



MERCY
HIGH SCHOOL

2017-2018
Student/Parent Handbook

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FOUNDED IN 1960 BY THE SISTERS OF MERCY



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HIGH SCHOOL

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SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Mary Beth Lennon '85
President

Jeanne Blakeslee
Principal

Mary Ella Franz Marion '76
Dean of Students

Diana Rego
Director of Finance and Operations

Niakia Cheese-Thornton
Director of Development

Bonnie Bevans Kottraba '98
Director of Enrollment Management

Tess Veloso '68
Director of Communications

Sister Mary Anne Smith, RSM
Director of Alumnae Engagement

Kate Gerwin
Director of Guidance and Student Services

Rebecca Egan Hogg '89
Director of Mission and Ministry

Dave Rybczynski
Director of Fine Arts

Nick Gill
Director of Athletics

Carol Gonce Rego '76
Registrar

David Barber
Facilities Coordinator

Lindsey Dixon '18
Student Council President

History of the Religious Sisters of Mercy

Catherine McAuley was born into a wealthy family in Ireland in 1778. After the death of both her parents and the couple who had become her benefactors, Catherine used her inheritance to build a house on Baggot Street in Dublin. The House of Mercy was officially opened on September 24, 1827, the feast of Our Lady of Mercy. There, other women joined her in providing education and health care to the city's poor, women and children.

On December 12, 1831, Catherine and two other women professed their vows, thus founding the Sisters of Mercy. The charism of Catherine McAuley soon spread across Ireland and England. In 1843, two years after Catherine's death, Frances Warde led the Sisters of Mercy to the United States. Today the circle of Mercy extends around the world.

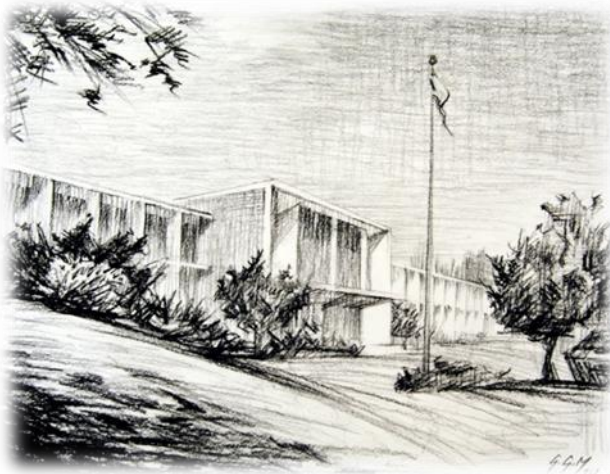


Catherine McAuley's Suscipe

*Perhaps the best known prayer of Catherine McAuley
is one she called her Suscipe*



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



Sketch by Gerardo Gómez, 2014

Mercy High School Alma Mater

Lyrics by Sister Patricia Smith, RSM

Music by Patty Schreck

Mercy High, our Alma Mater
Guide us with your light of truth.
We, your daughters, proudly follow
Standards held aloft to youth.

Red for strength and courage
Pure devotion shining white
We will proudly wear your colors
Living flames of service bright.

Alma Mater, hail all hail ye
Sing her glories, spread her fame,
Mercy High we sound your praises
Ever loyal to your name,
Ever loyal to your name.

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INTRODUCTION

Mercy High School, founded in 1960, is a private, Catholic, college preparatory school for young women, grades 9 through 12. It is sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy.

Mercy High School is accredited by the Maryland State Department of Education, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, and the Association of Independent Maryland and DC Schools. Mercy High School has been named an Exemplary Private School by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for American Private Education.

Admission to Mercy High School is based on successful completion of the eighth grade, standardized testing at grade level or better, correlation of academic performance with assessed ability, and satisfactory records in attendance and conduct.

Mercy High School is a part of a network of over 40 Mercy secondary schools located in 20 states in the continental United States, and 198 schools worldwide. As in all Mercy-sponsored schools, Mercy High School Baltimore is committed to educating young women with a focus on six core values:

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

Mercy High School's academic program is college preparatory, including selected honors and advanced placement courses. The student/teacher ratio is 12:1. The academic program is complemented by an extensive student activities program, including numerous athletic teams, clubs, and organizations.

Mercy High School is distinguished by its Adviser Program. Each student has a personal Adviser who oversees her academic program and assists in her social and emotional growth. The Adviser serves as the point of contact with the student's family.

OUR MISSION

We, the community of Mercy High School Baltimore, are a private, Catholic, college preparatory school for young women of diverse backgrounds from across central Maryland. Sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, we provide a rigorous education marked by academic excellence and personal attention. Here, students learn to communicate ideas and express themselves confidently, both individually and in collaboration with others. Mercy creates an environment where young women form habits of lifelong inquiry, critical thinking and courageous action in a global society. In the tradition of Catherine McAuley, the founder of the Sisters of Mercy, our work reflects a commitment to hospitality, service, justice and compassion.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

We believe

- That consistent with our Mercy tradition, every person is unique and valuable, made in the image of a loving God;
- That all of us grow and become our best selves through personal reflection, relationships and our generous response to the needs of others; and
- That a strong academic program is an excellent foundation for a woman's success.

WHAT WE WANT FOR OUR STUDENTS

We want each student

- To graduate well-prepared, both academically and personally, to challenge and shape our world;
- To live a life of meaning, balance and joy;
- To adopt a global vision, recognizing her responsibility to promote justice, peace and care for our planet; and
- To deepen her understanding of her own faith and to embrace a spiritual dimension as central to her life.

CORE VALUES (adopted at the Mercy Secondary Education Conference, 1990)

- Educational excellence
- Global vision and responsibility
- Compassion and service
- Concern for women and women's issues
- Spiritual growth and development

Approved by Mercy High School Board of Trustees, October 22, 2015

A MERCY GIRL:

- A Mercy Girl is generous, compassionate, and respectful.
- A Mercy Girl is smart, inquisitive, and hard-working.
- A Mercy Girl is open-minded, well-rounded, and thoughtful.
- A Mercy Girl is proud of herself, proud of her friends, and proud of her school.
- A Mercy Girl has integrity, is passionate, and appreciates all that she has.
- A Mercy Girl is committed to spiritual growth, service to others, and justice in the world.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

HONOR CODE

As a woman of honor, I pledge that I have not given or received unauthorized assistance on my work.

Each Mercy student will hand-write and sign her name to the honor code on any collected work including quizzes, tests, papers, examinations, and other collected work.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The core principles of integrity, which are honesty, truth, and honor, create a foundation for success in all of life's endeavors. Integrity in academic settings is a fundamental component of success and growth in the classroom. Practicing integrity prepares students for personal and professional challenges as well as providing a foundation for future fulfillment and success. *(Adapted from the International Center for Academic Integrity.)*

As a candidate school for the Middle Years Programme of the International Baccalaureate, Mercy expects our students to be principled, acting with "integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere." *(From the IB Learner Profile.)*

Violations of the **Honor Code** include but are not limited to:

- Unauthorized giving or taking of test questions/answers
- Unauthorized use of notes or aids on any test or quiz
- Asking for or giving assistance to another student during a test or quiz
- Copying another student's work
- Allowing another student to copy one's own work
- Falsifying information
- Presenting someone else's work as one's own
- Using the ideas, words, or analytical structure of someone else without crediting the source
- Using workbooks or other sources with answers provided
- Paraphrasing any source without giving proper credit
- Use of any material from Quizlet or Google Translator

- Copying and pasting any other material from the Internet or other electronic media without citation. *This includes images, music, or other material.*

REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF HONOR CODE

Every member of our school community holds a responsibility to uphold the Honor Code at all times.

The Honor Board, which is comprised of seven students from the 10th-12th grades, is selected by school leadership from recommendations from the faculty and staff. The dean of students will serve as the adviser to the Honor Board.

Within 24 hours of the violation being reported to the dean of students, the dean will assemble the Honor Board, who will question and listen to the identified student, will question and listen to the member of the community who reported the violation, and will recommend next step(s). The result may include, but may not be limited to:

- A zero on the test or assignment
- Possible resubmission of the assignment for partial credit
- Research on the importance of integrity to academics and intellectual inquiry
- In-school or off-campus suspension
- Probation or expulsion, especially for repeated or the most serious instances of dishonesty

If a student appears in front of the Honor Board, the dean of students will notify the parent/guardian within 24 hours.

UNIT OF CREDIT

Determination of a unit of credit is based upon the satisfactory completion of course work and the number of hours of instruction/study established by the school. A Mercy High School credit parallels the Maryland State Department of Education credit (120 clock hours, including class time and homework). Students should expect about 30 minutes of homework for each academic subject per meeting time. Students in AP classes will be assigned more academic work.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Religion	4 credits
Service Learning.....	0.5
English	4
Math	4
Science	3
Social Studies	3
(includes 1 U.S. History + .5 American Government)	
Fine Arts	1*
Physical Education	1**
Electives	5***
Total	25.50

Transfer students to Mercy High School after 9th grade who did not have religion courses in their previous schools are not required to make up those credits in Religion.

Students in Advanced Placement courses are required to take the AP exam.

**Students may apply .50 credit from participation in fine arts co-curricular activities toward satisfying the fine arts requirement.*

***For students in special programs, .50 physical education credit graduation requirement can be met by applying credits from sports with the permission of the physical and health education department chair and the principal.*

****The elective requirement cannot be met by credits earned through sports or co-curricular activities.*

ONLINE ACCESS FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER/CAMPUS CLOSURE

When Mercy High School is closed for inclement weather or for other situations, the following online school plan will be put into place. These online days will count as regular school days and would not need to be made up later in the school year.

Program Guidelines:

- The online school will be utilized for inclement weather or other emergency.
- *The plan will be activated via the Mercy High School web site. The general rule is that two days could be allowed for inclement weather or other emergency. Thereafter, all should expect to be continuing academic progress via online learning.*

Student Responsibilities:

Online school is a unique opportunity for students to continue their learning during what might otherwise have been a disruption and also to have an online experience – one that they will certainly have as they move through their higher education. Each lesson is designed to be meaningful, purposeful, and to hold each student accountable for her work.

- Assignments each day away from school will be posted by 10 am on PlusPortals. All due dates/times will be listed in the assignment. Many assignments will be posted sooner than 10 am, so students are encouraged to log-in early.
- If a student is ill and cannot complete the online work at home, parents/guardians need to call the school attendance line, just as on a regular day. That student will be recorded as absent for the day and she will need to work with her teachers to make up all work, just as she would for a regular absence.
- Student work will be approximately 50 minutes per class, excluding homework and preparation for class. This time may vary for different learning styles.
- Teachers will be available for questions via email until 3:00 pm, but may be available beyond this time if they are able to do so.
- Teachers may use a variety of communication tools they have already used in class, such as *FaceTime*, *Skype*, online videos, *Keynotes*, *PowerPoint*, *GoogleDocs*, *Dropbox*, or others. These will be included in the teacher directions and communication and linked from email or PlusPortals.
- *If a student's power or Internet connection is down, the student will report this to the principal on the day she returns to school, accompanied by a note from the parent or guardian. Mercy High School will handle this on a case-by-case basis.*

STUDENT EVALUATION/STANDARD MARKING SYSTEM

Student evaluation is an essential part of the school program. It provides the student and her parent(s)/guardian(s) an understanding of her academic progress. Total points are used by each department and a percentage is then calculated and reported as a letter grade.

- A (100-93)
- A- (92-90)
- B+ (89-87)
- B (86-83)
- B- (82-80)
- C+ (79-77)
- C (76-73)
- C- (72-70)
- D+ (69-67)
- D (66-65)
- F (below 65)

At the beginning of each course, the teacher will distribute his or her grading system and will post this on PlusPortals.

GPA

A student's cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated at the end of each academic year, based on the final grade in each course taken. All courses are included in the calculation of the GPA except those which receive grades of S/U or P/F.

A student's GPA is calculated using a 4-point scale. Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses are computed with a weighted scale. Honors courses are awarded an additional 0.5 quality points. AP courses are awarded an additional 1.0 quality points.

Grade F: Failure (no credit if F is final grade)

Does not fulfill the minimum requirements for successful completion of the course.

Grade I: Incomplete

Indicates there is work remaining to be completed. After two weeks the incomplete work will earn a grade of "F" or zero. The grade for the marking period will then be computed.

Grades S/U or P/F

Used in some departments to indicate satisfactory/unsatisfactory work or pass/fail.

Academic Communication with Students and Families

PlusPortals, the Learning Management System of the school, is the primary source of communication among teachers, students, and their families. To be successful in school, students must be active in their use of PlusPortals. Parents and guardians also use this learning management system to follow the academic progress of their Mercy Girl.

Teachers are required to have a syllabus for each class, including contact information for the teacher, description of the course and objectives, an account or listing of topics or units to be covered throughout the course, textbook and other materials used for instruction, and policies related to homework, testing, absences, and late work.

Major homework assignments, unit tests, and projects will be posted on PlusPortals at least one week in advance, with teacher modification on a regular basis.

Teachers are expected to post grades every other week.

Most teachers will also have web resources and other files posted on PlusPortals.

Report Cards and Progress Reports

Report cards are issued to students quarterly. Midway through the quarter, any student with a "C-" or below is issued a deficiency report via the United States Postal Service. Students and parents/guardians have the ability to keep track of a student's progress through the use of PlusPortals. Students and parents/guardians may expect teachers to write at least one substantial narrative comment each quarter through PlusPortals.

Exams

Students are expected to take their exams when they are scheduled during the exam period. Only very serious exceptions would necessitate a change in the timing of an exam. Students who are absent or ill during more than one exam period will need to present medical documentation if they experience illness during the next exam period.

Policy on Final Exam Exemption for Seniors

(full-year courses only)

- Seniors who receive “A” or “A-” for the first semester and “A” or “A-” for the third quarter may be exempt from that course’s exam in the second semester. Work for fourth quarter must continue to be “A” or “A-.”
- It is the responsibility of the student to notify her teacher of her eligibility for the exemption in writing during the week after third quarter report cards have been distributed.
- Teachers should inform the students of their exemptions by the seniors’ last day of classes. Students who meet the requirements for exemption from an exam have the option to take the exam if they wish.

Contracts for Success and Plans for Improvement

Freshmen and sophomores who are not doing as well in school as expected may be placed on a Contract for Success. Juniors and seniors are placed on a Plan for Improvement. To create this contract or plan, a student will meet with the principal, the student’s Adviser, the learning differences specialist, and her parent(s)/guardian(s) to determine its requirements. When a student does not meet her contract or plan, she may be placed on Academic Probation.

Structured Study

Juniors and seniors who receive more than one “C-” or below in any quarter will be placed on structured study until their grades improve. Structured study is scheduled when a student is free during Period 7 on Red, Green, White and Purple days, and during Period 6 on Gold Days.

Academic Probation

When a student’s academic progress is in jeopardy, she will be placed on Academic Probation. She may be asked to leave the school if her grades do not improve.

COURSE FAILURES/SUMMER SCHOOL

Grade 9 or 10

1. If any student in grade 9 or 10 fails Religion, English*, Mathematics, World Cultures or American Government, Science, French, or Spanish, she must attend summer school and pass this course or its equivalent in order to return to Mercy High School.
2. If a student receives a grade of “D” in French I or Spanish I, it is imperative that she attend summer school so that she is not at a disadvantage in French II or Spanish II.
3. If three major courses are failed in one year, the student cannot be promoted by means of summer school courses. Repeating the grade at Mercy High School must be discussed with the principal.

Grade 11

1. Any student in grade 11 who fails Religion, English*, History or Mathematics must attend summer school and successfully complete this course or its equivalent.
2. The necessity of summer school for any other failure depends upon the student’s credit count and what she needs to have as she enters senior year.

Note: *All summer school arrangements are expected to be completed during the week after closing activities.*

**A student may not earn English credit in summer school more than twice.*

ORIGINAL CREDIT SUMMER SCHOOL COURSES

Mercy Online

Anyone wishing to take courses for original credit outside of Mercy Online needs to fill out the appropriate application form and secure all required signatures before the end of school in June. Typically, the department chair would approve a course.

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process for membership in the Mother Catherine McAuley Chapter of the National Honor Society at Mercy High School, Baltimore, Maryland is as follows:

At the close of the second semester, grades of current juniors and sophomores are reviewed. Students who have achieved a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or above are selected for further consideration, in which all faculty and staff members can comment on each student regarding the other three criteria for membership in the National Honor Society: leadership, service and character. The following September, eligible students are asked to complete a student activity information form, outlining their accomplishments in the areas of service and leadership.

Leadership

- Is resourceful in proposing new problems, applying principles and making suggestions
- Demonstrates initiative in promoting school activities
- Exercises positive influence on peers in upholding school ideals
- Contributes ideas that improve the civic life of the school
- Is able to delegate responsibilities
- Exemplifies positive attitudes
- Demonstrates academic initiative
- Successfully holds school offices or positions of responsibility, conducts business effectively and efficiently, demonstrates reliability and dependability
- Is a leader in the classroom, at work, and in other school or community activities
- Is thoroughly dependable in any responsibility accepted
- Is willing to uphold scholarship and maintain a loyal school attitude
- Inspires positive behavior in others

Service

- Volunteers and provides dependable and well-organized assistance, is gladly available, and is willing to sacrifice to offer assistance

- Works well with others and is willing to take on difficult or inconspicuous responsibilities
- Cheerfully and enthusiastically renders any requested service to the school
- Is willing to represent the class or school in inter-class and inter-scholastic competition
- Does committee and staff work without complaint
- Participates in some activity outside of school, for example, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, church groups, volunteer services for the elderly, poor, or disadvantaged
- Mentors persons in the community or students at other schools
- Shows courtesy by assisting visitors, teachers, and students

Character

- Takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously
- Consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior (cheerfulness, friendliness, poise, stability)
- Upholds principles of morality and ethics
- Cooperates by complying with school regulations concerning property, programs, offices, hallways, etc.
- Demonstrates the highest standards of honesty and reliability
- Regularly shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others
- Observes instructions and rules, is punctual, and faithful both inside and outside the classroom
- Has powers of concentration, self-discipline, and sustained attention as shown by perseverance and application to studies
- Manifests truthfulness in acknowledging obedience to rules, avoiding cheating in written work, and showing unwillingness to profit by the mistakes of others
- Actively helps rid the school of bad influences or environment.

The faculty council of the National Honor Society, appointed by the principal, reviews the collected information regarding eligible students during a series of meetings. Students who meet the rigors of the selection process are then invited to membership in the National Honor Society. Induction occurs in the fall of each year.

All decisions made by the faculty council concerning National Honor Society membership are final.

Note: *The bulleted information above is taken directly from the National Honor Society Handbook.*

As stated in the National Honor Society Handbook, “Members should understand fully that they are subject to dismissal if they do not maintain the standards of scholarship, leadership, service, and character that were used as a basis for their selection.”

PROGRAMS

THE ADVISER PROGRAM

Mercy High School's Adviser Program assures that each student has consistent contact with an adult in a manner differing from other teacher-student relationships. Each student is assigned an Adviser when she enters as a ninth grader. Most advisee groups combine students from all four grade levels, thus modeling the community environment that Mercy High School fosters. Advisee groups are typically no larger than 18, but some may be considerably smaller; groups usually range from 8-15 advisees.

The Adviser's primary responsibility is overseeing the student's progress and participation in Mercy High School. This is facilitated by daily contact; students check in with the Adviser each morning. There are opportunities for monthly advisee meetings and luncheon opportunities as well. The Adviser is the liaison between the student and the faculty, and also aids parents/guardians with questions and concerns.

The advisee has the option to choose her Adviser after the first year, thus allowing the student to remain with the same Adviser for four years or to change. The ongoing relationship allows for better knowledge of the student, her academic habits, and her home environment, which aids in college counseling and in helping students with academic or behavioral challenges. The Adviser is the primary point of contact if concerns or difficulties arise regarding a student. When more serious concerns are involved, assistance from the director of guidance and student services may be necessary.

MISSION AND MINISTRY

Mission and Ministry has its roots and is grounded in the following excerpt from the Mission Statement of Mercy High School:

We want each student to deepen her understanding of her own faith and to embrace a spiritual dimension as central to her life.

Mission and Ministry includes three major components: (1) education in religious understanding, (2) response to ministerial needs of students and their families, (3) promotion of liturgical awareness, prayer and worship, and service learning.

- Educational aspects of Mission and Ministry are addressed primarily through a carefully sequenced curriculum of religion courses aimed at broadening students' knowledge and deepening their understanding of the religious dimension of their lives. Students of religious traditions other than Catholic are welcome at Mercy High School and encouraged to deepen their own religious understanding and practice. Mission and Ministry are the center of the school's response to the needs of students and their families in times of particular difficulty or crisis. The

director of mission and ministry is a member of the community support team, and works closely with the director of guidance and student services, the dean of students and the principal. Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to communicate with Advisers and/or with the director of mission and ministry about circumstances of this kind so that appropriate communication and support may take place.

- The director of mission and ministry promotes liturgical awareness in the school and integrates prayer and worship into the daily life of the school. Mission and Ministry is specifically responsible for providing an annual one-day retreat experience for each year level, the senior retreat, and various designated prayer services.
- The coordinator of the Frances Warde Service Learning Program directs and coordinates service learning for the entire school community and collaborates with other groups in the school in their service endeavors.

THE FRANCES WARDE SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM

Philosophy and Expectations

At Mercy High School, compassion and service are among our core values. As our Mission states, “We believe that all of us grow to become our best selves through personal reflection, relationships and our generous response to the needs of others.” Thus, personal reflection, relationships, and a generous response to the needs of others are the foundation of Service Learning at Mercy.

Inspired by the works of Mercy, students are called to perform actions that extend God’s compassion and mercy to those in need. God has great love for the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalized. Jesus revealed this merciful and compassionate love during his life on earth. Jesus highlights the goodness achieved through deeds of mercy, and in the Gospel according to Matthew, Jesus says, “...whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me...what you did not do for one of the least ones, you did not do for me” (Matthew 25:40, 45).

In the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy and in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, our students are given the opportunity to experience service learning by sharing their time, talent, and treasure with our neighbors in need. Throughout her years at Mercy, each student will complete at least 50 hours of service (not including school-wide service events and drives). Students are required to engage in direct service for a majority, or if they choose, all of their service hours.

This call to engage in direct service is about being with people whose lives are likely very different than one's own life. Direct service requires building face-to-face relationships, and breaking down the barrier between the giver and the receiver. While direct service will likely also include some element of doing something for another, this type of service is typically focused on conversation and building companionship. While this may seem intimidating to some, this direct, relational service often breaks down stereotypes and widens circles of compassion. These experiences will likely stretch students out of their comfort zones, and help form them as courageous leaders in our society.

Students are asked to complete a **minimum of 50 hours of service**, and they may choose to complete these hours in one of two ways:

- All 50 hours of direct service at one agency
- At least 30 hours direct service at one agency plus 20 hours of indirect service at multiple agencies/locations

When choosing where to serve, the following are some conditions to keep in mind:

- All service is given to others freely. Any activity that receives monetary compensation or has other strings attached will not be awarded hours.
- Service hours performed to fulfill Mercy's community service requirement must be performed for this purpose exclusively and not be used to fulfill another organization's requirement.
- Parents may not sign as supervisors of the service of their own children.
- Service sites must be official agencies or organizations. Babysitting free of charge or helping with a friend's good-willed endeavors will not be acceptable options.

Prior to beginning their service work, students must submit a proposal explaining how their service will be direct and submit it to the Service Learning Committee for approval by the assigned date. A sample proposal is provided on the Mercy web site for reference.

Once students begin their service, they are expected to meet the posted deadlines regarding completion of a specified number of hours within a certain time period. If deadlines are not met, consequences will ensue, as Service Learning is an integral part of the Academic Curriculum at Mercy. These consequences include, but are not limited to, being ineligible to receive academic recognition. Please see the Service Learning Timelines for more information on the required deadlines. Students should log their hours on the Mercy High School time sheet or an equivalent time sheet provided by the agency. A representative from the agency must sign the student's timesheet, indicating that the student has completed these hours.

In addition to serving for at least 50 hours, students are required to complete a **culminating project**. Students may choose one of the following culminating projects to be presented at a **Service Fair** in the spring semester of their junior year:

- A PowerPoint presentation (15-20 slides) or a tri-fold poster that displays her service work, including photos and information about the agency
- A three to five page reflection paper that contains thoughtful insight regarding the student's service
- Another project which the student proposes, and which the Service Learning Committee approves, that displays the student's service learning experience

Timelines

Class of 2019 Timeline*

September 1, 2017	Class of 2019 has completed at least 40 hours. In religion classes, students sign up indicating what they will be submitting for their culminating project.
January 12, 2018	Class of 2019 has completed at least 50 hours. Culminating project, completed timesheet, and volunteer evaluation are due.
March 7, 2018	Service Fair: Class of 2019 will present their service learning projects to the Mercy community, parents, and guests.

*Students were permitted to submit their proposals last spring and begin accruing service hours over the summer. Students who did so do not need to re-submit a proposal. A student must submit a proposal and receive clearance prior to beginning her service. Please note, the proposal should outline the student's plans for direct service.

A total of 50 hours must be completed by the end of the first semester of the student's junior year.

Class of 2020 Timeline*

September 5, 2017	Class of 2020 has completed at least 20 hours.
November 2017	Parent Report Card Conferences: Sophomore parents/guardians and students receive an update/friendly reminder regarding the student's Service Learning progress.

September 4, 2018	Class of 2020 has completed at least 40 hours. In religion class, students sign up indicating what they will be submitting for their culminating project.
January 2019	Class of 2020 has completed at least 50 hours. Culminating project, completed timesheet, and volunteer evaluation are due.
March 2019	Service Fair: Class of 2020 will present their service learning projects to the Mercy community, parents and guests.

*A student must submit a proposal and receive clearance prior to beginning her service. Please note, the proposal should outline the student's plans for direct service.

A total of 50 hours must be completed by the end of the first semester of a student's junior year.

Class of 2021 Timeline*

October 2017	Class of 2021 students receive service learning information and packet during religion classes. Class of 2021 parents receive service learning packet via email.
January 2018	Class of 2021 receives reminder/update in religion classes about service learning deadlines.
March 7, 2018	Class of 2021 attends Service Fair, hearing about the service experiences of their junior big sisters.
April 30, 2018	Class of 2021 submits proposals for committee review midway through fourth quarter.
September 2018	Class of 2021 has completed at least 20 hours.
November 2018	Parent Report Card Conferences: Class of 2021 parents and students receive an update/friendly reminder regarding the student's service learning progress.
September 2019	Class of 2021 has completed at least 40 hours. In religion class, students sign up indicating what they will be submitting for their culminating project.

January 2020	Class of 2021 has completed at least 50 hours. Culminating project, completed timesheet, and volunteer evaluation are due.
March 2020	Service Fair: Class of 2021 will present their service learning projects to the Mercy community, parents, and guests.

*A student must submit a proposal and receive clearance prior to beginning her service. Please note, the proposal should outline the student's plans for direct service.

A total of 50 hours must be completed by the end of the first semester of a student's junior year.

THE CATHERINE MCAULEY HONORS PROGRAM

The Catherine McAuley Honors Program provides the opportunity for students to meet rigorous academic challenges, building confidence as scholars and thinkers. McAuley Scholars are required to develop their leadership skills by participating in at least one extracurricular activity each year and achieve an overall "B" average or better for final grades in all courses each year. McAuley Scholars complete the program with a Capstone Project, which is initiated second semester of the junior year. The project is the conclusion or synthesis of the McAuley Scholar experience and should reflect thought, passion, and academic research. The Scholar will share the fruits of her labor with the Mercy High School Community.

THE MENTOR PROGRAM

A signature program of Mercy High School, the Mentor Program allows selected juniors to work with a "wise adviser," who accepts the student as a protégé, so she can explore an individually chosen field of interest beyond the traditional academic setting. Those in the Mentor Program can conduct an independent study for one or two semesters, with a minimum of 30 hours each quarter to be devoted to it. Research on the outlook for the profession, its current challenges, and the pathway to achieve mastery in it are part of the student's investigation. A final reflective paper marks the culmination of the course. A proposal outlining the goals of the rising junior and specific plans for her study is required.

PROJECT LEAD THE WAY BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE PROGRAM

The Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Biomedical Science Program comprises a sequence of classes that allows each student to investigate the roles of biomedical professionals as she studies human medicine, physiology, genetics, microbiology, and public health in the context of real-world cases. Students work with one another to understand and design solutions to some of the pressing health challenges facing the world. The project-based aspects of the curriculum give students a chance to identify a problem, apply what they know, and find unique solutions as they lead their own learning. PLTW courses complement the regular sequence of math and science courses required in the curriculum. Students in PLTW are exempt from technology requirements of ninth and tenth grades. They need to fulfill physical education and fine arts requirements before graduation. The physical education requirement can be exempt, with permission, when a student participates in athletics. Summer online courses in health and pre-determined arts courses can also fulfill the requirements.

WOMEN IN MEDICINE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MERCY MEDICAL CENTER

The partnership between Mercy High School and Mercy Medical Center is a unique one and offers Mercy High School students an unparalleled opportunity to work closely with medical professionals. During the ninth grade, Women in Medicine (WIM) students travel to the medical center nine times and explore multiple domains of hospital life. During the sophomore year, Mercy High School students travel to the hospital four or five times and participate in an on-campus speaker series to become acquainted with topics such as bioethics, the spiritual dimensions of healing, and biomedical engineering for example. Juniors choose a medical area on which to focus and are paired with a mentor. Each junior designs a research project, collects data, and creates a product designed to address a particular problem faced by a specific population of patients and their families at Mercy Medical Center. Seniors present their work to the community during a school-wide assembly in the spring.

WOMEN IN TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

This four-year program introduces participants to the possibilities of a career in technology. Experience is provided in programming, networking, operating systems, graphics, databases and information retrieval, security, emerging technologies, and design of software, hardware, and web sites. The social issues involving Internet security, privacy, copyright, and the impact of technology are also explored. Students edit both audio and

video material, and have vast opportunities to provide service to the Mercy High School Community using their expertise. Students are also able to explore career paths in technology via networking with women in technology careers and through field trips.

PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

THE SCHOOL DAY

We expect that attendance at school be the student's *first priority* and that students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) request exceptions only in cases of necessity.

Official School Hours/School Doors

Mercy High School operates on a five-day cycle, denoted by the colors green, red, gold, white, and purple. The regular school day is from 7:55 am to 3:10 pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and most Fridays and from 7:55 am to 2:15 pm on most Wednesdays. Each student checks in with her Adviser in complete uniform from 7:55 am – 8:00 am. The **Regular Daily Schedule** provides a 30-minute lunch period for all students and seven 50-minute class periods.

On red and white days, Magic Time allows for class meetings, advisee meetings, assemblies, liturgies, and other community-related events.

Mercy High School is officially open on school days beginning at 7:30 am. The school doors open to students at 7:00 am each day and are considered closed at 5:00 pm. There is no supervision provided between 7:00 am and 8:00 am or after 4:00 pm; however, the facilities and security personnel are on hand and available if needed.

Note for Student Safety:

- *For late openings due to inclement weather, there should be no expectation that the parking lots or sidewalks will be cleared by 7:00 am.*
- If not supervised, students must wait in the reception area after 4:00 pm.
- Students are generally expected to be picked up from the campus by 5:00 pm except when attending a supervised evening activity. **Any request for exception to this expectation must be made in writing to the dean of students.**
- While on campus, students are expected to observe all the rules and regulations of the school. On the following special event days, the Office of Academic and Student Affairs will close one hour after conclusion of the last event: Mercy Day/Ring Day, Field Events Day, Field Day, and Awards Assembly Day.
- School doors are locked during the school day for the safety of all. No student may ever put anything in a door to keep it open for her own convenience or that of someone else.

- Students enter and exit the campus using the doors by the reception area or front lobby doors. To enter using the lobby door, students need to ring in so that the receptionist can allow entrance.

Absence

- If an absence is known in advance, parent(s)/guardian(s) are requested to send a note to the school through the student's Adviser stating the date(s) and reason for the absence.
- There must be documented, verifiable communication between the parent/guardian and attendance officer prior to 9:00 am on the day a student has an unforeseen absence.
- When a student is absent, she needs to bring a note from parent(s)/guardian(s) into school upon her return stating the date(s) and reason for the absence. This will be collected by the Adviser and sent to the attendance office. Students who do not present this documentation will receive demerits.
- A student will be marked a half-day absent if she arrives after 11:00 am or leaves before 12:00 noon. Any student leaving school before 11:00 am will be marked absent for a full day.
- Any student achieving perfect attendance cannot be tardy more than five times and must not have any half-days of absence.
- The maximum overall absence allowed is 15 days per semester and 30 days for the academic year. If a student exceeds the semester or yearly absence maximum, she forfeits credit for the semester or for the entire year.
- The maximum number of absences allowed for a **one-semester course** is 12 class periods; the maximum number of absences allowed for a **full-year course** is 24 class periods. If a student exceeds the semester or yearly allowed absence, she forfeits credit for that course. If a student misses more than half of a class period, it is counted as a class absence.
- Any student who is absent from school or arrives at school more than 15 minutes after check-in, may not participate in any school activity that occurs after hours on that day. **Requests for an exception should be made to the dean of students through the faculty member supervising the activity.**
- Juniors and seniors are encouraged to schedule college visits on days when school is closed. Any college visit on a school day will be recorded as an absence.

Tardiness

- Students should leave home in time to arrive at school during check-in. When she arrives at school, she needs to check her uniform and ensure it is complete. Then she will check in with her Adviser between 7:55 am and 8:00 am.
- If a student arrives after 8:00 am, she should first go to her locker, arrange her uniform, gather her materials for class, and then report to the attendance office to receive a late pass.
- Any student arriving to school midway through first period (or later) must bring a note from a parent/guardian stating date and reason for lateness. Failure to bring a note results in a demerit each day until a note is presented. The student will be considered absent for her first period class.
- A student who arrives late to school five times in a semester will receive a detention. A senior student who is late ten times in a semester will lose her early dismissal privilege and be assigned to structured study for the remainder of the semester or for a period of time deemed appropriate. Students who have excessive lateness will lose their free time at school.
- Late arrivals due to a doctor's appointment will not be counted toward detention if the student presents a note from the doctor's office confirming the appointment/visit. A note from a parent/guardian will not suffice.

Request for Early Dismissal

- Early dismissal from school should be requested for serious reasons only. A written note from a parent or guardian, stating the reasons and time, must be presented to the Adviser at check-in on the day of the early dismissal.
- Please check the school calendar prior to making appointments or requesting early dismissal.
- Any time a student has permission to leave school during the school day, she must sign out in the reception area. When a student is returning to school, she must check in at the reception area to verify the time of return.
- For the safety and protection of everyone, requests by phone for early dismissal cannot be honored except in the case of an emergency. In such a situation, the person picking up the student must check in at reception to sign the student out; proof of identity will be required.

Early Dismissal Privilege

The early dismissal privilege policy provides a special opportunity for seniors to learn to manage their unscheduled time and to use community resources. This privilege is awarded to seniors who earn it, and who have the written permission of their parents/guardians and Adviser. Since the privilege is earned, it can be revoked if the student does not meet academic or social expectations.

- After the first quarter, seniors who have early dismissal privileges may leave the campus at 1:20 pm or at the beginning of period six, on days when they have no additionally scheduled activities that begin before 3:20 pm.
- Seniors may never exercise their early dismissal privilege earlier than 1:20 pm.
- Seniors must sign out at the reception area. Once a senior signs out, she is expected to leave campus.
- Any senior who receives ten or more demerits, or two or more detentions in a semester will lose her early dismissal privilege for the remainder of the semester or for a period of time deemed appropriate.
- Any senior who is late to school ten times will lose early dismissal privilege for the remainder of the semester or for a period of time deemed appropriate.
- Any senior who fails a class or earns more than one grade lower than "C-" for the quarter will not have early dismissal privilege until her grades improve. She will also be assigned to structured study.
- During the week before Field Day, there is no early dismissal privilege.

Special Days

Special days, such as Mercy Day/Ring Day, Foundation Day, Career Day, Emmaus Day, and the Assembly for Awards and Honors are an integral part of the school program and are required for all students.

Class Cancellation

A student should never assume that a class has been canceled. If the teacher is not present within the first five minutes, one student in the class should notify the attendance office.

School Delays and Closings

In the event of inclement weather or other emergencies, an announcement will be made on WBAL TV/radio (1090 AM). School delays and closings are also posted on the school web site and the Mercy App.

Assemblies

Most school assemblies are not open to the public unless otherwise noted.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are privileges accorded to students. Therefore, students must have demonstrated responsibility in their behavior in the Mercy High School Community in order to participate. Students can be denied the privilege if they fail to meet academic or behavioral expectations.

Students on a school-sponsored trip must adhere to the regulations for that trip. Students are expected to give full cooperation to requests and directives of chaperones. No student will be permitted to go on a field trip unless a permission slip signed by her parent/guardian is on file.

Because foreign travel involves a greater level of responsibility, Mercy High School reserves the right not to accept students for foreign trips if the school has any concerns about the student's behavior. All financial obligations must be up-to-date before a student can participate in a trip abroad.

COMMUNICATION

Partnering Between Home and School

Mercy High School values the partnership between home and school, and works hard to support it. The Adviser is the first point of contact on general matters regarding a student. The classroom teacher should be contacted about anything related to a particular course or classroom. The next point of reference after the teacher is the department chair.

When a parent or guardian wishes to speak with a member of the faculty or staff, the best way to schedule an appointment is via email or calling the receptionist.

Bulletin Boards/Flyers

Any announcement or flyer to be posted on campus needs prior approval from the dean of students.

Social Media

No social media can be used on campus between 8:00 am and 3:10 pm unless under the direct supervision of a teacher. Should a student be discovered using social media, her device will be confiscated and will be given to the dean of students, from whom the girl can retrieve it at the end of the day. Parents/guardians who need to contact their daughter(s) because of an emergency situation can call the receptionist and messages will be relayed between classes or at the end of the school day.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

Available Areas during the School Day

When a student does not have a scheduled class or activity, she may decide where and how she will spend her time. The following are available areas:

- Dining Hall
- College Counseling Center
- Knott Computer Lab
- Library
- Lobby

All other areas may be used if supervised by a faculty or staff member.

STUDENTS MAY NOT GO OUTSIDE WITHOUT PERMISSION DURING THE SCHOOL DAY.

Library

The library is a service to be shared by all members of the school. Care of and prompt return of books and considerate conduct in the library indicate an awareness of the needs of others.

Dining Hall

Food and drink are restricted to the dining hall. Students are responsible for the cleanliness of their tables and the surrounding area, and for disposing of trash in the proper containers. Only the dean of students can give permission for food to be elsewhere for special occasions and educational purposes.

Lockers

Each student is assigned one locker for her use during the school year. She is responsible for its maintenance. Lockers must be kept *locked at all times with a lock issued by the school*. It is not wise to share the combination for a lock.

Lockers may be decorated for special occasions using masking tape (no Scotch tape). All decorations are expected to be appropriate to the season and in good taste. When decorations become torn, they should be removed. The Adviser will monitor decorations.

The principal or the dean of students has the right to inspect a student's locker when it is considered necessary for the integrity of the school environment or the protection of the student body.

Health Room

The health room is provided for the immediate care of students who become ill while at school. **Students who become ill must go directly to the health room.** If necessary, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted by the school and the student sent home. **An ill student may not leave campus without checking out at the health room.**

MEDICATION

If a student needs to take medication during the school day, **school policy requires the necessary form be completed and on file.** This form may be obtained from the health room or downloaded from the parent portal of the school web site. No other medication should be taken by students during the school day.

APPEARANCE

The student's uniform will be held to a high standard because she represents Mercy High School and her appearance reflects her self-esteem. Uniform pieces that are torn or worn must be replaced as soon as possible. For security reasons, the nametag must be worn at all times.

Mercy High School Uniform – purchased from Flynn & O'Hara Uniform Company

- White uniform blouse or white turtleneck with school logo

- All-white, plain undergarments that do not show below the sleeves or above the neckline may be worn under the blouse.
***Note:** No underwear should be visible through the uniform blouse.*
- Plaid kilt worn just above the knee, not to exceed three inches
- Red blazer in good condition that *buttons completely* and fits well; only Mercy-related pins should be displayed on the lapel.
- Red or black uniform sweater with school logo
- Black fleece jacket with school logo
- Senior sweater
- Solid white or black knee socks
- Solid plain white or black crew socks with at least five inches of ribbing above the ankle (**no decorations, no borders, no stripes**).
- Plain white or black tights (sheer nylons, black stockings or leggings are not permitted)
- Black buck oxfords with standard soles, no contrasting stitching or contrasting grommets; purchased from Van Dyke & Bacon.
- No blankets or scarves are permitted.

Personal appearance

- The only headwear allowed will be solid white, black, red, and grey headbands measuring up to one and half inches (1.5”) wide.
- Jewelry must reflect simplicity with earrings no longer than one and half inches (1.5”); modest bracelets and necklaces must be few, thin, and simple.
- Except for ear piercings, no visible piercings and tattoos are allowed.
- Hair may not be dyed or highlighted any shade of red or an unnatural hair color. Because unity and simplicity are our touchstones for appearance, radical hairstyles are not appropriate. Any student who comes to school or a school event with inappropriately colored or styled hair will be sent home.

Dress regulations

- Students are expected to come to school in full, correct uniform. Flip-flops or beach shoes may never be worn in school.
- For warmth, plain black, red or gray sweat pants may be worn **to and from school**. *The pajama bottoms sold in the school store may not be worn to and from school.*
- At check-in each morning, Advisers check uniforms. **Students should be in full, correct uniform, including shoes, before checking in.**
- An out-of-uniform permission slip is issued **only** by the dean of students.
- On out-of-uniform days, dress may be casual but should always be neat and attractive and appropriate for Mercy High School.

PLEASE NOTE: *Sweat pants, jeans*, cut-offs or pants with tattered edges are deemed inappropriate for school and for trips sponsored by the school. In addition, flip flops, shorts, halters, tube tops and tank tops are never acceptable dress for school.*

- An excessively short, tight or revealing garment and bare midriff are deemed inappropriate. Any student inappropriately attired will be sent home to change to appropriate dress.
- A student may request permission to come to school out of uniform from the dean of students.

**Jeans may be worn by special permission on some occasions such as selected out-of-uniform days, retreats or outdoor field trips where jeans would be deemed appropriate by the sponsoring group. Torn, cut off, distressed, or excessively tight jeans are considered inappropriate.*

DANCE GUIDELINES

Attendance

- Dances on school grounds are held from 8 pm - 11 pm.
- No one will be admitted after 9 pm.
- Students are expected to remain until 10:30 pm.
- Should an emergency arise requiring a student to leave before 10:30 pm, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted by the moderator. If for some reason a student is not admitted to the dance or is asked to leave before 10:30 pm, the

parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted by the moderator and will be required to pick up their daughter and her guest.

- Once students leave the building during the dances, they may not be readmitted.
- No notes for permission to leave early will be accepted at the dance.
- Dance tickets are transferable but not refundable.
- If a student decides not to attend the dance after purchasing a ticket, the student needs to inform the dance moderator by 3:10 pm on the Friday of the dance.
- Dances held on campus are open to Mercy High School students and one guest per student. Mercy High School students should feel welcome to come to any Mercy High School dance without a guest.

Note: Any student who is absent from school or arrives at school more than 15 minutes after check-in, may not participate in any school activity that occurs after hours on that day. This includes dances. If there are any questions, please see the dean of students.

To attend the Junior-Senior prom, students must be in school the entire day on the Friday before.

Behavior

- Students are expected to behave in a manner befitting students who attend a Catholic girls' school.
- Students are reminded that they are responsible for the behavior of their guests. If a student has difficulty in this regard, she should ask for the assistance of a chaperone.
- Any student asked to leave the dance for misbehavior will not be allowed to attend any other Mercy High School dances for the remainder of the school year, which may include prom.

Appearance

1. Attire
 - The level of dress expected at a Mercy High School dance is semiformal, which means “dressy,” neat, and attractive. This applies to all school dances unless a dance theme is approved by the activities council which specifies a different type of attire. Students are reminded that they are responsible for the appearance of their guests.

- Any student or guest who is inappropriately dressed will not be admitted to the dance and parents/guardians will be contacted.
- The following are examples to clarify what is and what is **not** appropriate dress:

Appropriate Women's Attire

- Dresses, dressy pants or skirt with a dressy top.
Note: *The length of all dresses and skirts must meet the **fingertip test** (standing straight with arms at sides, the longest finger should not be longer than the length of the dress or skirt).*
- Shoes may be heels, flats, or dressy sandals. (Students may **not** enter a dance wearing beach flip-flops or have bare feet.)

Women's Attire NOT appropriate

- Short, tight or excessively revealing garments
- Slits that do not meet the fingertip test. (*See note above.*)
- Garments with bare midriff or revealing cutouts
- Jeans, skorts, khaki pants or skirts, corduroy pants or skirts
- Leggings (unless worn under a dress or skirt of appropriate length)
- Beach flip flops, *Birkenstock* style clogs, combat boots, *UGG* style footwear or any recreational shoes

Appropriate Men's Attire

- Dress slacks with dress shirt and tie; sport coat is optional
 - Dress shoes (no combat boots, flip flops or recreational shoes)
2. Mercy High School students may not have visible tattoos and body piercings (except for ears).
 3. Outerwear and knapsacks must be checked at the door.

POLICY FOR HOLDING POSITIONS OF STUDENT LEADERSHIP

A student may hold only **one** key leadership position during one school year. A student who holds one of these key positions may hold only one office in another school-sponsored activity or club. The following positions have been designated as KEY LEADERSHIP positions:

- The five officers of the student council
- The four officers of each class
- The president of the National Honor Society
- The president of the Girls' Athletic Association
- The president of the Environmental Awareness Club
- The president of the Social Justice Society

MISCELLANEOUS

I.D. Cards

Each student is issued an I.D. card. Students should report lost cards immediately to the dean of students. There is a fee for replacing the I.D. card.

Lost and Found

Items found on campus should be turned in at the Office of Academic and Student Affairs, where they can be claimed by the proper owners.

Major School Fund Raiser

The school sponsors one major student fund-raising activity per year. Each student is expected to fully participate in this fund-raising activity as designated by the Development Office. All other fund-raising activities must be approved by the school leadership team.

The Mercy High School Ring

The official Mercy High School ring is a symbol of a special relationship between an individual and the Mercy High School Community. All graduates of Mercy High School are entitled to wear the ring.

Student Visitors

Student visitors are permitted to attend classes at Mercy High School primarily to become acquainted with the kind of education available at Mercy High School and to encourage potential students. If a student

wishes to bring a visitor to school, she must obtain the permission of the dean of students in advance.

Students who withdraw from Mercy before the end of the academic year may not return to campus during the school day or for school activities without the permission of the dean of students.

Note: No children under age 10 may be brought to school as visitors. This includes special days and the last day of school.

CODE OF CONDUCT

In order for everyone to work together successfully during the school year, students are expected to:

- Behave in an appropriate manner in and out of the classroom.
- Be respectful of each other and of all faculty and staff.
- Be honorable in all academic work and behavior.
- Be respectful of school property and the property of others.
- Use appropriate language at all times.
- Be on time to classes, advisee meetings, and assemblies.
- Be in correct uniform at all times.
- Refrain from inappropriate displays of affection.
- Assist in keeping the campus neat and clean, including disposing of trash properly in the dining hall, hallways, classrooms, or outside, and keeping one's possessions in the appropriate place.
- Refrain from chewing gum while on campus.
- Eat only in the dining hall, including for class or club parties. Lunchtime meetings and special events that serve food require the permission of the dean of students. Lunches may be brought from home or purchased from Mercy High School's dining service. Ordering take-out food during the school day is not permitted.
- Respect Mercy High School's designation as a smoke-free campus.

- Refrain from the illegal use, possession, sale, distribution, or solicitation of alcohol or other drugs on the school's property or at any off-campus school function. Students may not arrive at school or at any off-campus school function under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted to remove any student who is under the influence of illegal substances and for such violations, the school will take appropriate disciplinary action (up to and including expulsion). Disciplinary action may also be the result of inappropriate off-campus behavior that is brought to the school's attention. Any illegal activity will be immediately reported to the authorities.

Student conduct off campus can detrimentally impact the school's reputation or the good of the school community. Therefore, the school reserves the right to discipline students for serious and inappropriate conduct occurring off campus of which the school becomes aware.

Demerits and Detention

Students receive demerits for minor infractions of the rules. When a student accumulates five demerits, is late to school five times, or displays unacceptable behavior, she serves a one-hour after-school detention. A student may be required to serve detention for unacceptable or disruptive behavior.

Students receive the notice of a scheduled detention one day in advance. Requests for changes must be made in person to the dean of students no later than 10:00 am on the day of the scheduled detention.

Detention begins promptly at 3:15 pm and ends at 4:00 pm unless otherwise noted on the detention form. Students should report promptly to the designated room with work to occupy their time. Whenever possible, students in detention will be asked to perform some minor service to the school during their scheduled detention period.

Behavioral Probation

When a student's behavior has not met community expectations, she may be placed on behavioral probation, designed so that she will focus on successfully managing her behavior. Should a student on probation not be successful in managing her behavior, she may be asked to leave the school.

Suspension

A student is usually suspended when she violates an important rule of the community or if she has not lived up to a number of expectations. An

offense may also lead to required counseling or even expulsion. The school will notify colleges of suspensions. Some suspensions are out-of-school and others are in-school. Any academic work missed during an out-of-school suspension will not be accepted. Any academic work missed during an in-school suspension will be accepted.

Loss of Privileges

A student may lose certain privileges as a result of significant misconduct including, but not limited to, participation in co-curricular activities, field trips, holding office, or representing the school publicly.

Dismissal

Ordinarily a student would be dismissed if, after a period of probation, she has not been able to meet expectations. However, the school may dismiss a student for a serious reason at any time.

A student may be required to withdraw from the school because of disregard for major rules and regulations, honor violations, violations of the law, personal maladjustments, prolonged academic deficiencies, or lack of cooperation on the part of parent(s)/guardian(s).

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Introduction

Mercy High School uses technology as a tool to enhance the curriculum and improve classroom instruction. To that end, it is the user's responsibility to employ technology as an educational resource. The term "technology" refers to electronic communications and information devices, and includes, but is not limited to, computing equipment, iPads, smartphones and other mobile devices, phones, photocopiers, calculators, televisions and other media players. Use of personal computing devices on school property is subject to the guidelines and expectations as set forth in this policy.

Use of technology at Mercy High School is a privilege and implies agreement with the principles outlined in this policy and, in accordance with the school's philosophy, with the broader concepts of ethical, moral and responsible use.

Telecommunications/Internet Guidelines

Every student receives a Mercy High School email account. Mercy High School email is an academic communication tool and students are obligated to use this tool in a responsible, effective, and ethical manner. Mercy High School student email accounts are meant for school-related uses.

Student computer use is subject to monitoring and inspection. It is the student's responsibility to use the Internet for specific curriculum-driven objectives and goals. It is unacceptable to access social media from 8:00 am to 3:10 pm. While on school premises, students may not use chat rooms and are forbidden to use the Internet to buy or sell items. Although content filtering software is in place in an effort to prevent access to sites that are obscene or harmful to minors, the school cannot guarantee that all inappropriate material will be blocked. Students must not attempt to bypass filtering software through the use of proxy servers, 3G/4G networks or other methods.

It is the student's responsibility to use technology resources in accordance with the school's mission and philosophy. Each student in the school community is responsible for her own actions. It is expected that students will model good digital citizenship and use technology in ways that show consideration and respect for others. Students will not use technology, including digital recording devices such as video cameras, audio devices, phones, and other such devices, to slander, bully or denigrate others. Using offensive or harassing language is never permitted.

It is important to note that these expectations extend to technology use beyond the school walls. Students who are reported using email, social networking postings, or text messaging in disparaging or offensive ways, whether occurring at school or off campus, will be subject to disciplinary action.

It is the student's responsibility to report violations of the Acceptable Use Policy to a faculty member or directly to the dean of students.

General Hardware/Software Guidelines

It is the student's responsibility to make sure no hardware or software is destroyed, modified or abused in any way. Computer equipment should not be moved, unplugged, or altered without the permission of a faculty member.

A student must not alter or attempt to alter a computer setup or system configuration. Students should print responsibly and only essential, school-related material.

In consideration of others, students must use earbuds when listening to audio. In the classroom, this is always at the discretion of the teacher. To promote safety, when not in class, students need to be able to hear safety instructions related to fire and other drills, so one ear should be accessible.

Intellectual Property Rights

It is the student's responsibility to abide by copyright laws and software licensing agreements. Software may only be installed with permission and under the supervision of the Technology Department.

Students are not permitted to copy or use school-owned material, including graphics, without permission.

Student-Owned Devices

Use of student-owned devices must always be in accordance with the Mercy High School Acceptable Use Policy and other school policies.

Student-owned laptops, iPads, and other mobile computing devices (excluding cell phones and smartphones) may be used in any available area in the school. Use of a student-owned device during a class is always at the discretion of the classroom teacher. **Between 8 am and 3:10 pm, the only content accessed by a student should be educational.**

The dining hall is a technology-free area during lunch periods. Students may not use electronic devices during lunch. Students who need to use an iPad or laptop during a lunch period must go to another available area in the school.

iPads and other mobile devices may not be used in the hallways between classes. Only earbuds, not headphones, may be used during the school day. **For communication and safety reasons, earbuds can only be used in one ear from 8 am to 3:10 pm.**

Images, music, video, and other material stored on a student-owned mobile device must always be school-appropriate and in conformity with the Acceptable Use Policy. Mercy High School reserves the right to examine a student's device and its contents.

Students must not use someone else's personal mobile device without specific permission from that person.

Each student is responsible for the proper care, maintenance, and security of her personal mobile devices. Mercy High School is not responsible for any damage or loss of student-owned devices and their contents.

Using the iPad in School

- A student is required to bring her iPad to school each day with a fully charged battery. A limited number of recharging stations will be provided throughout the school.
- If a student leaves her iPad at home, or if it is confiscated by a teacher, she will be required to complete assignments using alternate means (as determined by her teacher).
- iPad use in class is at the direction of the teacher.
- An iPad must not be used for non-classroom related activities (including checking email and texting) when in class.
- Classroom projectors and Apple AirPlay™ may only be used with the explicit permission of the classroom teacher.

- A student must not record conversations or take video and pictures of people or class activities without permission from the teacher and the person(s) involved. If permission to record is granted, the student must not post the recording on the Internet without permission from a teacher.
- iPad sound must be muted at all times unless permission is obtained from the teacher for instructional purposes. Push notifications should be turned off during school hours. Earbuds must be used when listening to audio.
- Mercy High School's Wi-Fi network must be used to connect to the Internet. Students may not use any other network (including a 3G/4G connection) to access the Internet at school.
- iPads are subject to random monitoring and inspection by teachers and school personnel. All content, including images and music, must be school-appropriate. **No social media may be accessed during school hours.**
- A student whose actions are in violation of these guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the principal and dean of students.

Security

Students must respect the integrity of computing systems. Use of anything designed to disrupt or alter the performance and/or integrity of the network or to breach network security is prohibited.

Students agree to maintain adequate security for their accounts. Passwords are not to be shared. Students are responsible for the activity on their own school accounts.

An unauthorized user may not enter anyone else's private account.

Wireless Internet access is available throughout the school. For an added level of security, wireless network access is restricted by a password, which may not be shared with anyone who is not a member of the Mercy High School Community.

Use of Cell Phones

A student may receive approval to bring a cell phone to school only if she and her parent(s)/guardian(s) agree to abide by the following regulations:

- The student must register her cell phone using the form available in the Office of Academic and Student Affairs. Any changes throughout the year must be reported to the dean of students.
- The phone must be **completely turned off** from 8:00 am to 3:10 pm. **Please note exception:** Cell phones may be used

near exit doors only if the student is waiting there to be picked up.

- Cell phones must be kept in lockers. A student may not carry a cell phone on her person, in her purse, or in her backpack.
- A student may use her cell phone during the regular school day **ONLY under the direction or supervision of a staff member.**
- A student found using a cell phone improperly will have the phone confiscated. The student will also be subject to disciplinary action and loss of cell phone privileges.
- Mercy High School accepts no responsibility for individual cell phones brought to school.

***NOTE:** If a phone is confiscated, it will be kept with the dean of students. The student whose phone is confiscated must speak with the dean to discuss the violation. Following this discussion, there will be a conversation with the parent/guardian before the phone is returned.*

Consequences of Inappropriate Behavior Regarding Technology

Students whose actions are in violation of this policy may

- Have her device confiscated;
- Lose the privilege of using technology resources at school for a period of time;
- Be subject to other disciplinary action;
- Be required to make full financial restitution, if applicable.

GENERAL POLICIES

AVAILABILITY OF THE ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Asbestos Management Plan is available for review. This plan contains information on our inspections, re-inspections, response actions, and post-response action activities, including periodic surveillance and re-inspection activities that are planned or are in progress. This plan is on file at The Catholic Center and here at the school. If you should wish to review it or if you have any questions, please contact the facilities coordinator.

CUSTODY

Divorced or separated parents/guardians who have special requirements or arrangements regarding custody need to let the school know what those requirements and/or arrangements are. The school cannot be held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that have not been made known.

Mercy High School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment. Thus, non-custodial parents/guardians, at their request, will be given access to the academic records and to information regarding the academic progress of their children, unless there is a court order specifically stating that the non-custodial parent/guardian is denied access to such information.

EMERGENCY AND CRISIS SITUATIONS

Mercy High School is committed to maintaining and promoting a healthy and safe environment for all students, faculty/staff and visitors. The active participation of faculty/staff and students is required in order to achieve the highest standards of health and safety in accordance with all legal requirements and with Mercy High School's philosophy and mission statements.

Expectations for Faculty/Staff

All faculty/staff are familiar with, follow and enforce policies and procedures, rules and regulations regarding health and safety, emergency and crisis situations – as listed in the *Employee Handbook*, *Faculty Handbook*, the *Student/Parent Handbook*, the *Crisis Response Plan*, and any other documents issued for such purpose. In the event of an emergency, it is the responsibility of faculty/staff supervising classrooms or other areas to supervise the students in their respective classes or

areas. All other faculty/staff not in such areas, unless charged with another responsibility, are responsible to seek out students who are not in classes or supervised areas (e.g. hallways, stairways, bathrooms, dining hall, etc.) and assume appropriate supervision of these students.

Expectations for Students

Students are expected to be familiar with and follow policies and procedures, rules and regulations regarding health and safety, emergency and crisis situations – as listed in the *Student/Parent Handbook* and as may be additionally distributed for such purpose. These items are periodically reviewed with students by the faculty and administration. Still further, students are expected to report immediately any suspicious persons, situations, incidents or objects anywhere on campus to a member of the faculty/staff in order to facilitate early intervention regarding a possible problem.

Response to Crisis Situations

Standard procedures for health and safety and for emergency situations have been in place for many years. However, since our national security was challenged by terrorist activity, the climate has changed, requiring heightened awareness and more specific planning for response to crisis situations. In such situations, the safety and welfare of students is the first and foremost responsibility of administrators, faculty and staff.

In light of national warnings about potential terrorist threats, Mercy High School is constantly attuned during the school day to information from the public media via radio in the Office of Academic and Student Affairs. If a crisis situation should occur, an emergency radio provided by the City of Baltimore is available in the Office of Academic and Student Affairs for immediate use. In the event of a terrorist attack and/or crisis situation of some kind, Mercy High School will act at the direction of civil authorities. Appropriate procedures are in place and will be implemented, as directed, for the duration of the emergency. A copy of these procedures is available in the Office of Academic and Student Affairs for any parent/guardian who wishes to review the types of responses identified in the school's *Crisis Response Plan*.

Communication with Parents/Guardians

- Parents/guardians are asked to attend to information provided by civil authorities through the public media in order to understand the nature of the crisis situation and to be aware of specific directives being issued.
- Listen to WBAL radio or TV for a Mercy High School-specific announcement. This will also be posted on the school web site.

- Information is also available via the Mercy App, which can be downloaded at no cost.
- If you find it necessary to contact the school, call the main school phone number: 410-433-8880. Depending on the nature of the crisis situation, we will set up, through the phone system, a method for you to access information about what is happening at school or to make personal contact.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Mercy High School complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. In general, FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to education records. (The rights granted to parents under FERPA automatically pass to the student when the student turns 18 or enrolls in college.) These rights and related procedures are as follows:

- Parents have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Parents should submit to the principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school will arrange for access and notify the parents of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- Parents have the right to request that the school correct records they believe are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. Parents who wish to request an amendment of the student's records should write to the principal and clearly identify the part of the record they believe is inaccurate or misleading, and indicate the information they believe should be included in a corrected record. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested, the school will notify the parent of the decision. The parent has the right to request a hearing.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from parents in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties under the following conditions:
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff).

- A person or company with whom the school has contracted to provide a service (e.g., attorney)
- A parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing her/his tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities or duties to the school.
- Other schools to which a student is transferring
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
- Accrediting organizations
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- Appropriate officials in case of health and safety emergencies

Schools may also disclose certain designated "directory" information without written consent unless a parent/guardian objects in writing. The primary purpose of designating certain "directory" information is to allow the school to include this type of information in certain publications. Examples of such publications include a playbill, showing the student's role in a drama production; programs for school productions and concerts; sports activity sheets; honor roll or other recognition lists; school newsletters and similar publications; promotional literature; the annual yearbook; graduation programs.

Mercy High School has identified the following as designated "directory" information:

- Student's name
- Grade level
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Honors and awards received
- Photograph

Parents who do not want the school to disclose some or all of the above "specific information" without their prior written consent must notify the principal in writing no later than within the first two weeks after the student begins enrollment at Mercy High School.

Parents have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Mercy High School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20202-8520

Note of Clarification: *Mercy High School publishes a student directory each year which includes the name of the student, the name of the student's parents or guardians, home address, phone number, parish affiliation. At the opening of the school year, parents/guardians are asked to submit this information. At that time, they are also given the opportunity to say they do not wish some or all of the information to be included in the directory available for student and parent/guardian use. However, all the information is included in the faculty copy of the student directory.*

LEGAL STATUS OF STUDENTS

- Mercy High School students may not be married. The principal may make an exception to this policy in the case of adult women who were formerly unable to complete their high school education.
- Because the education of Mercy High School students is a joint venture shared by the school staff, the parents/guardians and the students, a student is expected to live with her parent(s) or legal guardian(s). The request for any exception to this should be made directly in writing to the principal by the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).
- In cases of student pregnancy, each situation is handled individually. The decision regarding the student's continuance at school and her participation in school activities rests with the principal, who is guided by her concern for the individual and her responsibility to the school community.

POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Mercy High School is committed to providing a safe environment for all our students. Mercy High School joins with the Archdiocese of Baltimore in this commitment regarding the protection of children and youth, including protection from child sexual abuse, and follows the policies of the Archdiocese in this regard.

Each new member of the faculty/staff receives a copy of *A Statement of Policy for the Protection of Children & Youth* of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Each new employee is asked to read this statement carefully and is required to sign a document which is retained in each person's personnel file stating:

This is to acknowledge that I have received, reviewed and retained a copy of "A Statement of Policy for the Protection of Children & Youth" of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. I hereby certify that I understand and will abide by the policies as stated.

Should any allegation of child sexual abuse occur regarding a representative of Mercy High School in any capacity, the policies and procedures of the Archdiocese will be followed as well as the requirements of civil and criminal law.

A copy of the complete Archdiocesan *A Statement of Policy for the Protection of Children & Youth* is available in the Office of Academic and Student Affairs of Mercy High School, should a parent/guardian wish to review it.

For additional information regarding Mercy High School's handling of the reporting of child abuse and neglect, please refer to the section of the Student/Parent Handbook entitled "Reporting of Child Abuse."

If you suspect that an incident of child sexual abuse has occurred, please report it immediately to the president, principal, or the dean of students. As always, we thank you for working with us on behalf of the safety and well-being of all our students.

POLICY ON NON-DISCRIMINATION

Mercy High School does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, color, national or ethnic origin, or sexual orientation in the administration of its educational policies, programs or activities, its admissions policies, financial aid or scholarship programs, and other school-administered programs.

POLICY REGARDING BULLYING, HARASSMENT OR INTIMIDATION

Bullying, harassment or intimidation of any student is prohibited at Mercy High School. Retaliation against anyone who has reported these behaviors is also prohibited. Students engaging in these behaviors are subject to disciplinary and/or legal action.

As used in this policy, “bullying, harassment or intimidation” means any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, including an electronic communication, that physically harms an individual, damages an individual’s property, substantially interferes with an individual’s education or learning environment, or places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual’s person or property, or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.” (*Education Article 7-424.3, “Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation Policy,” State of Maryland, May 2011.*)

Consequences and remedial actions will be consistently and fairly applied to persons committing acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation, to persons engaged in retaliation and to persons found to have made false accusations. The seriousness of the behavior and prior conduct of the involved students will be considered when determining appropriate consequences. A student who violates this policy may be required to participate in appropriate counseling/intervention that is designed to increase the student’s understanding of the offense and its impact on others. A student who repeatedly commits acts of bullying, harassment or intimidation may be asked to withdraw from Mercy High School.

When a student reports to a staff member that she is or has been the target/victim of bullying, harassment or intimidation, the staff member will report the incident to the school administration. Students’ reports will be documented in writing in a timely fashion.

The principal or her/his designee will promptly and appropriately investigate reports. She/he will take steps to verify who committed the act of bullying, harassment or intimidation and whether others played a role. She/he will promptly and appropriately notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of the victim and the offender. After the investigation is complete, the principal or her/his designee will apply consequences and/or remedial actions consistent with the school’s disciplinary policies. The offender will be informed that retaliation against a victim or bystander is prohibited and will result in additional consequences.

Information about the appropriate types of support services available to the student bully or victim and any bystanders will be discussed with the parents or guardians of those involved.

REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE

Mercy High School is committed to providing the best possible and most appropriate learning experiences for all our students. Occasionally, there are factors in a student's appearance or behavior that lead to suspicions of child abuse or neglect. Maryland law requires that all educators and other school personnel, including volunteers, report suspected abuse or neglect to the proper authorities in order that children may be protected from harm and the family may be helped.

Mercy High School policy supports Maryland law in this regard and requires that all school staff report suspected abuse and neglect. At all times the intent is to protect the student from harm by providing services to maintain and strengthen the family.

Should you have any questions regarding the information in this handbook, please feel free to discuss them with your daughter's Adviser or with a member of the school administration. You can be assured of our continued interest and concern for the education and welfare of the students in our school.