

MERION MERCY ACADEMY

# Policies and Handbook

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Student

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## 1. Mission and Organization of the School

### 1. 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.

### 2. Belief Statements

- 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.

### 3. Core Values of a Mercy Education

Animated by the Gospel and Catherine McAuley’s passion for the poor, we, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, are impelled to commit our lives and resources to act in solidarity with the economically poor of the world, especially women and children; women seeking fullness of life and equality in church and society; one another as we embrace our multicultural and international reality. This commitment will impel us 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

#### 4. Incorporation

Merion Mercy Academy is incorporated as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) educational institution in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is sponsored as a canonical institution by the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Mid-Atlantic Community.

#### 5. Governance

The governance structure of the school is two-tiered: Members of the Leadership Team of the Sisters of Mercy constitutes the members of the corporation; the Board of Trustees is appointed by the members. The Head of School reports to the Board of Trustees and is an ex officio member of the board. The Leadership Team appoints a Sponsors Council to help with some of their governance responsibilities.

#### 6. Relationships: State of Pennsylvania and Accrediting Associations

Merion Mercy Academy abides by all Pennsylvania state laws and regulations applicable to it. The Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools granted MMA accreditation. Merion Mercy is also a member of National Association of Independent Schools, Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools, Independent School Management, National Catholic Education Association, Mercy Secondary School Association and Network for Mercy Education.

#### 7. Policy Statement

The following are Merion Mercy Academy's policies. Procedures, guidelines, and directives that flow from these policies are posted and/or published in order to assure the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.

#### 8. Right to Amend

The Head of School reserves the right to amend any directive, guideline, or procedure.

#### 9. Administration

The administration at MMA consists of the Head of School, the Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs, the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs, and the Administrative Council. The members of the administration

- Safeguard the religious nature of the school
- Assume responsibility for and leadership of the school's community, programs, functions, and activities
- Uphold and update the philosophy, objectives, and policies of the school

- Support the faculty in maintaining order throughout the school

The Head of School organizes regular meetings of members of the administration. In the Head of School's absence, the Assistant Heads of School assume responsibility for the school. The Head of School designates a faculty member as acting administrator when all administrators are absent.

#### 10. Administrative Council

An Administrative Council, consisting of admissions, athletics, business, advancement, and ministry, meets regularly with the administration to facilitate the integration of the mission and objectives throughout the school. The Head of School chairs meetings of the Administrative Council.

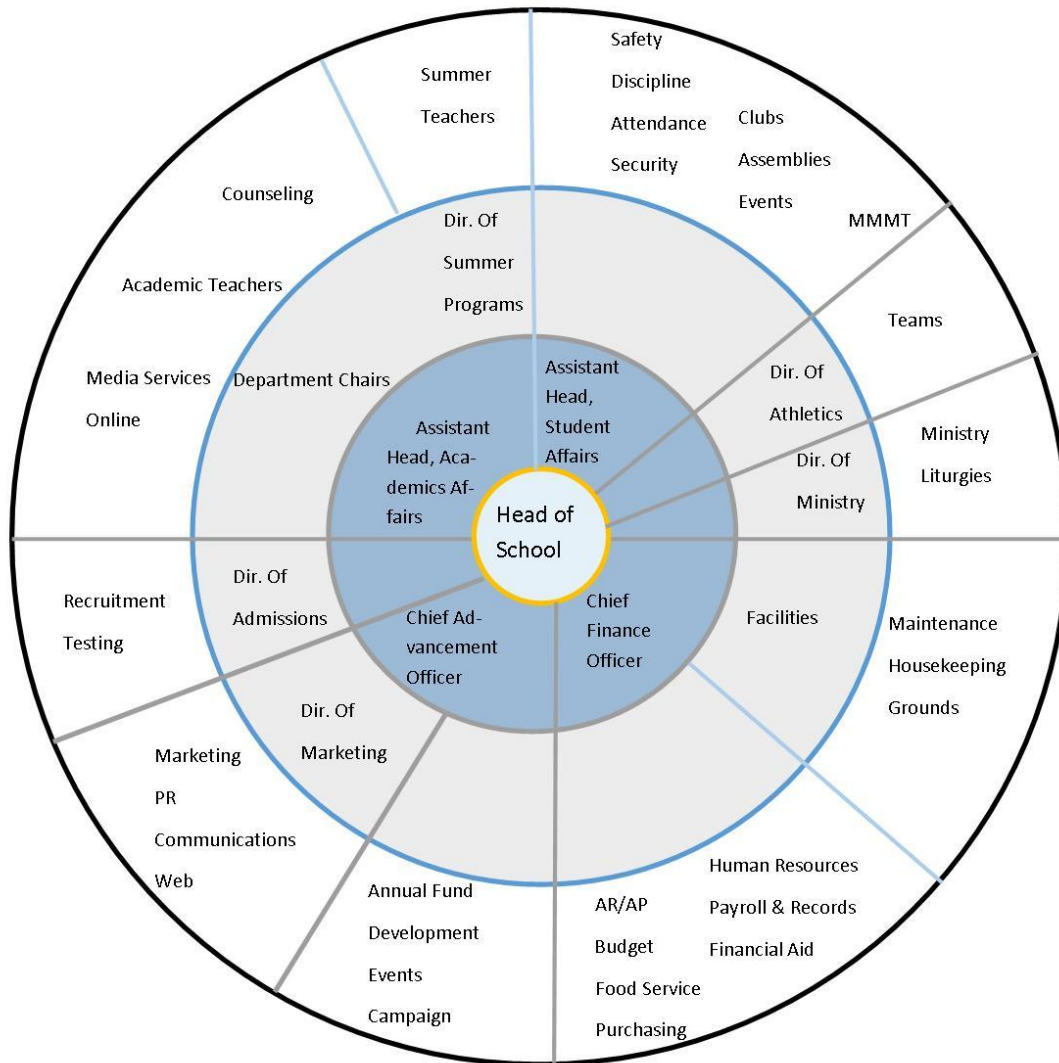
#### 11. Academic Board

The Academic Board, chaired by the Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs, meets regularly with the administration to

- Consider and evaluate curricular areas
- Discuss curriculum planning and implement academic programs
- Implement co-curricular objectives
- Plan and evaluate the overall curricular design

The Academic Board is comprised of the administration, subject department chairs, and a representative from college guidance, media center, and technology.

## 12. Organizational Chart



## 2. Catholic Identity and Ethical Issues

### 1. Catholic Nature of the School

Merion Mercy Academy is a Catholic independent secondary school sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy and is recognized by the Archbishop of Philadelphia as a Roman Catholic school.

The primary purpose for the school's existence is the teaching of the Catholic faith in the spirit of mercy. While a primary goal of the school is academic excellence, the academic and all other programs in the school exist within the framework of the Catholic Church.

### 2. Catholic Identity

Catholic liturgy, sacraments, traditions, and prayers are taught as an integral part of the school's curriculum. The liturgy is celebrated regularly, prayers said daily, and Catholic traditions celebrated according to the liturgical season.

The curriculum for theology is consistent with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. All supplementary material used in the curriculum must conform to Catholic moral teaching and doctrine.

Theology teachers must be practicing Roman Catholics.

At all times the conduct of those involved in the religious and educational programs of Merion Mercy Academy shall reflect adherence to the highest standards of ethical behavior.

### 3. Religious Services/Classes

Retreat days are organized for every student, faculty, and staff member. Every student and faculty member is expected to attend respectfully the school's liturgies and prayer services. All students take a theology course offered by the school each semester.

## 3. General Policies

### 1. Child Abuse Reporting

This school and its faculty and staff comply with the child abuse reporting laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. At least once a year, all faculty and staff are reminded and updated on their obligations and responsibilities regarding the reporting of child abuse.

### 2. Cooperation with Law Enforcement Officers

Police have the legal right to take direct action in school when a law enforcement official has witnessed the commission of a criminal offense. In non-emergency situations, an arrest warrant must be produced and the Head of School must be notified.

### 3. Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment in any manner is strictly forbidden.

### 4. Duty to Safeguard Reputations

The reputations of all members of the school community shall be considered sacred and shall be safeguarded at all times.

All personnel and student records shall be kept in secure locations and only those personnel with a legitimate need to access the records shall be granted access to them.

All personnel have the right to access their own records and may review them upon request. The review will take place within one business day from the date of request.

All personnel have the right to a copy of the material in their personnel files and shall be given a copy upon request at no charge.

### 5. Fundraising

All fundraising activities are coordinated through the office for institutional advancement. Student fundraising is limited and may not take place without the permission of the Head of School. Teams and activities may not sell spirit wear or memorabilia without permission from the Head of School. All spirit wear sales are coordinated through and approved by the school's store manager.

### 6. Harassment, Demeaning Behaviors, Bullying, and Hazing

Merion Mercy Academy will not tolerate any instances of harassment, demeaning behavior, bullying, or hazing. All allegations should be brought to the attention of the Administration. These allegations will be taken seriously and investigated promptly. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible for both the suspected perpetrator and the alleged victim.

#### Definitions

- Sexual harassment involves unwelcome sexual advances, implicit or explicit requests for sexual favors, inappropriate verbal comments, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- Verbal harassment involves derogatory comments, jokes, or slurs about a person's gender, race, religion, ethnic origin, physical characteristics, or family.
- Physical harassment involves unwanted physical contact, assault, deliberately impeding or blocking movements, and any intimidating interference with normal activity or movement.
- Visual harassment involves derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory material, such as posters, cartoons, writing, artwork, photographs, and gestures.
- Bullying involves an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act that is directed at another person; that occurs in a school setting; that is severe, persistent

or pervasive; and that has the effect of doing any of the following: substantially interfering with one's education, creating a threatening environment, or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

- Cyber bullying involves sending or posting harmful or cruel text or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices, including cell phones and PDAs (personal digital assistants). It can include sending cruel, vicious or threatening e-mails; creating Web sites that have stories, pictures and jokes ridiculing others; posting pictures of other people online with derogatory phrases or questions attached to them; using someone else's e-mail to send vicious or incriminating e-mails to others; or using instant messaging tools to harass others.
- Hazing involves 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 includes, but is 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. For purposes of this definition, 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.

Sexual, verbal, and visual harassment communicated through electronic means is unacceptable.

Retaliation in any form against an employee, volunteer, or student who exercises his or her right to make a good faith complaint of harassment, demeaning behavior, bullying, or hazing under school policy is strictly prohibited. Any employee, volunteer, or student who retaliates against another employee, volunteer, or student for making a complaint of one of these behaviors will be subjected to disciplinary action. Disciplinary action may include termination of employment in the case of an employee or suspension or dismissal from school in the case of a volunteer or student.

#### [Procedures for Complaints of Harassment, Demeaning Behaviors, Bullying, or Hazing.](#)

- Any employee, volunteer, or student who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment, demeaning behavior, bullying, and hazing has a responsibility to report the actions as soon as possible to an administrator.

- All employees, volunteers, and students are responsible for ensuring that the school is free from all forms of harassment, demeaning behavior, bullying, and hazing.
- The administrator will promptly and thoroughly investigate the complaint of impropriety and document the complaint and findings.
- All information will be kept confidential and will be disseminated on a “need to know” basis.
- As soon as possible after the completion of the investigation, the administrator will advise the employee, volunteer, or student who brought the complaint of the findings and what conclusion came from the investigation.
- If an employee, volunteer, or student experiences harassment or bullying from a parent, s/he should bring the allegation to the attention of an administrator who will investigate the situation. In this case, a parent found to be bullying or harassing an employee, volunteer, or student will be asked to communicate with school members only through an administrator.

This policy shall apply to acts conducted on or off campus or other school property whenever such acts are deemed to constitute harassment, demeaning behavior, bullying, or hazing. The policy shall apply to all employees (full-time and part-time, including contracted persons, coaches, and moderators), volunteers, and students. Accordingly, all employees, volunteers, and students shall receive a copy of the policy.

### 7. Issues of Child Custody

Merion Mercy requires that the custodial parent file a court-certified copy of the custody section of the divorce decree or a court-certified copy of the custody decree with the school. If no such copy is on file, school administrators will presume that both parents have custody rights. School administrators will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a student is released only to the appropriate parent at the appropriate time according to the court-mandated custody arrangements. However, a parent must accept the primary responsibility for such arrangements and should instruct their daughter as to which parent has physical custody on a particular day.

### 8. Married Students

If a student has entered into marriage, whether civil or religious, it remains the discretion of the Head of School whether the student would remain as a student at Merion Mercy Academy.

### 9. Parent Cooperation as Condition of Enrollment

The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. Just as a parent has the right to withdraw a student if desired, the Head of School reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the Head of School determines that the partnership is irretrievably broken.

## 10. Pregnancy

The parent of a pregnant student makes an appointment with the Head of School, who will outline a plan to accommodate the student while she completes her academic work. This plan includes expectations about class attendance, completion of academic assignments, taking of tests and exams, participation in school activities, and cooperation with the school's guidance staff. The school will follow the doctor's recommendations for the student's continued class attendance.

## 11. Pregnancy Termination

Upon learning that a student has obtained or assisted another in obtaining an abortion, the Head of School will arrange a meeting with the student and a parent. If the Head of School determines that the student has obtained or assisted another in obtaining an abortion, the student will be referred to an appropriate support service. All school personnel involved are expected to keep information about an abortion confidential.

In the case of a student abortion, the Head of School will handle the matter in a spirit of compassion and forgiveness; but, when public scandal, the student's refusal and/or failure to participate in counseling, or other circumstances warrant, the Head of School may either dismiss the student or take other appropriate action.

## 12. Principle of Subsidiary

Merion Mercy Academy operates under the principle of subsidiary, which holds that issues should be handled at the lowest possible level. A parent or student with a concern about a class or extracurricular activity should first attempt to address the issue with the particular teacher or moderator. Only after such attempts have been made should a parent or student contact an administrator.

### Procedures for Contacting an Administrator or Teacher

A student's parent/guardian should contact the administrator/teacher by email or through the main office. A response will be given in a timely fashion.

## 13. Release of Student Information

The Head of School is the only school official who can authorize release of student directory information to outside parties. Student and parent names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses may be printed in the school directory, which is distributed to all school families. A parent who does not wish the directory information published must notify the Head of School in writing prior to the first day of school.

## 14. Sexual Misconduct

An inappropriate sexual relationship between an adult member of the school community and one of its students is strictly forbidden. The administration will investigate any allegations of



impropriety. If such allegations have merit, the Head of School will report the allegation to civil authorities.

### 15. Smoking

Merion Mercy Academy is a smoke-free building.

### 16. Student Records

Each active student's file contains the following: academic transcripts, academic testing results, attendance, progress reports, application forms and activity participation. A parent or a student over the age of 14 may request to see the permanent record. This request should be made in writing to the Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs. No more than 48 hours may elapse between the time of request and the review of the record. The academic transcript and notation of activity participation are forwarded to colleges or to another high school. Standardized testing scores are also sent to other high schools if a student transfers.

No educational records will be transferred to another school until all financial obligations to the school have been met. Health records will be sent as required by state law.

Student records may not be removed from the main office without the permission of the Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs.

A non-custodial parent has the same rights as a custodial parent to inspect records of their daughter, unless a court order to the contrary is on file in the school.

Health records are kept for every student. These records are sent to the next school should a student transfer. The immunization record is given to the student when she graduates.

The guidance file contains psycho-educational records and teacher recommendations from the admissions process.

### 17. Supervision of Students

Administrators, teachers, and coaches who are supervising students must remain with the students at all times. For activities taking place outside the school's normal hours of operation, those employees charged with responsibility of an activity must remain with the students until they have left the grounds or have been picked up by a parent.

#### Guidelines for School Hours of Operation

On regular school days, school doors will open at 7:00 a.m. for faculty and students to enter the school. At 8:30 a.m. all doors will be locked for security purposes. During school hours, all visitors are asked to come to the front door where there is a doorbell, speaker, and a buzzer to open the door. If a faculty member sees an unauthorized visitor in the building, s/he should direct the visitor to the main office. If a visitor is uncooperative or appears suspicious, the faculty member should alert a member of the administration immediately.

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. A designated faculty member will be present in the building until 5:30 p.m. At 4:30 p.m., an announcement will alert the students who are unsupervised to report to the cafeteria, student center, or front door. Students may remain there until 5:30 p.m.

## 18. Use of Volunteers

The school welcomes qualified volunteers. Prior to giving any service involving direct contact with students, volunteers must provide the school with copies of their criminal background check, finger printing and child abuse report. Volunteers must attend the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's Protecting God's Children program.

## 4. Admissions

### 1. Non-discriminatory Policy

Merion Mercy Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, or disability. Admission to the school is open to academically qualified girls of high school age. Preference is given to practicing Roman Catholic girls and girls from families with a Mercy history. A student with severe learning differences seeking admission may be admitted on a probationary basis if it is determined that the school may have difficulty accommodating the particular difference.

### 2. Students with F Status

International students may be admitted in accordance with the existing requirements and regulations of the United States Department of Justice. Any student who is not a citizen or legal resident of the United States must have the legal documentation required by the immigration department to be admitted to Merion Mercy. If the student's family is in the United States with refugee status, a parent must submit a copy of their documentation from the U.S. immigration department. All students seeking admission under F status must present an I-20 form. Once the appropriate official has signed the I-20 form, the school will make and keep a copy in the student's permanent record. A parent is responsible to file the original with the appropriate authorities.

## 5. Curriculum and Educational Programs

### 1. Curriculum Requirements

Merion Mercy Academy, a college preparatory school, follows the curriculum requirements of the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. All students take a minimum of 24 credits.

The academic year is divided into two semesters with 0.5 credit offered for semester long courses and 1.0 for year-long courses. Each student completes the following required courses:

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

## 2. Basic Curriculum

The school’s basic curriculum teaches Christian values, respect for human rights, subject area content, and appropriate skills for high school age young women.

### Course Levels

- Level AP: Advanced placement courses for which college credit may be received. Students are required to take the AP exam at the end of the course.
- Level A: Advanced courses. Qualifying marks are requisites for most of these courses.
- College Preparatory Level: Standard college preparatory courses.

## 3. Academic Honesty

Each student has the responsibility to submit work that is uniquely her own. The classroom teacher generally deals with cheating and plagiarism. When serious or repeated violations occur, the teacher consults with the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs. 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.

## 4. Assessment: Grades and Grading

MMA uses a letter grade system on its report cards.

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

### Increment

- + 0.2 to each GP for A level courses
- + 0.4 to each GP for AP level courses
- No increment in the case of a failure (F).

The 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 use satisfactory and unsatisfactory to evaluate work.

## 5. Assessment: Honors

An Honor Roll distinction may be awarded. The criterion for Honor Roll is determined by the Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs in consultation with the Head of School.

### Criteria for Honors

To earn Distinguished Honors, a student must

- Have a GPA of 4.0 with no subject grade point below 3.5
- Carry at least six credits
- Have a conduct grade of at least 88
- Have satisfactory grade in every minor subject

To earn Honors, a student must

- Have a GPA of 3.5 with no subject grade point below 3.0
- Carry at least six credits
- Have a conduct grade of at least 83
- Have a satisfactory grade in every minor subject

## 6. Assessment: Academic Failures

A student with two academic failures at the end of January is placed on academic probation; if she still has two failures in June, she will not be permitted to return the following school year. A student who was not on probation but who receives one or two failures in June must attend summer school, and may return to MMA in September on probation provided she has successfully completed her summer course work. If the student still has two failures the following January, she may not return for the second semester. All academic failures for the year require attendance by the student in summer school. Students with a semester or cumulative GPA below 2.0 will be placed on probation.

A senior student assigned to summer school for an academic failure or for failure to complete assignments will not be permitted to participate in graduation exercises. After successfully completing the summer school program, the student will be presented with a diploma from Merion Mercy Academy.

Participation in extra-curricular activities by a student with academic failures is determined by the Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs.

### 7. Assessment: Reports

Reports are distributed after each semester ends. Teachers should have a minimum of five major marks to include in calculating the semester's work. A teacher may have four major grades if these include substantial major projects or papers. The five grades may come from tests, projects, papers, or classroom presentations. In calculating a semester grade, teachers may also consider participation, homework completion, and quizzes.

Interim grades are distributed to all students in October and March. Interim grades are not printed on semester reports. Honor distinctions are not awarded for interim grades.

In the event that a student is in danger of failing a subject for the semester or may receive a grade below C, the teacher must send the student's parent a progress report. Students may not fail for a semester unless a progress report has been issued. Exceptions may be made only for grave reasons and only with the permission of the Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs.

### 8. Assessment: 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 the second semester. All examinations are under the supervision of the department chair. The department chair shall review all examinations. Teachers may choose to assign an alternative assessment such as a project or paper in lieu of an examination. Permission for alternate assessments must be granted by both the Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs and the department chair. The semester examination counts as 20 percent of the semester grade; the work of the semester counts as 80 percent.

Graded semester examinations should be retained until the next semester begins.

### 9. Copyright Law

The school complies with the provisions of federal copyright law. The Head of School has the responsibility of providing information concerning copyright law to all staff members and monitoring compliance with federal law.

### 10. Course Expectations

During the initial week of a course, teachers will distribute course expectations including a brief description of the course, an outline of major topics to be covered, media necessary, materials required, and the teacher's expectations for homework, papers, projects, tests, quizzes, class participation, absence, and academic honesty. These expectations must be in keeping with the school's overall policies and directions. The teacher shall also indicate the manner in which the semester's work grade is determined.

## Directions for Projects and Papers

When assigning a project or paper, the teacher will distribute to each student a rubric describing the expectations of the assignment and the grading scale. In the case of projects or papers that need several weeks for completion, teachers will require components to be due at intervals, thereby teaching students time management.

### 11. Learning Differences

The school encourages students with learning differences and special needs to apply. The school should be made aware of any student who has a learning difference, psycho-educational report, IEP, 504 plan or any other document that recommends educational accommodations.

If a student is accepted to Merion Mercy Academy, the student is to receive every possible opportunity to do passing work. If after given opportunities to succeed, a student cannot do passing work because of the student's academic limitations, indifferent attitude, or lack of earnestness in working to her ability, then the teacher must bring the circumstances to the attention of the Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs.

### 12. Homework

Each student should expect to do 30 minutes of homework for high school level courses each school day. AP level courses may require 45 minutes of homework each school day.

### 13. Library Books and Materials

All books and materials must be related to some aspect of the school's educational program. The media specialist or the Head of School must approve all books and materials. A parent may challenge a book or material housed in the school's media collection.

#### Procedure to Challenge a Book or Material

The parent must submit a written statement of concern with the Head of School and request a meeting with the Head of School. The Head of School will respond to the parent's statement within a reasonable period of time. The decision of the Head of School is final.

### 14. Physical Education

The school places a high value on physical education as part of the curriculum. Through this discipline, a student learns physical conditioning, individual and team sports, and life-long skills that strengthen her physically and socially. All freshmen must take a full year of physical education or be exempt for medical reasons only. It is during this year that the physical ability of each student is assessed and this assessment is important to the overall school program.

## Guidelines for Release from Physical Education Class

Two years of physical education are required for all students. During her sophomore year, a student may elect not to take physical education class under the following conditions:

- The student is a member of an active MMA sport team. The student is expected to attend practice and meets/games as required by the coach and athletic director. The student will be notified when the study has been substituted for physical education and she will receive credit for the sport.
- The student participates in a qualified sport or physical activity outside of Merion Mercy for at least six hours per week during the qualifying semester. A note must be submitted from the director of the activity documenting that it is a valid substitution for physical education and that the student formally participates in this program for at least six hours per week during the year or semester that physical education is waived. This note must be submitted to the Assistant Head of School for Academic Affairs at least one month prior to the start of each semester. The student will not receive credit for physical education, but the requirement will be waived for graduation under these conditions. A student may take advantage of this option only if she does not have a study period on the days she would normally have physical education.

### 15. Textbooks

The Head of School, in consultation with the faculty, has final approval of all textbooks used in the curriculum.

## 6. Health and Counseling Issues

### 1. Communicable Diseases {CD}

The presence of CD's in society calls for the development of a policy and procedures relating to affected persons within the school environment. In order to avoid crisis and misinformation, medical, legal, and educational authorities have been consulted. The Sisters of Mercy and the administration of MMA are committed to providing a healthy school environment that is consistent with criteria from the Center for Disease Control.

Harassment by any employee or student based on CD status will initiate a full investigation and such action may result in counseling, probation, suspension and/or termination.

### 2. Confidentiality

Administrators and teachers will keep confidential information entrusted to them so long as no one's life, health, or safety is at stake. A teacher must report to an administrator any instance where a student's life, health, or safety is in jeopardy. In cases of suspected child abuse, all school personnel will follow Pennsylvania law. A parent will be promptly notified of an administrator's or teacher's concern for a student's life, safety, or health.

### 3. Counseling

School counselors are available for individual counseling. Students must notify their teachers of their counseling appointments prior to leaving class.

### 4. Health Care

Merion Mercy Academy respects the parent as the person responsible for the health care of their daughter. The school's staff will cooperate with all reasonable medical requirements, but a parent must understand that the school is primarily an educational institution.

All students are required to have the immunizations and physicals mandated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Failure to do so may result in suspension from school.

School personnel will promptly record in writing and report any student accidents or injuries to the affected student's parent. School personnel file an accident report in the business office. Reporting does not constitute an acceptance of liability.

### 5. Medication

The school nurse will dispense medication prescribed by a physician. Prescribed medications are kept in the infirmary and dispensed by the school nurse according to the directives of the physician and parental consent. A student may not self-administer over-the-counter medication. Over the counter medications that can be administered at school according to prescribed standing orders require signed parental consent on the MMA Emergency Card (see card for listing of meds) A student with a serious medical condition should bring this to the attention of the school health staff. A student with emergency medications for allergies or diabetes may keep this medication in the infirmary. Any medication kept in the nurse's office must be in its original container with the student's name and dosage on the label.

### 6. Self-destructive Behaviors

Students identified as self-destructive must receive appropriate help as quickly as possible. The primary responsibilities of school personnel working with a self-destructive student are support, parental contact, and referral. To these ends, student confidentiality will be maintained so long as no one's life, health, or safety is compromised.

### 7. Substance Abuse

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

The possession and/or use of alcoholic beverages and/or illicit drugs are strictly prohibited. In 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.



## Procedures for Student Drug and Alcohol Abuse

- 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, traffics 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.

## 7. Absence/Lateness

### 1. Absence

A student is expected to be in school on all scheduled school days, except for illness, emergencies, or approved family reasons. A parent must notify the school by phone or signed fax of a student's absence. On the day when the student returns, she must have a signed note by the parent. A parent should make doctor or dentist appointments at times when school is not in session. Parents are requested to plan vacations at times when school is not in session. If a parent decides to take a student out of school for a vacation, the parent must understand that it may not be possible for teachers to give make up work in advance.

A student who accumulates 16 absences jeopardizes her promotion at the end of the school year. She may be asked to attend summer school.

Students absent from school, arriving after 9:00 a.m., or having an extended stay in the infirmary may not participate in any athletic or extra-curricular activities that day unless the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs makes an exception.

Students who are not in school during an official school day, regardless of reason, must check in at the attendance office before participating in any school activities.

## Procedures for Student Absence

- On the day of absence, a parent calls the attendance office (610-664-6655 x.119) before 8:30 a.m.
- Upon the student's return to school, she presents to the attendance office a note on a 3x5 index card with the student's name, date(s) of absence, and reason for

absence. The School Code of Pennsylvania requires a reason for absence. A parent or guardian must sign the card.

- Students absent for three or more consecutive days must submit a doctor's certificate.
- Students are expected to make arrangements to complete any missed work on the first day after returning from an absence.
- For planned absences, parents must communicate a student's absence three days in advance of the starting date of the absence. The dean will communicate this absence to the teachers. The student is responsible to obtain assignments from her teachers.

#### Procedures for Student Lateness

- A student is late if she is not in her first class before the bell rings.
- A late student must report to the attendance office for a late slip before being admitted to class.
- A student's lateness is marked on her record.
- Lateness is excused only when the school bus fails to arrive at school on time.
- Although each lateness is recorded, a student is granted four per semester, which can be used for doctor's appointments, weather problems, or unexpected transportation problems. A student will be given a detention when the number of late days exceeds the four per semester. The detention must be taken on the day of lateness from 3:15-3:45 p.m. or the following day from 7:40-8:10 a.m. or 3:15-3:45 p.m..
- A student who is late eight times in a semester will incur a Saturday detention.

#### Procedures for Student Late Arrival/Early Dismissal

- A student who has a study or free period at the beginning of a cycle day may arrive in time for her second period class, except when an assembly, liturgy, or special event is planned for the morning.
- A student who has a study or a free period at eighth period on a cycle day may leave school after seventh period, except when an assembly, liturgy, or other special event is planned for the afternoon.
- A student on academic probation or who has academic report failures forfeits the privilege of late arrival and early dismissal.

#### Procedures for Early Dismissal

- A student needing to leave school early must bring a note to the attendance office requesting permission. The note should be presented before her first period class on a 3x5 index card signed by a parent or guardian.
- The Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs will review the request before permission is granted.
- Permission to leave before the end of the school day will be granted only for serious reasons.

### Procedures for 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.
- No student may call a parent and ask to be dismissed early.
- A determination will be made by the school's administration about the departure of student drivers.
- Parents will be notified about changes in the school schedule on the web page, by TV broadcast, and through the AlertNow messaging system.

### 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 a 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.

### Perfect Attendance

At the end of the school year, perfect attendance is awarded to students who are not absent for all or any part of each official school day.

## 8. Discipline

### 1. Discipline Code

Merion Mercy Academy's disciplinary procedures, directives, and guidelines are grounded in the Christian principle of respect and dignity for all members of the school community.

The school publishes and distributes a handbook listing student guidelines, procedures, and directives that are written for the common good. Each parent and student is asked to sign a card stating that they have read the handbook and will abide by its content. The school retains the right to modify these and to make exceptions when circumstances call for a different response. The Head of School is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at her discretion.

A senior who fails conduct may jeopardize her participation in graduation and may not receive her diploma until she has reconciled the failure.

### Directives for Disciplinary Grades

- Every student begins each semester with a conduct mark of 95. Her grade is lowered according to the number of demerits she receives.
- A student who has a conduct grade below 70 is liable to suspension; a student with two conduct grades below 70 in any year is liable to dismissal.
- A senior who has a conduct grade below 70 may be excluded from graduation exercises and will not receive her diploma until the failure has been reconciled.
- For minor offenses, a student will be given demerits.
- A teacher may assign a student to a private detention.
- A student who accumulates ten demerits in a semester, commits repeated offenses, accumulates excessive lateness, or has serious infractions will incur a Saturday detention.
- For any serious offense or a series of offenses, a student will be placed on suspension. A parent/guardian will be informed of the suspension and a conference interview will be arranged.
- A student on probation may be ineligible to participate in athletic or extracurricular activities.
- An in-school suspension is given to a student whose behavior is not detrimental to the school but is indicative of disregard for the school's regulations. After a conference between school officials and the student's parent/guardian, the suspended student reports to her regular classes, but is prohibited from all extracurricular activities. A suspended student is placed on probation.
- Out-of-school suspension is reserved for a student who has exhibited behavior that is detrimental to others or to the school. She will remain out-of-school during the duration of the suspension. Before returning to school, the student and her parent/guardian must meet with the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs and/or the Head of School.
- For serious reasons, the Head of School may dismiss a student from the school.

## 2. Academic Sanctions for Disciplinary Violations

Merion Mercy Academy does not impose academic sanctions against students who violate its discipline code. A student who misses work because of suspension must make up her academic work on her own time without hardship to the student's teachers.

## 3. Conduct, Inside/Outside School

A student enrolled at Merion Mercy Academy is considered a student at all times. A school administrator may discipline a student who engages in conduct, whether inside or outside the school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school.

#### 4. Electronic Devices, including Cell Phones and iPods

Students may not use any mobile communication or other electronic device during the school day without the permission of an administrator. A student may have a tablet, iPad, or laptop in school provided she safeguards it and does not use it inappropriately in class. Students may listen to music with head phones during free time.

Use of electronic devices such as radios, CD players, iPods, beepers, and remote controls are not permitted during the school day except in the cafeteria. Cellular phones that are brought to school must be turned off and their use is strictly forbidden during school hours. Any such electronic equipment will be confiscated and turned into the dean's office. Student will be allowed to keep cell phones with them during the school day. For each offense, a student receives five demerits; a second offense incurs a Saturday detention. Repeated violations will require a parent to pick up the electronic device from the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs. If a parent needs to send an important message to a student, the parent should call the main office. If a student needs to make an emergency call during the school day, the student should receive permission from the main office or the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs.

#### 5. Fair Hearing

A student may expect to have a fair hearing telling her side of the story before disciplinary action is taken by a teacher or 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.

#### 6. Lockers

Lockers are school property assigned to students for their convenience; they remain the property of the school and therefore are subject to inspection by school authorities at any time.

##### Guidelines for Locker Use

The Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs is responsible for any problems concerning lockers or locker keys. Some lockers have built in combination locks; others require 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. If she loses her key, she must pay \$8.00 to have the key replaced. Students must store their backpacks in their lockers during the school day. Students should use their lockers frequently to collect only the books necessary. Quiet must be maintained in the locker areas whenever classes are in session. Students are responsible for keeping their lockers and the surrounding area clean and orderly. All lockers must remain locked when not in use, and students may not use another student's locker. 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.

All students must check with the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs before decorating a locker. Decorations may only be 8 1/2 X 11 sheet of paper. No food, bows or excess tape is allowed. Decoration may only be up for a one week period. This includes all birthdays, holidays and senior dedications.

## 7. Rules and Directives

Rules and directives for good order are established by the administration and Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs. These rules and directives are published and distributed. The administration reserves the right to change these rules as needed to maintain good order in the school. Such changes will be announced and published.

### Arrival and Dismissal

Family members or friends dropping off or picking up students should remain in their cars and respect the academic environment necessary for learning. Cars must use the east side hockey door or the front door for drop off and pick up. The west side doors are reserved for buses.

Students may not leave campus once they have arrived in the morning even if their first period is free. A student may never leave campus during the school day without the permission of her parent and the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs. A student is not required to be at school during a free first or eighth period unless an assembly or liturgy is scheduled.

### Cafeteria/Food

The school cafeteria 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 cafeteria by groups are submitted to the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs.

Food and beverages are normally consumed in the cafeteria only. Students are permitted to fill up their water bottles at the *Brita Hydration* stations only during lunch codes. 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 cafeteria at any time must clean up after themselves before leaving the room.

Before entering the cafeteria for lunch, students should go to their lockers to deposit their books and/or bags of any sort. No bags are permitted inside the cafeteria during lunch periods. Students may choose their table and are responsible for keeping that table clean and in good order. Students who leave tables in disorder will incur

demerits from the moderators or detention from the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs.

Students must remain in the cafeteria until the bell rings at the end of the period. They may use only the ladies room near the cafeteria and must then return promptly to the cafeteria. Students wishing to use the library or computer lab or who need to see a teacher must receive permission from the cafeteria 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 cafeteria only. In compliance with administrative policy, cafeteria moderators will determine if this privilege may be granted.

### Change of Classes

Students may go to their lockers between classes. The time between classes is four to seven minutes depending on the bell schedule for the day. This extra time allows students to carry only the few books necessary so that their posture is not overburdened. Students should not be carrying all of their books. Backpacks and small tote bags or purses may be used to carry books and other necessary items such as personal items, pens, calculators, etc. No bag should be too heavy, however. All such bags must fit inside a student's locker.

### Channel One

Channel One is ordinarily viewed at the beginning of first period. Students must be in their assigned class and give attention to the program. No homework, class work, homeroom business, or social activity is to be conducted during this 12-minute time period.

### Corridors

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 for their appropriateness of content and location. 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. Only three copies of any flyer or ad may be posted.

### Elevators

Students are not permitted to use the elevator. However, permission will be granted to those students with medical disabilities when a note is presented to the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs.

## Homeroom

All students are required to be in homeroom, which is usually scheduled between second and third period. Students should not be purchasing food or drinks in the cafeteria prior to reporting to homeroom. Time is allotted for attendance check, homeroom business, and announcements. Students are responsible for all the information in these daily announcements. When necessary, the Timeline will post adjustments for homeroom. When homeroom is scheduled at a different time, all students must be in attendance.

## Identification

All students are issued ID cards annually. Students are expected to carry the ID at all times during school. ID cards are necessary to borrow books or a computer from the media center.

## Laboratories

The art, computer, music, and science labs may be used with the permission of a teacher who is responsible for the student's presence.

## 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 dean's office. Students can retrieve lost items in the dean's 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. to 5:00 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 (former conference room and temporary school store). It may be used before and after school, after a student finishes lunch, and during her free time. Light snacks are permitted in the lounge, but 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 regulations.

### Smoking

Smoking is forbidden throughout the entire MMA building. Students do 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.

### 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. Food and beverages are not 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.

### Telephones

Students do not ordinarily use office phones. No student will be called to the phone for an incoming call except for a family emergency. Messages from parents will be delivered. Cell phones must be turned off as their use is strictly forbidden during school hours.

## Violations

The following violations subject a student to demerits, detention, probation, suspension, or dismissal. Behaviors that do not conform to MMA's philosophy and/or are disruptive to the school are also considered violations. The following list is not all-inclusive:

- Possession or use of alcohol or drugs
- Cutting class
- Dishonesty of any form, including cheating
- Disregard for regulations published in the Handbook or posted elsewhere
- Disrespect for faculty and staff
- Failure to comply with the dress code
- Failure to follow absence and lateness regulations
- Habitual violation of classroom order and discipline
- Leaving the school grounds or building without permission
- Smoking
- Theft
- Truancy
- Unexcused lateness to class
- Vandalism
- Violation of criminal or civil laws during the course of a school-sponsored activity
- Failure to respond to requests to return forms or see a teacher or administrator

## 8. Uniforms

All students must wear an official school uniform on school days, except when permission is given otherwise.

### Directions for Uniforms and Personal Appearance

Students are required to wear the school uniform while in the school building during the normal school day. Sloppy and/or inappropriate dress is unacceptable and will result in demerits for each violation. Unbecoming dress, which detracts from a presentable appearance, will not be permitted and may result in a student's not attending classes. When in uniform, students must wear it with dignity and respect. Dress requirements for field trips will be given with the directions for the trip and must be representative of the school. Students who change into other clothes before or after school must wear outfits that are appropriate, clean, and in keeping with the school's values.

The plaid uniform skirt is now a synthetic that can be washed and dried (preferably hung to dry). Many students grow during their first two years of high school and their skirts need to be replaced. The skirt may not be more than four inches above the knee.

Students should realize that teachers will 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. Students attending or participating in school liturgies, assemblies, or activities are expected to be in full uniform, including the school blazer. The dress code is in effect until the end of the school day.

Visible tattoos are not permitted. Moderate cosmetics and jewelry may be worn. Fad jewelry piercings must be discreet. Only natural color hair is acceptable. It is the duty of each student to have all uniform and personal articles properly identified with her name. The school assumes no responsibility for students' property, including money.

Blazers must be worn for all school masses/prayer services or assemblies.

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 advertizing 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.
- All students wear navy tights and navy MMA sweaters or navy MMA fleece vest.
- The skirt should be no more than 4 inches above the knee.
- The brown shoe must have a full back and must not have a heel higher than one inch. The brown shoe must have laces and tie. The shoe should not have a patterned design; also, it may not be a moccasin, boot or sneaker type shoe. A brown leather Oxford, a brown Sperry, or brown suede buck style shoe is recommended.
- Socks need to be solid navy or black pulled above the tights

### Fall/Spring Uniform

- The fall/spring uniform consists of the kaki skirt and a yellow or white golf shirt.
- If a tee shirt is worn under the school shirt, it must be all white.
- Tights are worn when the weather is cool (as determined by the administration).
- The skirt should be no more than 4 inches above the knee.
- The school sweater or blazer may also be worn.
- The standard brown tie shoe is worn with only white socks that have a cuff of at least one inch.

## 9. Violence/Weapon

The Head of School will take immediate action against a student who poses a threat or a danger to any member of the school community. Physical assaults are forbidden. A weapon is any implement which can be used to threaten, endanger, or injure oneself or another person. If a student is found with a weapon, a parent and the police department will be contacted. Suspension or expulsion may result.

## 9. Activities, Athletics, Trips

### 1. Participation

The school recognizes that athletics, activities, and trips are important parts of the educational experience. Every student has a right to “try out” for sports and activities and to be evaluated fairly.

While efforts are made for as many students as possible to participate, there is no absolute right to play sports or participate in activities or trips. A student who wishes to participate in activities, including athletics, must meet the eligibility requirements.

The Head of School must approve any school-sponsored social activity, which should have some educational purpose.

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.

### 2. Athletic Facilities

The athletic facilities comprise the new gym, the playing fields, and certain areas within the Patricia Waldron Center. They 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 Locker Room

The gym locker room may be used by physical education classes and the after school sports program only. 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 athletic director.

### 3. Athletic Membership

The athletic program will comply with all requirements of the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association and the Athletic Association of Catholic Academies.

### 4. Funds

All student fundraising must be approved by the Head of School. All funds are managed through the school's business office. The business office establishes accounting procedures.

### 5. Supervision

All school-sponsored activities and sports will be adequately supervised.

### 6. Participation: Field Trips

School field trips are a privilege. A student is expected to participate in a field trip designated for her entire class. A student may be denied participation in a field trip for academic, disciplinary, or financial reasons. The Head of School may deny a student's field trip participation for other causes. A parent may ask for a student to remain in school during the time of the field trip. Trips of educational value should be planned for students of all ability levels.

#### Student Guidelines for Field Trips

- Each student must give the supervising teacher a signed parental consent form at least three days prior to the trip.
- The cost of the trip for each student will be added to the student's tuition bill.
- Dress should always be in good taste and appropriate to the nature and the destination of the trip.
- Students in academic difficulty may be asked by the teacher in the area of difficulty to remain in school.
- The total school population will participate in specific trips on one designated day each year. Ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students are expected to participate in the educational experience planned by faculty members. Student dress and conduct should reflect the values of MMA. The cost of these trips will be included in the tuition bill.
- Additional field trips may be organized by faculty members to support the academic program.
- Students will ask permission from each teacher to participate in any trip that will cause absence from class.
- Students are responsible for all work missed due to a field trip.

## 7. Permission Form

A student must have a signed standard permission form for each specific field trip. A student without a proper form will not be allowed to participate. The school will furnish a permission form to all students expecting to participate. The form must contain the student's name, grade, trip destination, date of trip, and parent signature. A telephone call or an email is not an acceptable substitute for a written permission form. A faxed copy of the permission form is acceptable. Permission slips are kept on file for one year from the date of the trip.

<i>Generic Form</i>	
My daughter _____ in grade _____ has permission to go on the field trip on _____ to _____.	
I release Merion Mercy Academy and all teachers supervising this event from any liability.	
_____	_____
Signature	Date

## 8. Liability of the School

No student may attend a field trip without having turned in the standard permission form. A student on a field trip is expected to conform to all school policies, guidelines, and procedures, especially those dealing with safety.

## 9. International and National Travel

Students on extended overnight trips or on international trips will be required to submit proof of medical insurance, passport information, and special permission forms. Students who apply must meet academic standards as set by the school. These documents shall be under the auspices of the Head of School.

## 10. Faculty Application for International Travel

For international travel involving students, the faculty member who is organizing the trip or accompanying the group abroad must submit a letter to the Head of School outlining the plan for international travel. The letter must be submitted at least six months before the date of departure. The following materials concerning the proposed trip should be attached to the form:

- A detailed program itinerary, proposed orientation schedule and materials,
- Copies of all promotional, course and other materials provided to students and parents concerning the trip, etc.
- Liability waivers must be obtained from every participant before the proposed trip.

## 11. Liability Waivers and Insurance

A signed liability waiver must be obtained from each participant before the proposed trip. The School strongly encourages all travelers to assess, purchase, and/or maintain adequate insurance coverage during travel outside the United States. Students should be strongly encouraged to purchase and maintain adequate travel or study abroad health insurance during travel outside the United States. At a minimum, coverage for medical expenses, accidental death & dismemberment (AD&D), repatriation expenses, and medical evacuation should be included.

## 12. Expectations for Participants on International and National Trips

The school cannot eliminate risks involved with international travel, any more than it can eliminate the risks arising out of everyday life in the United States. Faculty wishing to take students abroad are, however, expected to learn and communicate to the students traveling with them in pre-travel orientation the reasonably foreseeable risks associated with travel to the countries that will be visited, as well as the basic health and safety information contained in the State Department's consular information for those countries. Merion Mercy Academy also expects faculty members accompanying students abroad to manage the trip in a manner that minimizes the reasonably foreseeable risks of harm, accident, and injury and helps assure compliance with applicable School policies during the trip.

<p><i>Statement of Responsibility, Release, and Agreement</i></p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>I, _____, parent of _____, who is a student at Merion Mercy Academy, have agreed to her participation in an Extended Trip Program to _____</p> <p>from _____ through _____.</p> <p>I understand and hereby acknowledge that my daughter's participation in the Program is wholly voluntary. In consideration of her being allowed to participate in the Program, I hereby agree as follows:</p> <p>1) I hereby represent and warrant that she is and will be covered throughout the Program by a policy of comprehensive health and accident insurance which provides coverage for injuries and illnesses she sustains or experiences during the travel. By my signature below, I certify that I have confirmed that my health insurance policy</p>
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will adequately cover my daughter and that my coverage includes medical evacuation. I hereby absolve Merion Mercy Academy of all responsibility and liability for any injuries, illnesses, claims, damages, charges, bills, and/or expenses I incur while she is in the Program. I agree to report to the School any physical or mental condition she has that may require special medical attention or accommodation during the Program at least thirty (30) days prior to departure.

2) I understand that the School reserves the right to make changes to the Program itinerary or to cancel all or part of the Program at any time and for any reason, with or without notice, and the School shall not be liable for any loss whatsoever to me by reason of any such cancellation or change. If all or part of the Program is cancelled, prevented or rendered impossible or unfeasible, it is understood and agreed that there shall be no claim for damages by me or on my daughter's behalf and the School's obligations as to the Program shall be deemed waived by me. The School is not responsible for penalties assessed by air carriers that may result due to operational and/or itinerary changes, regardless of whether the School makes a flight arrangement. Any additional expense resulting from the above will be paid by me. The School reserves the right to substitute hotels, accommodations, or housing of a similar category at any time. Specific room assignments are within the sole discretion of the School. I hereby agree to have my daughter reside throughout the time in the room assigned to her in connection with the Program.

3) I understand and acknowledge that the School assumes no responsibility or liability for any delays, delayed or changed departure or arrival times. If due to weather, flight schedules or other uncontrollable factors my daughter is required to spend additional nights, the School will not be responsible for her hotel, transfers, meal costs, or other expenses. Her baggage and personal property are at her risk entirely throughout the Program and any travel incident thereto. The right is reserved by the School, in its sole discretion, to cancel the Program or any aspect thereof prior to departure; and, in the School's sole discretion, to require that all participants return home if the School determines or believes that any person is or will be in danger if the Program or any aspect thereof is continued.

4) The School reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to decline to accept or retain my daughter in the Program at any time should her actions or general behavior impede the operation of the Program or the rights or welfare of any person. Similarly, if her conduct violates any policy or procedure of the School, or any provision of MMA's Student Handbook, including the use of illegal substances, drugs or alcohol, which I hereby agree shall apply to her conduct while she is traveling, I understand that she may be required to leave the Program in the sole discretion of the School, and she may be sanctioned with further disciplinary action. I understand and hereby acknowledge that she will be subject to discipline by the School, as well as by any civil authority. I agree not to challenge in any forum or proceeding the authority or jurisdiction of the School to discipline her at any time for her misconduct, during or in connection with the Program or any travel related thereto. I understand and hereby agree that the School, in its sole discretion, shall have the right to refuse to allow her



to participate or continue in any activity or event it designates while she is traveling. In such an event, I agree to comply with the School's directive, which may include her returning home at my own expense, or my coming to the destination, at my expense, to assume responsibility for my daughter.

5) I hereby consent to allow the School or its employees, agents, representatives, or designees to consent to the rendering of emergency medical treatment to my daughter if I am unable to render such consent for her. This consent is not intended by me to create a 'special relationship' between the School and my daughter, and I hereby release the School and its officers, trustees, employees, agents, affiliates, and representatives from all liability for any injury or damage she sustains in the course of, or as a result of, any medical treatment decision(s), medical care, or medical treatment she receives (or fails to receive).

6) For those on International Trips: I understand and hereby acknowledge that I have received and reviewed U.S. State Department Consular Information concerning travel to, in and around the country in which my daughter will be traveling and that I am aware of and understand the risks and dangers of travel to, in, and around this country. I hereby assume, knowingly and voluntarily, each of these risks and all of the other risks which could arise out of or occur during my daughter's travel to, from, in or around this country.

7) I hereby acknowledge that I have read, understand, and will abide by each of the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

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(Parent Signature)

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

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(Student Signature)

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. Dances

### 1. Formal Dances

MMA's formal dances are provided to help students develop social skills and graces necessary for life. These dances are open to MMA students and their dates only. In keeping with the social norms of the Catholic Church, a student attending a formal dance is escorted by a male date.

The junior-senior prom is a date dance. For the Sophomore Hop and Harvest Moon, the expectation is that a student attends with a date; however, a student may attend alone.

A student should choose a dress with an awareness of her own self-respect and dignity as a young woman. Clothing judged by the administration to be improper will result in the student not being admitted to the dance. The following are considered improper dress: bare midriff, dresses with plunging necklines, dresses cut below the waist in the back, and dresses with no back.

## 2. Mixers

Mixers can be scheduled throughout the school year. The Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs will publish rules for mixer attendance and behavior.

### Directives for Mixers

- MMA students must purchase tickets for themselves and their female friends; boys may purchase tickets in advance at their own schools or at the mixer door.
- Tickets will be sold in advance and at the door for Merion students.
- Students must write their names on the back of their tickets and on the back of each ticket bought for a friend.
- Tickets will be sold at some boys' schools.
- Boys who buy tickets at the door must show a school ID from an invited school.
- Once the dance has reached capacity, no students will be admitted to the grounds of the school unless tickets have been purchased in advance.
- Mixers start at 7:00 p.m., and the doors close at 8:00 p.m.
- Everyone admitted to the dance must remain until closing (10:00 p.m.), unless the administrators present determine otherwise.
- Students who do not have tickets purchased in advance may not be dropped off. Drivers must wait to verify that their passengers have been admitted. Students not admitted will be asked by security to leave the grounds.
- The dress code includes no micro-shorts (i.e. short shorts), short skirts, bare midriffs, tank tops, tube tops, halter tops, or tops with spaghetti straps.

## 11. Student Drivers

### 1. Driving to School

Because of limited parking, only students who are 17 or older may drive to school. This is an agreement Merion Mercy has with Lower Merion Township. Students who drive to school must register their car (or cars) with the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs.

### Directives for Student Drivers

- A student who parks her car on school grounds must register her vehicle with the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs and hang a parking tag on her rear view mirror. A fee of \$30 per year is assessed for this privilege.

- A student may register during the first semester. Due to the limited number of parking spaces, a student who receives her license during the second semester must wait until September to apply for parking privileges on campus.
- A student may park only in areas designated for student parking.
- A parking spot on campus is never guaranteed.
- A student may never park in spots reserved for Waldron, for Merion faculty and staff, or convent parking. Faculty and staff spots are assigned and numbered.
- A student must park on Meeting House Lane on the school side of the street if all student-designated spots are taken on campus.
- Students may never park in the neighborhoods surrounding the campus.
- Students must follow all parking signs on Meeting House Road.
- The speed limit is 10 mph on campus.
- A student who disregards traffic regulations will receive demerits; a student with repeated offenses will be fined and/or lose her driving privileges. In such a case, the parent/guardian will be notified.
- We will not be accepting any more parking applications after we meet out cut off of approx. 125 permits.

## 12. Network and Internet

### Acceptable Use of Technology Section

Merion Mercy Academy's network has been established for limited educational purposes. Educational purposes include classroom activities, career development, and limited high quality self-discovery activities. The school's network has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. The school will place reasonable restrictions on the material a student may access or post through its network.

The school's network is not for commercial purposes. A student may not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through the school's network, except those necessary for class work such as textbooks or applications directly related to instruction.

The school's network may not be used for political lobbying. A student may use the network to communicate with elected representatives and to express an opinion on a political issue.

To have Internet access, a student must have a signed permission form on file in the technology office. The school may revoke a student's privilege of using the Internet.

All files and emails housed on the school's servers, domain, or web page are the property of the school. A user may expect limited privacy in the contents of files and documents on the network. Routine maintenance and monitoring of network is performed often on the network.

The technology director and system operators shall abide by a code of ethics for the maintenance and monitoring of the school's network.

The school makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the network will be error-free or without defect. The school will not be responsible for any damage a user may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. MMA is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the network. The school will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system.

When a user accesses the school's network, the user leaves an electronic "footprint" that allows the system administrators to trace activities. This monitoring system allows the school to trace irresponsible use and instances where someone violated the policies or directives.

Due to the evolutionary nature of technology, it is imperative for students to realize that our policies, rules, and regulations regarding the use of technology in our community will also be evolutionary. We ask all students to employ their best judgment when it comes to the use of school technology and keep in mind that our policies, rules, and regulations related to technology are not meant to supersede our other school policies, but rather to complement them. Although Merion Mercy Academy provides certain technologies, we recognize that members and guests of our community also have their own technology devices that they bring to our campus and school events. Our rules and regulations address the appropriate use of both technologies provided by the school and personally owned technological devices. Please read the rules and regulations below before using our network and computers, because by using our technology you agree to be bound by the terms, conditions and regulations below.

### 1. Supervision and Personal Responsibility

This policy applies only to students. All adult users including teachers, student teachers, parents, faculty members, and staff members have a separate Technology Use Policy.

All children and teens visiting our campus are also subject to the terms and conditions of this Technology Use Policy.

All students and their parent or guardian must sign a contract card before they can utilize any school technologies. This contract card must be signed on an annual basis at the beginning of every school year.

### 2. Personal Responsibility

The use of school and personally owned technology on school property or at school events comes with personal responsibilities and if you violate the responsible use of any school technologies, your access may be revoked and/or suspended.

### 3. Privacy

Merion Mercy Academy reserves the right to monitor and track all behaviors and interactions that take place online or through the use of technology on our property or at our events. We also reserve the right to investigate any reports of inappropriate actions related to any

technology used at school. All e-mails and messages sent through the school's network or accessed on a school computer can be inspected. Any files saved onto a school computer can also be inspected. Students have a limited expectation of privacy when using their own technology on school property or at school events so long as no activity violates policy, law and/or compromises the safety and well-being of the school community.

#### 4. Filtering

All access to the Internet is filtered and monitored. The school cannot monitor every activity, but retains the right to monitor activities that utilize school owned technology. By filtering Internet access, we intend to block offensive, obscene, and inappropriate images and content including pornography.

#### 5. Right to Update

Since technology is continually evolving, our school reserves the right to change, update, and edit its technology rules and regulations at any time in order to continually protect the safety and well-being of our students and community. To this end, the school may add additional rules, restrictions, and guidelines at any time.

#### 6. Termination of Accounts and Access

Upon graduation or other termination of your official status as a student at Merion Mercy Academy, you will no longer have access to the school network, files stored on the school network, or your school-provided email account. Prior to graduation or transfer, we recommend saving all personal data stored on school technology to a removable hard drive and set up an alternative email account. If you leave our institution in good standing, we will provide you with access to your Merion Mercy Academy email for a period of about three months.

#### 7. User Orientation

All students must attend a class about acceptable and unacceptable behaviors related to technology at the start of every school year. This class is required.

#### 8. Purposes and Use Expectations for Technology

The use of all school-owned technologies including the school network and its Internet connection is limited to educational purposes during the school day (8:18 am – 3:05 pm). Educational purposes include classroom activities, career development, communication with experts, homework, limited high quality self-discovery activities, and the purchase of school related materials and resources. Commercial use of school technology resources is prohibited. Students may not utilize school technology to sell, purchase, or barter products or services. Students may not resell their network resources to others, including, but not limited to, disk storage space. During the school day, students may not utilize school technology to play games, visit social networking websites, or send instant messages or e-mails unrelated to

the educational purposes stated above. The school is not responsible for any damages, injuries, and claims resulting from violations of responsible use of technology.

Recreational uses of school technology will be limited to before or after school hours. Allowable recreational uses of school technology include: playing appropriate and non-offensive games, non-school-related research, communicating with friends and/or family members, updating profiles or accounts on social networking websites, looking at pictures, similar activities that do not otherwise violate school policy.

If recreational use interferes with another's educational use, you will be asked to refrain from your activity.

## 9. Personal Responsibility

We expect our students to act responsibly and thoughtfully when it comes to using technology. Technology is a finite, shared resource offered by the school to its students. Students bear the burden of responsibility to inquire with the IT Department or other school administrator when they are unsure of the permissibility of a particular use of technology prior to engaging in the use.

## 10. School Provided Technology Resources

Network storage is a finite school resource and we expect students to be respectful of other users and limit the amount of space and memory taken up on school computers and on the school network. Each student has a limited amount of space to save files on our network.

All students are provided with a school e-mail account. All e-mails sent from this account are representative of the school and students should keep in mind school policies regarding appropriate language use, bullying, stalking, and other policies and laws. Student e-mail accounts are subject to monitoring and have limited privacy. Students are sharing resources such as bandwidth and server space with others and downloading large files utilizes finite resources. Abusing these resources can result in the loss of this privilege. Please delete old e-mails and save large attachments elsewhere to limit the amount of storage space your e-mail account is using. Each student is provided with a limited amount of storage space.

Merion Mercy Academy has wireless Internet that is protected by a password. Students will be provided with a password to connect a laptop or iPad to the Internet. Unauthorized access is forbidden.

Merion Mercy Academy provides individual technology accounts for students to keep track of their technology use. Users must log off when they are finished using a school computer. Failing to log off may allow others to use your account, and students are responsible for any activity that occurs through their personal account.

## Unacceptable Uses of Technology Section

Cell phones are permitted on campus, but are not to be used during academic hours (8:18 am to 3:05 pm). Cell phones are to be turned off and secured in lockers or on your person during the school day. For the sake of on-going emergency preparedness, cell phones can be carried in students' kilt pockets so long as they are turned off.

### 1. Recording, Video, and Photography

Cameras and video recorders are permitted on campus, but should be used in a safe and appropriate manner. Students are expected to receive permission from any faculty, staff or student before capturing a photo or recording video.

Devices capable of capturing, transmitting, or storing images or recordings may never be accessed, turned on or operated in restrooms, dressing rooms, or other areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

### 2. Social Networking and Website Usage

The use of all school-owned technologies including the school network and its Internet connection is limited to educational purposes during the school day. Students may have social networking profiles or accounts, but these profiles/accounts may not be accessed during academic hours from either personally owned or school owned technology.

During academic hours, students are not permitted to access from a school-owned computer or through the school's technology any photography sharing websites including, but not limited to, Snapchat, Instagram, Tumblr, Photo Bucket, and Flickr.

Students are not permitted to access from the school's technology any rating or dating websites including, but not limited to Match.com, eHarmony, Christian Mingle, Black Planet, Hot or Not, RateMyTeacher.com, RateMyCoach.com, or JuicyCampus.com.

Students may not access material that is offensive, profane, or obscene including pornography and hate literature. Hate literature is anything written with the intention to degrade, intimidate, incite violence, or incite prejudicial action against an individual or a group based on race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, gender identity, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, political views, socioeconomic class, occupation, or appearance (such as height, weight, and hair color).

### 3. Communication: Instant Messaging, E-mail, Posting, Blogs

During academic hours (8:18 am to 3:05 pm), students are not permitted to access through the school's technology any instant messenger services including, but not limited to, AOL, AIM, FaceTime, Skype, Yahoo! Messenger, MSN Messenger, and Gtalk.

Inappropriate communication is prohibited in any public messages, private messages, and material posted online by students. Inappropriate communication includes, but is not limited to the following: obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language or images typed, posted, or spoken by students; information that could cause damage to an individual or the school community or create the danger of disruption of the academic environment; personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks; harassment (persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person) or stalking of others; knowingly or recklessly posting false or defamatory information about a person or organization; and communication that promotes the destruction of property, including the acquisition or creation of weapons or other destructive devices. If you are told by another person to stop sending communications, you must stop.

Students may not utilize any technology to harass, demean, humiliate, intimidate, embarrass, or annoy their classmates or others in their community. This is unacceptable student behavior known as cyber-bullying and will not be tolerated. Any cyber-bullying, on or off-campus, that is determined to substantially disrupt the safety and/or well-being of the school is subject to disciplinary action.

Cyber-bullying is when someone sends derogatory or threatening messages and/or images through a technological medium in an effort to ridicule or demean another. Cyber-bullying also takes place when someone purposefully excludes someone else online. For example, a group of students create a group on Facebook that many would like to join, but the student creators purposefully exclude one individual or certain individuals and do not let them join their group. Cyber-bullying also takes place when someone creates a fake account or website criticizing or making fun of another.

Do not post or send chain letters or spam. Spamming is sending an unnecessary and unsolicited message to a large group of people. Spamming can occur through e-mails, instant messages, or text messages.

#### 4. Intellectual Property, Academy Honesty, Personal Integrity and Plagiarism

Do not claim or imply that someone else's work, image, text, music, or video is your own. This is plagiarism and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is also when you incorporate a piece of someone else's work into your own without giving them appropriate credit. All students are expected to maintain academic honesty. Do not pretend to be someone else online or use someone else's identity without express permission from that person and/or his/her parent/guardian if he/she is a minor. Do not use, post, or make accessible to others the intellectual property; including, but not limited to text, photographs, and video; of someone other than yourself. This includes intellectual property that you were given permission to use personally, but not publicly. This behavior violates school policy as well as state and federal laws.

A work or item is copyrighted when, among other issues, one person or one group owns the exclusive right to reproduce the work or item. Songs, videos, pictures, images, and documents can all be copyrighted. Copyright infringement is when you violate copyright law



and use or reproduce something without the authority to do so. Make sure to appropriately cite all materials used in your work. Do not utilize someone else's work without proper permission.

## 5. Data and Gaming Devices

Students are allowed to bring their personal iPods, MP3 players, CD players, DVD players, or other similar data-accessing devices onto campus, but are not permitted to utilize these devices during academic hours (8:18 am to 3:05 pm). These devices must be secured in a locker, unless a teacher gives permission to use the device for educational purposes during class time. Music should not be played in the halls during the school day.

If a student has been identified as using a large amount of the school's bandwidth or network space for recreational purposes, the student may be asked to refrain from their activity if someone else needs the bandwidth to complete school work.

## 6. Downloads and File Sharing

Students may never download, add, or install new programs, software, or hardware onto school-owned computers. Downloading sound and video files onto school-owned computers is also prohibited. This prohibition applies even if the download is saved to a removable hard drive.

Students may never configure their school computer or personally owned computer to engage in illegal file sharing. The school will cooperate fully with the appropriate authorities should illegal behavior be conducted by students.

## 7. Commercial and Political Use

Commercial use of school technology is prohibited. Students may not use school technology to sell or barter products or services. Students may not use school technology to purchase goods, unless they are school related books and resources. Students may not resell their network resources to others, included, but not limited to, disk storage space. The school is not responsible for any damages, injuries, and/or claims resulting from violations of responsible use of technology. Students who are engaged in fund-raising campaigns for school sponsored events and causes must seek permission from a school administrator before using technology resources to solicit funds for their event.

Political use of school technology is prohibited without prior, specific permission from a school administrator, teacher or advisor. Students may not use school technology to campaign for/against, fundraise for, endorse, support, criticize or otherwise be involved with political candidates or campaigns. Without prior, specific permission, students may not use school technology to fundraise for, endorse, support, criticize or otherwise be involved with political causes.

## 8. Respect for the Privacy of Others and Personal Safety

Merion Mercy Academy is a community and as such, community members must respect the privacy of others. Do not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to others. Do not misrepresent or assume the identity of others. Do not re-post information that was sent to you privately without the permission of the person who sent you the information. Do not post private information about another person. Do not use another person's account. If you have been given an account with special privileges, do not use that account outside of the terms with which you were given access to that account.

Do not voluntarily post private information about yourself online, including your name, your age, your school name, your address, your phone number, or other identifying information.

Our institution prides itself on its reputation for excellence; therefore, you may not use the school's name, logo, mascot or other likeness or representation on a non-school website without express permission from our institution. This includes pictures of anyone wearing clothes with the school name, crest, emblem, or logo. This also includes listing our school name or our employees on a social networking profile, a dating website profile, or a rating website such as RateMyTeacher.com or RateMyCoach.com.

Merion Mercy Academy is trademarked and may not be used without permission from an Administrator.

## 9. Computer Settings and Computer Labs

The computer lab is open during the school day, and the technology director is available to assist students needing help. Students may work in the lab during their study periods, lunch period, activity period, and before and after school, except when the lab is reserved for use by a class. Students may be held accountable for repair costs of equipment damaged through negligent use. Each student is asked to conform to the following guidelines:

All books and other materials are to be left in a designated location.

Food, gum, and drink are prohibited from school computer labs. Students may not eat or drink while using any school-owned computers or other technologies.

Students are only allowed to alter, change, modify, repair, or reconfigure settings on school-owned computers with the express prior permission of the Technology Department. This includes deleting cookies and history and re-setting the time and/or date on the computer.

Purposefully spreading or facilitating the spread of a computer virus or other harmful computer program is prohibited.

Students may not circumvent any system security measures. The use of websites to tunnel around firewalls and filtering software is expressly prohibited. The use of websites to

anonymize the user is also prohibited. The use of websites, both domestic and international, to circumvent any school policy is prohibited. Students may not alter the settings on a computer in such a way that the virus protection software would be disabled. Students are not to try to guess passwords. Students may not simultaneously log in to more than one computer with one account. Students are not to access any secured files, resources, or administrative areas of the school network without express permission or the proper authority.

No policies, rules, or regulations can detail all possible examples of unacceptable behavior related to technology use. Our school technology users are expected to understand that the same rules, guidelines, and policies that apply to non-technology related student behavior also apply to technology-related student behavior. Our school technology users are expected to use their best judgment when it comes to making decisions related to the use of all technology and the Internet. If there is ever an issue about which you are unsure, ask a member of the Technology Department for assistance or consult the Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs.

## 10. Personally Owned Technology and Technology Devices

Personally owned technology and technology devices (hereinafter, PTDs), including, but not limited to, cellular phones, smart phones, iPods, pagers, beepers, gaming devices, headsets, and other communication devices are for use only during nonacademic hours and must be turned off and secured in lockers during the school day. For the sake of on-going emergency preparedness, cell phones can be carried in students' kilt pockets so long as they are turned off. During class time, the use of these devices is subject to teacher approval for academic use.

Specific devices, such as iPads and laptops are required during the school day for academic purposes. Teachers may establish guidelines for use in their classrooms.

Devices capable of capturing, transmitting, or storing images or recordings may never be accessed, turned on or operated in restrooms, dressing rooms, or other areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

To protect the safety and well-being of students, staff and other community members and avoid disruptions to the learning environment, group leaders, teachers, or school personnel reserve the right to confiscate any PTDs. The content of the device may be reviewed as part of any investigation of policy violation or other inappropriate, immoral and/or illegal use. Appropriate actions will be taken, up to and including the notification of local authorities. The institution or organization and its subsidiaries and/or affiliates are not responsible for any damage or harm to PTDs, including but not limited to loss, theft, damage, or destruction of PTDs or any of their contents.

## 11. Response Section

Merion Mercy Academy's network and other administrators shall have broad authority to interpret and apply these policies, rules, and regulations. Violators of our technology policies, rules, and regulations will be provided with notice and opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in the School Handbook, unless an issue is so severe that notice is either not possible or not prudent in the determination of the school administrators. Restrictions may be placed on a violator's use of school technologies and technology use may be revoked entirely pending any hearing to protect the safety and well-being of our community. Violations may also be subject to discipline of other kinds within the school's discretion. Our school cooperates fully with local, state, and/or federal officials in any investigations related to illegal activities conducted on school property or through school technologies. School authorities have the right to confiscate personally-owned technological devices that are in violation or used in violation of school policies, rules, and regulations.

If you accidentally access inappropriate information or if someone sends you inappropriate information, you should immediately tell a school administrator or a member of the Technology Department so as to prove that you did not deliberately access inappropriate information.

If you witness someone else either deliberately or accidentally access inappropriate information or use technology in a way that violates this policy, you must report the incident to a school administrator as soon as possible. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.

The school retains the right to suspend service, accounts, and access to data, including student files and any other stored data, without notice to the student if it is deemed that a threat exists to the integrity of the school network or other safety concern of the school.

## 12. School Liability

Merion Mercy Academy cannot and does not guarantee that the functions and services provided by and through our technology will be problem free. The school is not responsible for any damages students may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The school is not responsible for the accuracy or the quality of the information obtained through school technologies. Although the school filters content obtained through school technologies, the school is not responsible for student's exposure to "unacceptable" information nor is the school responsible for misinformation. The school is not responsible for financial obligations arising through the use of school technologies.

## 13. General Safety and Security Tips for the use of Technology

Never post personal information about yourself online. Personal information includes your phone number, address, full name, siblings' names, and parents' names. When creating an account on a social networking website, make sure to set your privacy settings so only your friends can view your pictures and your profile. Avoid accepting a friend you do not already know. If possible, set up your account so that you are notified of any postings onto your wall

or page. If possible, set up your account so that you have to approve all postings to your wall or page. If possible, set up your account to notify you when someone else has posted and tagged you in a picture. If you have a public profile, be careful about posting anything identifiable such as a sports team number or local park where you spend your free time.

- **Communications:** Think before you send all forms of communication, including emails, IM's, and text messages. Once you send the data it is not retrievable, and those who receive it may make it public or send it along to others, despite your intentions.
- **Strangers:** Do not feel bad about ignoring instant messages or e-mails from unknown people. Save all contacts from known or unknown people who are repeatedly contacting or harassing you. These saved messages will help authorities track, locate, and prosecute cyber-stalkers and cyber-bullies. If you have been speaking with a stranger online and make plans to meet the stranger in person, notify your parents or guardians first.
- **Passwords:** Do not share your passwords with your friends. When creating a password, do not make it anything obvious such as your pet's name or favorite sports team. Also remember to include both letters and numbers in your pass word if possible.
- **Downloads and Attachments:** Do not open or run files on your computer from unknown or suspect senders and sources. Many viruses and other undesirable consequences can result from opening these items.
- **Stay Current:** Do protect your own computer and devices by keeping antivirus and antispayware up to date. Keep your operating system and application software up to date. Turn off file sharing as an option on your computer.

“These rules and regulations were created from a Campus Outreach Services policy resource. For information on utilizing any language in this policy, please contact COS directly.”

## 13. Facilities and Safety

### 1. Crisis Management Plan

Merion Mercy Academy has a detailed crisis plan that is updated and published regularly. A copy of the plan is available in the main office. The Assistant Head of School for Student Affairs publishes information about emergency plans. Each faculty and staff member receives a copy of the crisis plan and is expected to know how to operate in an emergency situation.

### 2. Public Address System

The school's public address system allows two-way communication. In an emergency, anyone may depress the call button located in each classroom, which rings the main office. Rapidly depressing the button several times in a row sends an all-call emergency notice throughout the building. Misuse of this equipment may be a serious offense.

### 3. Safety

Every member of the school community is responsible for her or his own safety and the safety of others. Behavior that poses a threat to safety cannot be tolerated and will result in

disciplinary procedures. Serious infractions can result in dismissal from the school or termination of employment.

Open flames are not permitted anywhere in the school building. An adult must be present where a lit candle is in use. The candle must be in a fire-rated container.

The school complies with state regulations regarding the regular practice of fire and emergency drills.

#### 4. School Grounds: Use

During an official school day, an administrator or designee will always be present. School hours are generally 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Outside of these times, a teacher or administrator must be with students. The school hours may change depending on weather conditions or a change in schedule. The adjusted hours will be posted through school communication channels.

Students may only use school facilities while under the supervision of a school staff member. The school assumes no liability for students who choose to use any of the facilities without supervision.

At 4:00 p.m., unsupervised students should wait at one of the doors, in the student center, or in the cafeteria. On special occasions, students and parents will be notified of a change in schedule that necessitates securing the building earlier than usual. A parent will then need to make accommodations to pick up their daughter earlier.

Balconies inside and outside the school building are off limits to students.

#### 5. Security

The school building is locked throughout the school day. Students and staff should not grant access into the building for visitors. Visitors enter the building only through one of the monitored doors. Visitors must sign in and receive a badge at the main office.

##### Emergency Procedures: Moving Students from MMA

- If an emergency situation occurs that warrants an evacuation of the MMA building, the students would go directly to the gymnasium at Waldron Mercy Academy 610-644-9847. Faculty and staff will remain with students at all times. Parents may call the WMA number or come directly to Waldron to pick up their daughter.
- If an emergency situation occurs that warrants the evacuation of the entire Merion campus, students will be taken directly to a local pre-approved location.
- Faculty/staff will remain with students at all times. Merion Mercy Academy will send an Alert Now message to all parents identifying the location. Parents may come to this location to pick up their daughters.

## 6. Surveillance Cameras

Surveillance cameras are installed throughout the MMA building and outside the building as a means to protect people and property. The cameras are video only. Electronic listening to anyone's conversation without their permission is not allowed.

## 7. Visitors

All visitors are expected to report to the main office. A student who wishes to bring a visitor to school must seek the permission of the Head of School for Student Affairs at least one day in advance. Students bringing visitors are responsible for their appropriate dress and conduct. Students from other schools visiting MMA after dismissal normally remain in the cafeteria and are the responsibility of the MMA student being visited.

# 14. Finance and Tuition

## 1. Finances: Money Collected

All monies received and collected in the name of Merion Mercy Academy shall be under the control of the school Head of School. The Head of School must give permission for any bank accounts to be opened under the name of Merion Mercy Academy or any subsidiary operation. The Head of School must be a signatory on all accounts.

No single individual, adult or student, is to be solely accountable for incoming funds at any time. At least one adult should be present when funds are being handled.

The school accepts responsibility only for purchases made according to school procedures. No reimbursement will be given without a receipt.

Unless otherwise indicated, all fees are non-refundable.

## 2. Tuition and Fees

Annual tuition is determined by the school's board of trustees and is communicated to parents in late winter. Students who withdraw from MMA will be assessed for their current semester. All tuition and fees must be paid for students to take part in graduation, examinations, formal dances, field trips, or cost-assessed activities. A student with unpaid tuition will not be permitted to matriculate the following school year.

## 3. Participation

A student is eligible to begin a semester when her tuition is paid according to the financial plan her family has chosen.

Only those students who have met all financial obligations may

- Take examinations.

- Receive report cards.
- Take part in school-sponsored travel.
- Arrange for transcripts to accompany college applications and/or final grades to be forwarded to colleges.
- Arrange for transcripts/final grades to be forwarded to another high school.
- Receive diplomas.
- Matriculate at MMA the following school year.

## 15. Public and External Relations

### 1. 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 written permission form is provided each year asking for a parent's acknowledgement of this school right. A parent should make known to the director for institutional advancement any circumstances that mitigate against the school's use of a student's picture for public relations information.

### 2. 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 a designee may make official statements to the media concerning the school.

### 3. 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.



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