unless she has the teacher's permission and administrative approval. Students who cannot account responsibly for their absence from all or part of the class are considered cutting class/truant and will be disciplined accordingly.

Seating Areas in Corridors and Courtyards

Junior and senior students may use the benches which are not on classroom corridors and the formal seating areas during their free periods. The purpose of a study period is to provide in-school time for private work in an academic area. A quiet atmosphere should permeate the building throughout the day. All areas are to be used responsibly and left in good order. The benches and formal seating areas are available to all students before and after school.

Senior Lounge

The senior lounge is located in room 127. It may be used before and after school, after a student finishes lunch, and during her free time. With the exception of water, no food or drinks are permitted in the lounge, and each senior is responsible to clean up the area before she leaves. Seniors are not allowed to leave their belongings throughout the day in the lounge. Seniors forfeit the privilege of a senior lounge if they do not comply with all posted regulations.

Student Center

The center is available to all students before and after school. Juniors and seniors may utilize the center during their free periods. A quiet atmosphere conducive to study must be maintained during school hours. It is to be used responsibly and left in good order. With the exception of water, no food or drinks are permitted in the student center.

Teacher Out of Class

If a teacher has not arrived for class, students are to begin working; one student must report the teacher's absence to the main office. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a mature manner. The classroom door is to remain open until the teacher or a substitute arrives.

Political Activity

The school complies with the provisions of federal law governing 501(c)(3) organizations and partisan political activity. The school will not endorse candidates for public office nor allow any candidate to use the building or grounds for campaign purposes.

Approval for School-related Activities

The school recognizes that school activities and trips are important parts of the educational experience. All school-sponsored social activities should align with the school's mission and be approved by the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs.

Participation in School-related Activities

A student in good academic standing may participate in activities provided she has met attendance requirements as published by the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs on the day of participation. A student who is on suspension may not participate in activities, athletics, or trips during her suspension. A student under consideration for expulsion may be excluded from activities, athletics, and trips.

Use of Athletic Facilities

The athletic facilities include the gym, playing fields, and certain areas within the Patricia Waldron Center. These areas are primarily reserved for physical education classes and supervised sports/activities. Students are permitted to use the facilities with the permission of the athletic director if a faculty member is present and assumes responsibility for them. The school assumes no liability for students who choose to use any of the facilities without supervision. The athletic director must give permission for the use of equipment, which must be returned to the director's office in good condition. No food or drink is permitted in the indoor athletic facilities.

Guidelines for Athletic Locker Rooms

The gym locker room is only used by physical education classes and after-school sports. All equipment and clothing must be locked in a locker for security; if not, it will be placed in Lost and Found. Locks must be obtained from the office of the Director of Athletics; there is no charge for the locks unless they are not returned when the student's athletic commitment has ended. Gym lockers are not to be used as a substitute for a student's personal locker. Exceptions to this rule require expressed permission from the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs or the Athletic Director.

Student Fundraising

Student fundraising is limited and all fundraising activities are coordinated through the Development Office and must be approved by the Director of Development. Teams and activities may not sell spirit wear or memorabilia without permission. All spirit wear sales are coordinated through and approved by the school's store manager.

Spirit Store

The Spirit Shop offers Merion apparel and other merchandise to students, families, alumnae, and friends of Merion Mercy Academy. Regular hours are Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays during lunch codes: 11:15 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The Spirit Shop also opens for special events during the school year, such as the Family Picnic, Back-to-School Night, and Carol Night. Special shopping times are also available by emailing Mrs. Debbie Bevilacqua at dbevilacqua@merion-mercy.com.

Driving to School

Because of limited parking, only juniors and seniors who are 17 or older may drive to school and park there. This is an agreement Merion Mercy has with Lower Merion Township.

Student Parking

Students who drive to school must pay a fee to register their car with the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs and hang a parking tag from their car window. Parking is not guaranteed for all students. Students may only park in designated areas for student parking and should take care not to park anywhere else. In addition to parking on campus, there are student-designated spots on the school-side of the street on Meeting House Lane. There are approximately 125 parking spaces on campus and along Meeting House Lane for students' use. Students parking on Meeting House Lane must follow all of the posted parking signs. Students may not park in the neighborhoods surrounding the campus.

Safe Driving on Campus

The speed limit is 10 mph on campus. Students who disregard traffic regulations or posted signage will receive demerits and students with repeated offenses will be fined and may lose driving privileges. In such cases, the parent/guardian will be notified.

Student Guests on Campus

If a student intends to bring a guest to campus, her parent/guardian must notify the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs office and get permission. All guests need to sign in and sign out at the main office and wear a visitor's name tag during their visits. Students are reminded that they should accompany their guests at all times and in all places on campus. The guest is subject to school rules.

School Dances

School dances are held from 7:00 to 10:00pm (mixer); from 7:30 to 10:00pm (semi-formal); and 7:00pm to 11:00pm (formal). Students must arrive at dances no later than one hour after the starting time. Once a student and her guest, if she brings one, enter(s) the dance, she/they are expected to stay until the end. Parents must be called if a student needs to leave early.

Use of Student Information and Pictures

The school reserves the right to use student pictures and public relations information for press releases or on its web site. A parent should make known to the Director of Communications any circumstances that mitigate against the school's use of a student's picture for public relations information by submitting the [Photo Release Opt-Out Agreement](#) available on the school website.

Media

Merion Mercy Academy reserves the right to refuse to allow representatives of the media on the grounds or into the school building. Only the Head of School or designee may make official statements to the media concerning the school.

Weather-related or Emergency Dismissals

The school administration will determine the necessity for early dismissal and will notify parents via the AlertNow messaging system. If the school is notified that a bus district will arrive early to pick up its students, the students for that district will be dismissed in time to meet the bus. Parents will be notified about changes in the school schedule on the web site, by local media outlets, and through the AlertNow messaging system.

