

Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School

Diocese of Fresno

Parent/Student Handbook

2020 - 2021



Letter of Welcome

Welcome to Our Lady of Mercy School. I am excited that you have chosen Our Lady of Mercy School for your child's education. As the principal of Our Lady of Mercy School, I work hard to foster a safe, positive, and Catholic learning environment where students experience high quality instruction, high expectations, and learn to the best of their abilities. All of us at Our Lady of Mercy School work to create and support a community dedicated to academic excellence surrounded by religious formation.

At OLM we believe the development of children is best achieved through the efforts of educators who support and complement parents as their child's primary educator.

The following handbook serves as a guide of the OLM policies and procedures necessary to maintain a strong Catholic School Environment.

Please read over this handbook with your child to ensure that all policies and procedures of Our Lady of Mercy School are followed throughout the school year.

It is my hope that the adherence of all policies and procedures will be carried out by students, parents, faculty, and staff of OLM School. This will maintain and support the success of OLM School and maintain strong relationships between all groups.

I know you have a choice in your child's education and I thank you for choosing Our Lady of Mercy School. We are committed to a purpose and vision that will set your child on the path for a lifetime of success.

God Bless You!

Mrs. Judy Blackburn

Table of Contents

Title page

Welcome Letter

Table of Contents

Important Information Regarding Enrollment and this Handbook

- Scope of this Handbook
- Parent/Student Handbook Agreement
- Right to Amend
- Good Standing and Continued Enrollment
- Condition of Enrollment for Parents/Guardians

About Our Lady of Mercy School

- Mission Statement
- Vision Statement
- Philosophy Statement
- Student Learning Expectations
- History
- Accreditation
- Non-Discrimination Policy

School Structure and Organization

- Diocesan Office of Catholic Education
- Superintendent
- Pastor
- Principal
- Administrative Team
- Faculty and Staff
- School Advisory Board
- Parent Club Board

Admission, Registration, and Financial Policies

- Partnership of School and Family
- Admission Priorities
- Age for Admission
- Probationary Admission
- Age for Admission
- Documentation Requirements
- Physical Examination
- Immunization

- Application Process
- Registration Fee
- Tuition
- Other Fees
- Tuition Collection
- Financial Aid
- Cost of Education
- Other Enrollment Requirements
- Withdrawal

Extended Care

- Hours and Days
- Minimum Days
- Monthly Payment Plan
- Drop-in Rate
- Extended Care Program Policies
- Extended Care Program Contact

Communication

- School Contact Information
- Parent Contact Information
- Confidentiality
- Office Telephone Use
- Communication from the School
- Contacting Teachers
- Deliveries and Forgotten Items
- E-Mail Use
- Back to School Night
- Process for Conflict Resolution

Visiting the School and Volunteering

- Visiting the school
- Classroom Visits
- Volunteering Requirements and Guidelines
- Volunteer Code of ethics
- Field trips
- Volunteering Opportunities and Requirements

Curriculum

- Introduction
- Essential Core curriculum
- Enrichment Curriculum
- Modified Curriculum and Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
- Student Success Team

- Religion Classes, Sacramental Preparation, and Worship
- Field Trips
- Library
- Textbooks

Student Evaluation

- Parents as Primary Educators
- Standardized Testing
- Homework
- Homework Time Allotment Guidelines
- Missed Homework due to Absence
- Grading
- Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Conduct/Effort Codes
- Progress Reports
- Report Cards
- Parent Conferences
- Academic and Behavior Probation
- Promotion
- Retention
- Acceleration
- Honor roll
- Valedictorian
- Awards
- 8th Grade Promotion/Graduation

The School Day and Attendance

- School and Office Hours
- Closed Campus
- Arrival
- Dismissal
- Drop Off and Pick Up
- Walkers and Bike Riders
- Minimum Days
- Absences
- Tardies
- Excessive Absence and Tardiness
- Missed Homework due to Absence

Appearance and Student Uniform Requirements

- Introduction
- Basic Uniform
- General Dress Code and Uniform Regulations
- Spirit Days
- Uniform Holidays

- Free dress

Health and Safety

- Immunization and Student Medical Examinations (referenced again)
- Emergency Cards
- School Insurance Coverage
- Illness and Notification
- Medications
- Medication Forms
- Illness at School, Injury, and First Aid
- Students with Severe Allergies
- Head Lice
- Mandated Reporting
- Harm to Self or Others
- Pregnancy
- Parking Lot Safety
- Severe Illness Outbreak

Concussion Policy

Emergency Procedures

- Emergency Care Plan
- Emergency Drills and Events

Student Discipline

- General policy
- Expectations
- Academic Integrity
- Behavior Guidelines
- Right to Search
- Interviews by Officials
- Disciplinary Actions and Sanctions
- Suspension
- Reasons for Immediate Suspension
- Expulsion
- Disciplinary Records

Information and Communication Technology Policies

- Online Social Media and Networking Policy for Parents and Students
- Acceptable Use
- Social Media Use
- Use of Electronic Devices Owned or Issued by the School
- Acceptable Use Pledge Covering Electronic Devices

- Consequences for Violations of Information Technology Policies

Harassment and Bullying

Controlled Substances

Extra-Curricular Activities

- Student Council
- Social Events and Dances
- Student Parties Outside of School

Athletics

- Athletic Teams
- Participation on Athletic Teams
- Parochial Athletic League (PAL)
- Player Eligibility
- Conduct of Players During Games and Practices
- Conduct of Parents and Fans
- Playing Time
- Reporting Injuries and Special Limitations
- Concussion
- Communication with Coaches
- Uniforms
- Transportation
- Parent Participation

Transfer, Custody, and Student Records

- Transfer of Students
- Transfer of Students Because of Parental Behavior
- Transfer Between Catholic Schools
- Custody of Minors
- Rights of Non-Custodial Parents
- Students Not living with Legal Guardians
- Access to Student Records

Miscellaneous Information and Policies

- Classroom Parties/Birthdays
- Lost and Found
- Lunch Program/Milk Program

Forms

- 2020-2021 Parent/Student Handbook Agreement Form
- Volunteer Agreement Form
- Acceptable Use Pledge Covering Electronic Devices

Important Information Regarding Enrollment and this Handbook

SCOPE of this HANDBOOK

Enrollment at Our Lady of Mercy School is a privilege. Ongoing student status is subject to the school's academic and behavioral standards which may evolve and change over time. Decisions regarding academic matters (including but not limited to the issuance of grades), student discipline, and an individual's continuing status as a student at the school are within the discretion of the school administration. The purpose of this handbook is to set forth general guidelines that will assist students and their families in understanding what the school expects of them. The provisions of this handbook are subject to change at any time by the school administration. Questions about items contained in this handbook should be directed to the principal.

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT

Signing the Parent/Student Handbook Agreement Form is deemed an agreement on the part of the student and his/her parents/guardians to comply with all policies, rules, guidelines, and regulations of the school as outlined in the most current Parent/Student Handbook and in any subsequent updates or revisions of the handbook. Parents/guardians and students agree that Our Lady of Mercy School has the right as a private academic institution to make rules that require specific conduct on the part of the parents/guardians and students. Parents/guardians and students agree to comply with required conduct and to support the policies and procedures contained herein, and intend to cooperate fully with Our Lady of Mercy School and its personnel as educational partners. Students may not attend class or participate in any school activities until the agreement is signed.

RIGHT TO AMEND

Our Lady of Mercy School reserves the right to amend or waive provisions of this handbook when deemed necessary by the principal. The contents of this handbook are subject to change at any time when this is determined to be necessary by the school administration. If changes are made to the handbook, parents/guardians and students will be notified in a timely manner. This handbook exists to foster the efficient operation of Our Lady of Mercy School. The school administration exercises flexibility to meet this objective and has the discretion to take actions other than those specified in this handbook. This handbook is not intended and should not be considered to create any additional rights for students or parents/guardians, including a right to continued enrollment at the school.

The contents of this handbook are to be accepted by the parents/guardians and students as an essential element of the contract between home and school. Violations of the spirit, intent, or letter of the policies, rules, and regulations found in the handbook will be considered just cause for administrative action. Under no circumstances may a parent/guardian excuse a student from observance of the policies, rules, and regulations of Our Lady of Mercy School ***if the parent/guardian expects the student to remain in good standing with the school.***

GOOD STANDING and CONTINUED ENROLLMENT

Students are enrolled at Our Lady of Mercy School on the basis of an evaluation and acceptance that is ongoing. The school reserves the right to dismiss students at any time for violation of any policy in this

handbook, whether on campus or off campus, unsatisfactory academic standing, or for other reasons that, in the judgment of the school administration, adversely affect the welfare of the individual student or other students, the school and its employees, the reputation of the school, or the school community.

In order to continue enrollment at the school, a student must be in “good standing.” A student considered to be in “good standing” is one who has not become subject to dismissal for academic reasons, one whose record of conduct is at least satisfactory, one whose family supports the school faculty and the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, and one who has met all financial obligations to the school or made satisfactory arrangements for those obligations. Continued enrollment, then, is a privilege earned by cooperative personal conduct and fulfillment of academic requirements and financial obligations. ***The school reserves the right to refuse registration or re-registration.*** When the school judges that the parents/guardians do not support school policies, the school reserves the right to terminate the student’s enrollment.

CONDITION of ENROLLMENT for PARENTS/GUARDIANS

It is a condition of enrollment that the parents/guardians of a student shall also conform themselves to standards of conduct that are consistent with the Christian principles of the school, as determined by the school in its discretion. These principles include, but are not limited to, any policies, principles, or procedures set forth in any Parent/Student Handbook and contract of the school.

These Christian principles further include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Parents/guardians are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with the school to assist the student in meeting the religious, academic, moral, and behavioral expectations of the school.
2. Students and parents/guardians may respectfully express their concerns about the school operation and its personnel. However, they may not do so in a manner that is discourteous, scandalous, rumor-driven, disruptive, threatening, hostile, or divisive.
3. Parents/guardians and students may not send or post content on email, text messaging, or social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, etc.) that is contrary to the mission and philosophy of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fresno and Our Lady of Mercy School. This includes expressing displeasure with the school administration, or with a teacher, staff member, student, or any authority at Our Lady of Mercy School and/or parish in regards to a policy, homework, assignments, or any school-related program.
4. Parents are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with other parents of the school community. Difficulties in relationships must be addressed and resolved by the parties themselves. If a difficulty impacts the environment of the school, the principal has the authority to intervene and work to determine an outcome.
5. These expectations for students and parents/guardians are expected on and off campus and include, but are not limited to, all school-sponsored programs and events (e.g. extended care, licensed child care programs, athletics, field trips, etc.).
6. ***The school reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, which actions fall short of meeting the Christian principles of the school and the policies in this handbook.*** Depending on the

severity and circumstances of the event, failure to follow the school's principles and policies will normally result in a verbal or written warning to the student and or parent/guardian. For serious violations of the school's principles and policies, the school's response may be to take disciplinary actions up to and including the requirement to withdraw from school (e.g., suspension of a student, suspension of parent/guardian's privilege to come on the campus grounds and/or participate in parish/school activities, volunteer work, etc., or permanently withdraw enrollment from the school).

7. The school reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, when conduct is of such a severe nature as to warrant immediate disciplinary action without a warning.

About Our Lady of Mercy School

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Lady of Mercy School enlightens the mind while enriching the soul.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

As a Catholic elementary school in the Diocese of Fresno, Our Lady of Mercy School is a community of believers dedicated to living the Gospel through their daily commitment to worship, prayer, and service to others. Our Lady of Mercy School, mindful of its mission to be witnesses to the love of Christ for all, accepts students of all races, religions and ethnic origins while still maintaining its Catholic identity.

We believe in a holistic approach to the development of children, which encompasses their spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, physical, emotional, and aesthetic growth.

We believe this development is best achieved through the continuing efforts of educators who serve as facilitators of learning as well as supporting and complementing parents in their role as the primary educators of their children.

We believe our students are prepared to take their place in the global community with a sense of respect, reverence, and responsibility.

Goals

RELIGIOUS GOAL

To develop in children a basic understanding of and appreciation for Scripture and Tradition, to encourage a firm and lasting commitment to Christ, and to involve them in the living and sharing of their faith.

ACADEMIC GOAL

To provide a strong basic education in academics, which enables the students to reach their potential, develop their abilities to think and learn and foster enthusiasm for learning.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL GOAL

To help children build a positive self-concept and healthy relationships with others-an awareness of the independence of self, family, community, and world.

PHYSICAL GOAL

To develop healthy bodies, to promote and appreciation for physical well being, to encourage cooperation and teamwork, to acquaint the students with rules of games and sports, and to foster spirit and enthusiasm with the school.

AESTHETIC GOAL

To promote an understanding of and appreciation for beauty, especially as expressed in the fine arts, and to provide opportunities for students to participate in activities in these areas.

SCHOOL WIDE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Students graduating from Our Lady of Mercy School should be:

1. Active faith-filled people who:
 - a. know the basic teaching of the Catholic Church
 - b. live the Gospel Message through service
 - c. participate in the faith life of the Church by celebrating the liturgical seasons and Catholic traditions.

2. Effective communicators who:
 - a. read, write, and speak with understanding
 - b. listen attentively
 - c. respond respectfully

3. Responsible Citizens who:
 - a. share their time, talents and treasures with their community
 - b. exercise personal responsibility and stewardship for the environment

4. Successful learners who:
 - a. demonstrate a strong foundation in basic subjects
 - b. use current technology and research skills
 - c. practice effective problem solving
 - d. understand learning is a life-long process

HISTORY

Our Lady of Mercy School was founded in 1927. It was originally founded by the Ursuline Sisters, whose charism was to provide a Catholic Education to all children in the community of Merced. The Ursuline sisters shared the message of the Gospel daily with their students. Although there are no religious who minister in the school now, the school works to maintain the charism of the founding order, sharing the Gospel through daily commitment to worship, prayer, and service to others.

ACCREDITATION

Our Lady of Mercy School enjoys accreditation granted by the Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). These Associations are non-governmental, nationally recognized organizations whose members include elementary schools through collegiate institutions offering post-graduate instruction. Accreditation of an institution by these associations indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality periodically applied through a peer review process. An accredited school or college/university is one which has available the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives clear evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Our Lady of Mercy School, in the Diocese of Fresno, mindful of their primary mission to be witnesses to the love of Christ for all, admits students of any sex, race, color, and national and/or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at this school. Our Lady of Mercy School in the Diocese of Fresno does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national and/or ethnic origin, or disability in the administration of education policies, scholarships and loan programs, and athletic, and other school-administered programs.

School Structure and Organization

OFFICE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The Office of Catholic Education (OCE) endeavors to support the mission of the Diocese of Fresno in all of its administrative, operational, financial, intellectual, and spiritual pursuits. The OCE is committed to the mission of the Church by supporting Catholic faith formation and academic excellence for all to ensure life-long learning and the development of responsible and compassionate citizens. The OCE is comprised of a Superintendent, an Assistant Superintendent for curriculum and instruction, an Assistant Superintendent for finance, mentoring, and overall school management and an Office Manager.

SUPERINTENDENT

The Superintendent oversees the entire program of the Office of Catholic Education.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Our Lady of Mercy School is a Pastor Administered Parish School. The Pastor is the canonical officer of the parish school. As the Bishop is the chief pastor of the diocese, so is the Pastor the head of the parish; he is also responsible for all educational programs within the parish. Just as the Bishop delegates school-related responsibilities to the Superintendent, so does the Pastor delegate the administration of the school to the Principal with support from the OCE.

PRINCIPAL

The school principal is delegated by the Pastor in a Pastor Administered Parish School or by the Superintendent in a Diocesan Administered Parish School to serve as the educational leader of Our Lady of Mercy School, responsible for managing the policies, regulations, and procedures to ensure that all students are supervised in a safe, traditional, Catholic learning environment that meets the approved curricula and mission of Our Lady of Mercy School.

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Two members of the faculty, in addition to the principal, make up the Administrative Team. The functions of the Administrative Team include assisting the principal in specific delegated functions and receiving suggestions from teachers and presenting them at regular administrative or faculty meetings. Susie Gargano, the kindergarten teacher and Mary Kravec, the preschool director, along with Mrs. Blackburn, make up the administrative team.

FACULTY and STAFF

The faculty and staff are selected by the principal in consultation with the pastor of a Pastor Administered Parish School, or the Superintendent of a Diocesan Administered Parish School. A directory of faculty and staff may be found on the school website.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD

The local Catholic School Advisory Board consists of the Pastor or Superintendent, principal, and eight to twelve members of the school or parish community, including a parent club officer and a rotating faculty

representative. The Advisory Board works interactively with the Principal to fulfill the Board's advisory consultative responsibilities regarding the school's Catholic Identity, parent engagement, strategic planning, facilities, marketing, and development activities; its role is collaborative and advisory only.

Advisory Board Members:

Scott Hunter

Steve Kisling

Tisha McParland

Melissa Pareira

Juanita Pedrozo

Mike Pellicano

Matthew Van Hagen

Marjorie Webster

PARENT CLUB BOARD

Our Lady of Mercy Parent Club Board is a major support organization of Our Lady of Mercy School. The purposes of the Club are to provide spiritual and educational enrichment for parents, to give parents the opportunity to experience Christian community in working with others, and to provide financial support for the school. Meetings are held on the 1st Thursday of the month @6:00pm in the Library

Officers for the 20120-2021 School Year

Pending

Admission, Registration, and Financial Policies

PARTNERSHIP of SCHOOL and FAMILY

Our Lady of Mercy School works with the parents in the faith formation of their children and continues the value development begun in the home. The school, however, has a mission to be a Catholic school and to form students in the Catholic faith. All students must participate fully in Religion class and other faith-formation activities subject to the restrictions by the Church upon full participation in the Eucharist by non-Catholics.

Acceptance to Our Lady of Mercy School is a privilege, not a right. Parents have a right to apply to Our Lady of Mercy School for admission of their child (ren), but the privilege of attending the school is contingent upon the parents' acceptance of the school's program of formation and instruction and their willingness to accept responsibility for their portion of the cost of education.

Because the Church acknowledges parents as the primary educators of their children, the school believes that it has a responsibility to continue the child's faith formation. If the parents' public beliefs, values, and practices cause disruption of the school's educational climate, it becomes impossible for the school to support the parents in the faith formation of their children. In cases where parents engage in such conduct, continued enrollment of their children may be denied.

Acceptance into Our Lady of Mercy School is dependent upon the ability of the school to meet the educational needs of the child. The school may not have all the resources necessary to meet the educational, physical, psychological, and/or emotional needs of an individual child. While the school will make an effort to accommodate reasonable needs, if the needs of the child exceed the resources of the school, the best interests of the child may be best served by placing the child in a different educational environment with appropriate resources for the child.

ADMISSION PRIORITIES

The order of priority for acceptance to Our Lady of Mercy School follows:

1. Continuing students in good standing at Our Lady of Mercy School who meet registration deadlines (students who do not meet registration deadlines may lose their priority standing).
2. Siblings of Catholic families attending Our Lady of Mercy School
3. Siblings of non-Catholic families attending Our Lady of Mercy School
4. New Catholic Families
5. New non-Catholic families

PROBATIONARY ADMISSION

All students are admitted to Our Lady of Mercy School on a probationary basis. Probation covers conduct as well as grades and general participation. The school administration may terminate enrollment at any time.

AGE for ADMISSION

- A child may be admitted to Pre- Kindergarten who is 4 years of age on or before September 1st of the current year; these children do not yet meet the age requirement or the social and/or academic requirements for the school's Kindergarten program.
- A child may be admitted to Kindergarten who is 5 years of age on or before September 1st of the current year; applicants must be developmentally ready, which shall be determined through appropriate screening.
- A child may be admitted into the first grade who is 6 years of age on or before September 1st of the current school year.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

At the time of initial registration, the school will require parent(s) to provide the school with records that establish and verify the student's age, gender at birth, and vaccination history, and whether the student is Catholic and has received his or her Sacraments. As part of the registration, therefore, each school shall require the parent(s) to provide copies of the student's birth certificate, health records including an up-to-date immunization record, and Baptismal certificate (and Reconciliation, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation certificates, if applicable).

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

Every new student must have a physical examination report on file in the school office by the first day of attendance. The report must be dated within 18 months of entrance. Students may not attend class until this information is on file.

The school will require all children to submit proof of having received a health assessment during the 18 months prior to entrance into first grade. The principal may grant permission to extend this to 90 days after entrance.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Immunizations can be a complicated topic which may be explained more fully by the child's physician. Every child must show up-to-date proof of required immunizations by the submission of a current California School Immunization Record (this can be provided by the physician).

The California Health and Safety Code sections 120325-120380 set forth current California law on this topic; a summary follows:

- Required immunizations for grades TK – 12 currently include the following: polio (OPV or IPV); diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (DTP, DTaP, or DT); measles, mumps, rubella (MMR or MMR-V); hepatitis B (HepB or HBV); and varicella (chickenpox, VAR, MMR-V, or VZV).
- Students entering 7th grade are required to have Tdap (or DTP/DTaP given on or after the 7th birthday).
- The California Dept. of Public Health may require vaccination for "any other disease deemed appropriate."

- Public or private elementary schools are prohibited from admitting any child without documentation that the child has been immunized for the specified diseases, unless there is a documented medical exemption, based on attestation from the child's licensed physician that immunization is not safe, due to medical circumstance, such as family medical history.
- Regarding former exemptions for personal reasons, any student who, prior to January 1, 2016, had submitted a letter/affidavit of exemption on grounds of personal belief will be allowed to continue enrollment or be enrolled, without proof of immunization, but only until the child reaches the next "grade span." The statute specifies three grade spans: (1) birth to preschool; (2) kindergarten (including transitional kindergarten) through 6th grade; and (3) 7th through 12th grade.
- The school will be permitted to temporarily exclude a student who has not been immunized, if there is good cause to believe the child has been exposed to one of the itemized diseases, until the county or city health department is satisfied that the child is no longer at risk of developing or transmitting the disease.

Questions regarding immunizations should be directed to the principal. The following website provides thorough information: www.shotsforschool.org

APPLICATION PROCESS

New student applications are accepted online on the school website beginning in April and require a \$200.00 non-refundable application fee. Applications are considered incomplete until the application fee and all required documentation (see DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS above) have been received. Applications remain on the waiting list throughout the school year for which the application is completed. Parents will be notified whether the child is accepted or not accepted.

APPLICATION INTERVIEWS, TESTING, or SCREENING

All new applicants are screened using STAR data or grade level testing.

REGISTRATION FEE

This fee helps offset various costs including standardized testing, student insurance, parent club membership, field trip fees, classroom party expenses, a student planner, a yearbook, and textbook use.

- A non-refundable registration fee of \$200.00 for each student is due and payable upon registration; students will not be considered registered until the registration fee is paid in full.
- The registration fee for continuing students is due no later than April 1; priority status for any student is forfeited if the registration fee is not received by the due date, and a late fee of \$50.00 per child will be assessed.
- ALL financial obligations for the previous school year, including fees due for the Extended Day and Preschool Programs and extra-curricular and co-curricular programs, must be paid in full, and all required work service hours must be completed and recorded before registration is accepted.

- Students transferring from another private school must have paid all fees at the previous school prior to registration at Our Lady of Mercy School.
- A penalty fee of \$25.00 per hour per family is added to the SMART tuition account for un-served parent hours for the year ending at the time registration is due.

TUITION

Tuition rate for Parishioners:

1 child in school	\$6,618.00 per year
2 children in school	\$12,948.00per year
3 children in school	\$17,166.00 per year

Parishioners are those who are registered Catholic members of PARISH, attend Mass regularly, are active in the parish community life, and contribute annually . This status will be assessed regularly by the school and the parish staff. Failure to meet these criteria will result in the assignment of non-parishioner status and the assessment of the non-parishioner tuition rate.

Tuition rate for non-parishioners:

1 child in school	\$8,563.00 per year
2 children in school	\$17,126.00 per year

OTHER FEES

Elective fee grades 5th-8th \$25.00
 Graduation Fee for 8th grade \$50.00

TUITION COLLECTION

There is a registration fee for all grades of \$200.00 per student per year. This pays for insurance, student textbooks and materials that are used throughout the year. There is also a \$50.00 per family fee for enrollment to the SMART Tuition program.

We use the SMART Tuition program for the 2020/2021 school year. Tuition is due in twelve equal payments as indicated below. The first installment is due July 2020, with each payment thereafter due on selected payment dates through June 2021. A late fee of \$65.00 will be assessed any time the tuition payment fails to reach the SMART Tuition office by the selected monthly payment date. **If late enrollment occurs, payments will be divided equally for the remaining months.**

To qualify for the OLM/St. Patrick's Parishioner Benefit Rate, it is understood that a child must be a baptized member of the Catholic Church. It is also understood that Our Lady of Mercy School is part of the education ministry of Our Lady of Mercy/St. Patrick's Parish and that in being accepted to receive this rate children of parishioners will receive support from the parish.

OLM School offers two plans of tuition payment:

1. Full Tuition: approximates the cost of education of students.
2. Parishioner benefit rate: is subsidized yearly by Our Lady of Mercy/St. Patrick's Parish.

To be eligible for the parishioner benefit rate, families are expected to contribute to the parish they attend. (This will be substantiated through the use of church envelopes or the use of checks and approved by the Pastor.) Failure to support parish ministries will result in being assessed the full tuition rate.

If an account is in arrears, a student may be excluded from class until the account is brought current. For special circumstances, arrangements must be made with the pastor and principal. ***All monies owed to the school must be paid before a student can enroll for the following year.***

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Some financial assistance is available for Catholic families who cannot afford to pay the total tuition costs. Forms are available at the school office during registration in the month of March for those who wish to apply for financial assistance. Catholic families that qualify for the parishioner benefit rate and have been enrolled in the school for at least 1 year are eligible.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The KIM JUAREZ award is presented to a seventh grade student who exemplifies compassion, helpfulness and citizenship and excels in sports.

The MARK SALVADORI award is presented to a seventh grade student who excels in English, especially in creative writing.

The AVIK CHATTERJEE award is offered to a seventh grade student for effort, class participation and interest in religious studies.

The YOUNG LADIES INSTITUTE SCHOLARSHIP is awarded to a seventh grade student who demonstrates exceptional improvement in all academic areas.

The FATHER GENE CSENSCITS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP is awarded to one fifth or sixth grade student. High scholastic and moral requirements are necessary to receive this award. Application may be made to the school office after the third quarter report card.

The BARBARA PEDROZO MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP is awarded to a deserving student in grades one through seven who demonstrates an exceptional Christian attitude.

The JONATHAN YORMARK MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP is awarded to a deserving student in grades one through seven who displays an exceptionally positive attitude and sense of enthusiasm.

The RYAN CRANE SCHOLARSHIP is awarded to a student who is actively involved in the faith life of the school and the parish.

The BRENDA FEEHAN SCHOLARSHIP is awarded to a deserving Catholic or non-Catholic student in any grade who has demonstrated exceptional leadership skills and the ability to work well with others, treating them with dignity and respect.

FORD SCHOLARSHIP is awarded to a student who best displays the qualities of Family, Outdoors, Religion, and Duty.

DEACON JOE SMITH SCHOLARSHIP is awarded to a student who displays a Christian attitude.

ZACHARIAS FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP is awarded to a student who has exceptional effort and a Christian attitude.

JANET GONZALEZ SCHOLARSHIP is awarded to a family that is involved in school activities.

MILLS FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP is awarded to a student who demonstrates a Christian attitude and makes exceptional effort in all school subjects.

FLUESTCH FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP is awarded to a 6th or 7th grade student with high scholastic and moral qualities. An essay must be written in order to be eligible for this scholarship.

COST of EDUCATION

Tuition and fees do not cover the actual cost of educating a child at Our Lady of Mercy School. Families whose financial situation enables them to pay the actual cost of education are encouraged to do so. Any amount paid above the stated tuition fee is a donation to Our Lady of Mercy School.

OTHER ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Families agree to fulfill the following additional commitment(s):

- 25 Parent Service Points minimum total per family
- Raise \$270 *minimum* in profit through Scrip.
- A penalty fee of \$25.00 per family is added to the registration fee for unserved parent hours for the year ending at the time registration is due.

WITHDRAWAL

Two weeks' notice by parents/guardians is required before the withdrawal of a student. An exit interview must also take place with the principal. Tuition and monthly extension contracts are prorated by day. All other fees/obligations will not be prorated. The registration fee is non-refundable. The school reserves the right to withhold student records until all financial obligations have been settled.

Extended Care Program

The Extended Care Program at Our Lady of Mercy School provides professional care, supervision, homework support, and recreation and enrichment activities for the children of working families who desire both Catholic school education and supplementary day care in a Christian environment as an Extended Care Program of the school day. All policies of school, including the contents of this handbook, apply during the Extended Care Program which is only available to students enrolled at Our Lady of Mercy School for an additional fee.

HOURS and DAYS

The Extended Care Program after school from 2:30pm to 5:30pm. The Extended Care Program operates only on regular school days and teacher in-service days and is not available on holidays, vacations, or in the summer months.

MINIMUM DAYS

The Extended Care Program is available on minimum days from 12:30pm to 5:30pm for children enrolled in the program and for drop-in students. Minimum days are included in monthly rates. All children must bring lunches on minimum days as no lunch program is available.

MONTHLY PAYMENT PLAN

The monthly payment plan is designed for families who know they will be using the Extended Care Program on a regular basis. Rates are significantly lower than the drop-in rate and require a nine-month contractual commitment. Rates are calculated using 180 academic days, and payments are prorated over nine months, September through May. Credit is not offered for unused days, absences, or on days that the Extended Care Program is closed. Monthly contracts are handled through the school office.

- Grades K - 8 ~ after school only \$150.00 per month for 1 child

DROP-IN RATE

Students who are not on a monthly Extended Care Program contract will be charged the drop-in rate, billed in ¼ hour increments, on a monthly basis. Drop-in Extended Care Program fees are due at the school office on the 1st of each month. Non-payment of Extended Care Program fees will result in removal from the Extended Care Program.

- \$5.00 per student per hour

EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM POLICIES

All policies of school, including the contents of this handbook, apply during the Extended Care Program.

- Any students on campus before 7:30am or after 2:45pm must use the Extended Care Program.
- Students are NOT allowed to wait unsupervised off campus before 7:30am or leave school unsupervised at any time to avoid signing in to the Extended Care Program.
- If a student remains at school after 2:45pm, he or she must be enrolled in the Extended Care Program. The teacher supervising dismissal will escort students not picked up by 2:45pm to the

Extended Care Program. Parents will be charged the per student hourly rate if their child is not contracted.

- If a student has a reason to remain at school, such as tutoring, math lab, sports practice, or another *supervised* activity, his or her siblings may not remain at school after 2:45pm unless they are enrolled in the Extended Care Program.
- When students will be attending the Extended Care Program after these supervised activities, parents MUST inform the Extended Care Program Director via the office before attending the activities. The program is limited to those students who attend Our Lady of Mercy School.
- All children must be signed in and out by a parent or authorized adult each time they use the Extended Care Program (except those who are contracted after school or who are not picked up after school). Children will be released to authorized adults only (those listed on the emergency form).
- Every student attending the Extended Care Program must have the signature of a parent, guardian, or authorized person(s) on file to sign the student out. Any changes must be in writing, signed, and dated. NO EXCEPTIONS! Emergency forms MUST be kept current.
- The Extended Care Program staff is instructed to ask for picture identification from any parent or adult they do not recognize. For the protection of all the children, these rules are strictly enforced.
- Parents must not take children from the playground or other areas without notifying the Extended Care Program staff and signing out the children.
- Students who attend the Extended Care Program after school must check in immediately after school (or 12:30pm on minimum days). Students arriving late are required to have a written excuse from their classroom teachers.
- The Extended Care Program must be notified by 3:00pm on the day that a student will be attending the Extended Care Program. In accordance with Diocesan Policy, students must either be signed into Extended Care Program or checked into an approved school activity. Students may not remain unsupervised on campus.
- If an emergency arises, and someone not listed on the emergency form needs to pick up a child, the Extended Care Program staff require written or verbal permission from the parents. Upon arrival, the individual will be asked to show picture identification.
- Time is based on the Extended Care Program Program's clock. After 5:30pm, parents will be charged a late fee of \$2.00 per minute. Parents are asked to pay this fee before their child re-enters the program the next day. After three instances of late pickup after 5:30 pm, parents must meet with the Director and develop a plan for pickup.
- School personnel will not release a child to any adult who appears incapable of providing safe conduct or when the child demonstrates anxiety or fear in being released to the adult. In such an instance, school personnel will call others on the approved list to come to pick up the child; law enforcement may be called.

EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM CONTACT

- During office hours 7:00am – 5:30pm 209-722-7496

Communication

SCHOOL CONTACT

School Office: (209) 722-7496
Office Fax Number: (209) 722-7532
Extended Care: (209) 722-7496
Website Address: www.Our Lady of Mercy School.org

PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION

It is essential that parent/guardian contact information be kept current at all times on the emergency card in the school office and in Option C.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Members of the staff will not divulge information concerning any student to anyone who does not have a clear “need to know.” In disciplinary or academic situations, the only persons who meet this definition are appropriate members of the faculty/staff and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child(ren) involved.

OFFICE TELEPHONE USE

- Calls for students during school hours are to be for emergency only and are to be left with the school secretary.
- Students may use the telephone for emergency calls only. The following are not considered emergencies: forgotten gym clothes, homework, lunches, or social arrangements after school.

COMMUNICATION from the SCHOOL

- The Option C portal is the school’s primary mode of communication. This login-protected site is for parents to have access to announcements, week-at-a-glance calendars for the school and each class, sign-ups, forms, RSVP’s, lunch menus, grades, and homework and progress reports. It will be updated by 8:00 P.M. every Sunday for grades 3-8. Please check the teacher’s blog on a daily basis to receive the most up-to-date information and announcements. Grades and progress reports for grades 3-8 are updated on a regular basis. Progress Report dates are posted on the School Calendar.
- Family Envelope
- CONTACTING TEACHERS

Parents must not interrupt a teacher during class time, which includes arrival and dismissal time. Instead, parents may make an appointment in person or through the office, or email the teacher directly. Messages will be answered within 48 hours. In the case of an urgent message, the office should be contacted. Parents and students should never call a teacher at home or on his or her cell phone.

E-MAIL USE

Email is a great means of communication which been embraced by schools as an effective way to communicate back and forth between parents and teachers. However, the impersonal face of email unfortunately makes it easy to say things in such a manner that one would not use during a face-to-face meeting or in a personal phone call. The following guidelines govern appropriate e-mail use:

- E-mail is an appropriate vehicle for quick, uncomplicated messages to teachers or administrators ***when time and/or confidentiality are not critical factors.***
- E-mail is ***not*** an appropriate communication tool when a parent requires an immediate response or when the requested response would be highly sensitive and/or complex in nature.
- E-mail is an appropriate place to ask questions that require simple, direct answers.
- E-mail is ***not*** an appropriate communication for extensive chronologies, opinion statements, critiques, or judgments.
- ***E-mail should not be used to avoid a difficult situation; the people involved should be spoken to directly.***
- E-mail messages lack the nuances of voice inflection or facial expressions that are part of personal conversations and are therefore open to misinterpretation.
- E-mail should ***not*** be used when the sender is upset.

DELIVERIES and FORGOTTEN ITEMS

- Any deliveries to students such as lunches, books, athletic equipment, or homework must be made in the office and not the classroom. Items should be clearly labeled with student first and last name and grade level.
- Birthday presents, balloons, and gifts, etc., are not to be sent to the school office for any student; such items will ***not*** be delivered to the classroom but may be picked up by a parent.

BACK to SCHOOL NIGHT

Our Lady of Mercy School will have an Open House/Back to school night during the fourth week of school.

PROCESS for CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Disputes in schools are usually due to misunderstandings, differences in judgment, opposing interpretations of school policy, or perceived inequalities in the relationship between and among students, parents, teachers, and the principal. All parties involved in a dispute are expected to manifest good faith in their efforts to resolve disputes by maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect, confidentiality, and Christian charity.

Every effort should be made between differing parties, through open and honest discussion at the onset, to resolve the dispute. In each case the parties need to meet to provide the opportunity to state the issue(s) clearly and begin work on solutions. The parties are empowered by their participation in the process to affect the outcome. In every case, the parties should attempt to resolve their differences at

the level at which the dispute has taken place. Appeals to higher authorities may not be considered until this attempt at resolution has been completed.

- If a conflict arises between a teacher and a student, a conference will be arranged with the teacher, student, and parent(s). The principal of the school must be informed prior to this contact. Every effort must be made to resolve the issue at this level.
- The next level of appeal is to involve a vice-principal or dean of students, if applicable. A conference will be held with the parties listed previously.
- The final appeal at the local level is to the principal. In parish schools the principal will consult with the pastor who may be invited to a conference with all parties if he or the family so desire. Every effort should be made at this level to be sure that all parties are able to present their cases.
- After consultation with the pastor, it is the responsibility of the principal to render the final decision.
- In the event that irreconcilable differences remain, request to meet may be made to the OCE only when all steps above have been followed. The OCE will address the request according to its procedures in effect at that time, which will be provided to all those involved in the appeal.
- Local Advisory Boards and parent organizations are **NOT** part of this appeal process.
- Should it become obvious that a parent is unable or unwilling to support the philosophy and policies of the school and/or the implementation of its philosophy and policies, the principal will recommend/require that the parent transfer his child/children to another school.
- In any instance of a dispute between parents (such as over custody of children enrolled at the school), the school will make every effort to remain neutral, and the parents involved in the dispute must make every effort to resolve the dispute between themselves, and to keep it away from the school environment. Individual parents are prohibited from directing any requests to the school or staff members for information or assistance that is designed or calculated to give that parent an advantage in his or her dispute with the other parent.

Visiting the School and Volunteering

VISITING the SCHOOL

- All visitors and volunteers must sign in at the school office upon arrival and sign out when leaving.
- Unaccompanied siblings who are not registered students of Our Lady of Mercy School are not permitted on campus during school hours without prior scheduling.
- Pets are not allowed on campus unless preauthorized.

CLASSROOM VISITS

- Parents/guardians are welcome to visit the classrooms of their children if prior approval has been obtained from the teacher and principal.
- Other children visiting classrooms must be cleared in advance with the principal and teacher.

- The principal reserves the right to refuse a request, in his or her discretion.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS and GUIDELINES

All parents, guardians, grandparents, relatives, or friends who wish to volunteer at school events, drive on field trips, help in the classroom, or volunteer at parish events where the school children are present, **MUST** be fingerprinted (fee due at the time of fingerprinting) **AND** have clearance through the Safe Environment Program **AND** be free from infectious tuberculosis. All volunteer coaches or aides over the age of 18 must be fingerprinted. The time frame for fingerprint results can be anywhere from 48 hours to a week. All results are sent to the Diocese. It is **REQUIRED** that this clearance be on file **BEFORE** anyone can volunteer in any capacity. ***Volunteering is a privilege granted at the discretion of the principal.***

- Fingerprinting: The school office will provide forms and information regarding fingerprinting.
- Save Environment training: A link is available through the school website to take this online training for identifying and preventing child abuse and neglect. Volunteers will submit a copy of the certificate of completion to the school office. Volunteers should contact the school office for assistance or more information. This training must be renewed every 3 years.
- Completed TB Questionnaire
- Signed Volunteer Agreement Form
- Driving and Insurance Requirements:
 1. All volunteers who drive children for school-sponsored activities must be 25 years of age or older and be covered with auto liability insurance. Current volunteer driver information forms must be completed and left in the school office.
 2. The privately owned vehicle policy must provide liability coverage on the automobile driven in the amounts no less than \$100,000.00 individual/ \$300,000.00 cumulative each loss or occurrence, bodily injury; \$50,000.00 property damage; \$5,000.00 per person medical; and \$100,000.00 uninsured motorist insurance.
 3. No vehicle larger than an 8-passenger vehicle may be used.
 4. The number of persons in a car should not exceed the number for which the car was constructed.
 5. All children must wear a seat belt or be secured in an appropriate child passenger restraint system meeting federal motor vehicle safety standards as appropriate for their age and weight. Any child under 8 years of age must be secured in a car seat or booster seat *in the back seat* of the vehicle (unless all back seats are already occupied by younger children). A child under the age of 8 who is 4'9" in height or taller may be properly restrained by a safety belt instead of child passenger restraint system.
 6. The school must have a copy of the driver's license and current proof of automobile insurance for any volunteer who will be driving students in connection with the school activity.
 7. Volunteer drivers must strictly adhere to the itinerary of the planned trip; no deviation is allowed.

8. Drivers may not bring siblings or younger children.

VOLUNTEER CODE OF ETHICS

Adults working with children/youth as part of the ministry of the Diocese of Fresno must strictly follow the following rules and guidelines as a condition of providing services to the children and youth of the diocese. This Code of Ethics also applies to parents/guardians who are on campus or attending a school event where children are present.

Adults working with children/youth **will**:

- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity and consideration.
- Collaborate with other adults in service to children and/or youth;
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth;
- Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children and/or youth with whom the adult comes in contact ;
- Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth with whom the adult comes in contact;
- Report suspected abuse (including but not limited to physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect) to the pastor, administrator, or appropriate supervisor. If the adult is a mandated reporter under California law, he/she will also comply with his or her reporting obligation; and
- Cooperate fully with authorities in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

Adults working with children/youth **will not**:

- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of, or provide these products to, children and/or youth;
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or marijuana at any time while volunteering, and will not make alcohol or marijuana available to anyone under the age of 21;
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time, and will not make illegal drugs available to children and/or youth;
- Pose any serious health risk to children and/or youth (e.g., contagious illnesses);
- Strike, spank, shake, grab, or slap children and/or youth (unless the physical action is necessary to prevent harm or injury);
- Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children and/or youth;
- Touch a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner;
- Use any discipline that unreasonably frightens or humiliates children and/or youth; or
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.
- Share personal contact information with youth or e-mail, text, or message youth unless principal and parents are included.

- Take photographs or videos of students or post these to any social media site unless expressly requested to do so by the Principal; these must be checked for authorization by parent/guardian to release.

FIELD TRIPS

- Students must have a signed permission slip for each trip which is distributed by the students' teacher. No other signed form can be substituted, and no phone call authorization can be taken.
- Those transporting children must have completed the driver's insurance coverage form and follow the volunteer guidelines as listed in this handbook. The minimum age for a driver is twenty-five (25). Those driving or chaperoning may not bring younger children on the trip. Parents must drive site-to-site according to the field trip form and follow routes given by teacher; no detours or unscheduled stops may be taken.
- As students are representing Our Lady of Mercy School, they are required to wear the school uniform on all trips away from school unless the principal decides otherwise.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES and REQUIREMENTS

Participation in the Family Service Hours Program is an obligation of 25 service hours per year, per family. If you receive financial aid, you are responsible for 50 hours per year. Each family is responsible to complete a Family Participation Form for all hours worked. These forms are used to track volunteer hours and are kept on file in the school office. There are a variety of activities that can be done to complete your mandatory service requirements. Every volunteer must complete the following:

1. All volunteers must be Safe and Sacred Certified. You can complete this course on-line by logging into the OLM Lancers website at olmlancers.com. You will click on the parent portal, scroll down to safe and sacred and begin the on-line course. Once you have completed the course, you will need to print your certificate and bring \$10 to the school office. Once this is complete you will be on file and certified to volunteer at the school.
2. If you plan on chaperoning, driving students or working in the classroom, you MUST be fingerprinted through the Diocese of Fresno. Forms are available in the school office. You can then take the form to Guardco Security, so that they can do the live-scan fingerprinting and forward to the DOJ for clearance. Once the Diocese has received clearance from the DOJ, you will receive notification that you are now able to chaperone, drive or work in the classrooms.
3. Families may enlist the help of grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc., but remember the above rules also apply to these volunteers.

We have listed activities below and the maximum hours that will be given for each:

Classroom Volunteer (Teacher approval) 1-2 hours per day

School Picture Day 2-3 hours per day

Auction Committee—1 hour for meetings 1-6 hours during Auction set-up

Driver/Chaperone for out of town class field trips—2 hours

Drivers for Elective Classes, Cherish, Mass, Prayer Services—3 hours per function

Halloween Booths—30min-1 hour shifts

Teaching an Elective Class—7 hours (5 class periods, Mondays in Fall and Spring TBA)

Book Fairs (Librarian approval) 1-4 hours per day

Junior High Hot Lunches 1-4 hours on day of service

School Meetings (Halloween, Auction, Parent Club) 1 hour PER FAMILY

Drivers for Sports—to and from games...students must be brought back to school—2 hours

Five(5) of the mandatory service hours must be completed at ONE of the following fundraisers each year.
Auction, Oktoberfest, Crab Feed, or Pancake Breakfast.

A \$25 per hour assessment fee will be charged for every hour NOT completed.

Mandatory SCRIP Obligation

Participation in the SCRIP Program is also part of the mandatory fundraising. Each family is responsible to purchase SCRIP making a \$250 profit for the school(July-June). If the obligation is not met, families will be billed for the remaining balance due.

Curriculum

Our Lady of Mercy School embraces the vision of a Catholic educational philosophy. Christian values and traditions of the Catholic faith are integrated into the curriculum and all teaching/learning situations, within and beyond the classroom.

Guidelines for the curriculum at Our Lady of Mercy School are developed and implemented in cooperation with the Office of Catholic Education of the Diocese of Fresno. The curriculum is carefully coordinated from Kindergarten through eighth grade. Teachers and school administration review and evaluate textbooks cyclically and sequentially according to specified curriculum areas to insure that Diocesan standards are met. All subjects will remain aligned to the California State Standards and Diocesan Religion standards. Further specifics regarding the curriculum can be provided by the principal.

ESSENTIAL, CORE CURRICULUM

Our Lady of Mercy School provides complete academic instruction in essential core curricular subjects: English/language arts, reading/literature, religion, mathematics, science, history/social studies, physical education, and religion.

ENRICHMENT CURRICULUM

Students participate in programs of study in music, art, foreign language, and computer technology as an enrichment of the academic curriculum.

MODIFIED CURRICULUM and/or ACCOMMODATIONS for STUDENTS with DISABILITIES

- Students with identified learning disabilities may receive *reasonable* accommodations to assist with their academic success. Such accommodations may include added time to complete class work or homework, preferred classroom seating, minimizing distractions, etc. These accommodations will be discussed on an individual basis with the family, teacher(s), and principal.
- Students with identified learning disabilities who require that the curriculum be reasonably modified to meet their learning needs will have such modifications noted on grade reporting or transcripts with an “M”; however, such notification will not indicate the reason for the modification. A modified curriculum will be the result of collaboration with the family, teacher(s), and principal.

Families with students coming from a public school with an already-established IEP (Individualized Educational Program or Plan) or a 504 Plan are advised that such plans relate to public school; if a family wants the full implementation of an IEP (or full access as outlined in a 504 Plan) from the public system, they must enroll the student in public school. Catholic schools endeavor to work with the public school and the family to address whatever needs they can in terms of an IEP or 504 but are only required to implement *reasonable* accommodations.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

A Student Support Team is used to identify student needs and develop a plan to address those needs in order to assist individual students. A Student Support Team consists of the classroom teacher, principal, resource teacher, parents, and the student, as appropriate. Intervention responsibilities are clarified for the school, parents, and the student.

RELIGION CLASSES, SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION, and WORSHIP

- Our Lady of Mercy School provides daily religious instruction (Catechesis) that educates children every year, at every grade level, in the four pillars of the Catechism of the Catholic Church: The Profession of Faith, The Celebration of the Christian Mystery, Life in Christ, and Christian Prayer. This age-appropriate approach invites students to discover the meaning and presence of God's activity in their lives and to encounter and know the faith of our Catholic Christian community.
- Students in 2nd Grade prepare for, and receive, the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist during the school year.
- All students who receive sacraments must be baptized and active, participating members of the Catholic faith.
- Each school day begins with prayer. Opportunities for community and personal prayer are offered throughout the school day (e.g., Assembly, Lunch Blessings, Dismissal Prayers). Prayer services celebrating the church calendar are offered throughout the school year.
- Mass is celebrated as a school community monthly.
- Opportunities for the sacrament of Reconciliation are offered to students at the beginning of each school year, during Advent, during Lent, and at the end of the school year.

FIELD TRIPS

Faculty members may arrange, in collaboration with and approval of school administration, field trips of an interesting and educational nature for their students. See also VISITING the SCHOOL and VOLUNTEERING.

LIBRARY

- Each class has the opportunity to go to the library on a regular basis(usually once a week) and check out books.
- The teacher will work cooperatively with the librarian on supplementing their classrooms with materials from the library.
- Students will be assessed a fee for lost or destroyed items from the library.

TEXTBOOKS

- All students are responsible for their assigned textbooks. If a textbook is lost or destroyed the student will be assessed the cost of the textbook for replacement.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE PROGRAM

Although there are no set requirements for Christian Service at Our Lady of Mercy School, we encourage all students and families to participate in Christian Service. Some of the many opportunities that Our Lady of Mercy School suggests are:

- Making St. Vincent Lunches
- Bringing food and clothing for Catholic Charities
- Feeding the “D” Street homeless
- Collecting money for various charities
- Participating in Relay for Life
- Visiting the Elderly

Student Evaluation

PARENTS as PRIMARY EDUCATORS

As the primary educators of their children, parents are expected to make frequent use of Option C to monitor student progress and to take the initiative to contact teachers should they develop a concern.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

The Catholic elementary schools in the Diocese of Fresno use a comprehensive, formative assessment program called STAR Renaissance. These assessments of Common Core standards are administered to grades K - 8 four or more times per year. They are criterion-referenced and indicate a student's mastery level of specific grade-level standards.

HOMEWORK

Homework is assigned for the purpose of applying and reinforcing concepts, skills, and values being learned in the classroom. Homework supports and enhances previously introduced material and is a valuable way of fostering good, independent study habits. Homework is an effective method for enrichment, as well as, extending the curriculum beyond school hours.

HOMEWORK TIME ALLOTMENT GUIDELINES

Actual homework time will vary by student; the amount of time provided to work on assignments during the school day, the instructional calendar, and individual use of time are factors impacting the amount of homework a student may have on a given day.

Homework will be assigned on a regular basis Monday through Thursday. Written homework is ordinarily not assigned over the weekends and/or holidays with the exception of assignments not completed and/or special projects. Homework time allotment guidelines per day for Catholic schools within the Diocese of Fresno are as follows:

Grades 1 st and 2 nd	10-20	minutes
Grades 3 rd and 4 th	30-40	minutes
Grades 5 th and 6 th	50-60	minutes
Grades 7 th and 8 th	60-80	minutes

MISSED HOMEWORK DUE to ABSENCE

- Missed assignments are the student's responsibility.
- Students who are absent due to illness have one day for each class period absence to make-up the missed assignments, quizzes, or tests. For example, a student who was absent three days would be given three school days to complete the missed work.
- When a student is absent for three or more days due to illness, a parent may call the school office before 9:30 a.m. to arrange for the pick-up of homework assignments.

- Any absence that is not due to personal illness or injury, medical/dental appointment, funeral, or for religious observances/celebrations is considered unexcused. When parent(s) wish to take their child out of school for several days for personal reasons, they should discuss the student's progress with the teacher and principal who will advise them of the effect such an absence would have on the pupil's school work.
- The school is under no obligation to provide tutoring, makeup work, or special testing schedules for unexcused absences. The principal, in consultation with the teacher, has final and absolute discretion to determine the conditions and terms governing such absences.
- If a student must leave school prior to the last day of school, an incomplete grade may be given in any affected subject areas. All work necessary to clear the incomplete from the transcript must be completed during the summer in order for grades to be entered for the fourth quarter for the year. The principal has final and absolute discretion to determine the conditions and terms governing such absences.
- The school calendar provides for extended weekends and vacations throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process.

GRADING

The following academic grading scale has been adopted by Our Lady of Mercy School for essential curricular subjects in accordance with the Report Card Standards determined by the Office of Catholic Education of the Diocese of Fresno:

GRADES K, 1, 2, and 3

Standards met independently

Standards met with assistance

Standards not met

Not Assessed

GRADES 3-8

97-100%	A
94-96%	A-
90-93%	B+
86-89%	B
82-85%	B-
78-81%	C+
74-77%	C
70-73%	C-

67-69%	D+
63-66%	D
60-62%	D-

An incomplete in any subject becomes an “F” if the student does not finish make up work with-in the time specified by the teacher.

GRADE POINT AVERAGES (GPA)

Grade Point Averages are calculated as follows:

A, A-	=	4.0
B+, B, B-	=	3.0
C+, C, C-	=	2.0
D+, D, D-	=	1.0
F	=	0.0

CONDUCT/EFFORT CODE

Students are expected to be prepared for daily studies, to be diligent in their academic work, to be prompt in completing assignments, and to contribute to a positive learning environment within class. Each Quarter, students’ conduct and effort in Grades K through 8 will also be evaluated.

PROGRESS REPORTS

At a minimum, progress reports will be sent home at the mid-term of each quarter for students in Grades K through 8.

It is the responsibility of the student and parent to inquire at progress report time as to the steps which should be taken to correct any deficiency. Families are reminded that the Progress Report is not a report card but rather an indication of progress to date in a specific area. Dates for progress reports to be sent home are indicated on the school calendar.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are given in Grades 1-8 at the close of each quarter of instruction. Kindergarten report cards are distributed twice a year. Report cards are to be signed by the parents and returned to the teachers within three school days. Students who have been absent 10 or more days during a quarter may receive an incomplete in the subject areas affected.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences will be held for preschool – eighth grade at the end of the first and third quarters. There may be other times throughout the year that the parents or teacher deem a conference necessary. The student may be requested to be present at this conference. Parents are encouraged to take the initiative to keep themselves informed of their child’s progress. Parents will be notified of their assigned conference time and are requested to notify the office as soon as possible if a change is needed.

ACADEMIC/BEHAVIORAL PROBATION

- If a student receives a grade below (C-) in academics, or if a student does not maintain a grade point average of (C) or higher on quarter report cards, she/he will be placed on academic probation.
- If a student receives unsatisfactory grades in either conduct or effort on quarter report cards, or consistently disrupts the learning environment of the classroom, she/he will be placed on behavioral probation.
- Students will remain on academic or behavioral probation until the next progress report or report card is issued. At that time, students who improve their academics or behavior to the appropriate standing will be removed from probation. If not, they will remain on probation and may be asked to acquire special remedial assistance. If a student does not remediate her/his academics or behavior after two grading periods, the school administration will reconsider her/his continued enrollment or re-enrollment.
- Students on academic or behavioral probation are ineligible for extra-curricular activities. Final end-of-year grading from the previous school year determines a student's initial eligibility status.

PROMOTION

- Elementary school students satisfactorily completing a grade's work and who are correspondingly mature shall be promoted to the next grade.

RETENTION

If in the teacher's judgment retention is probable, arrangements for a conference with the teacher, parents, and the principal will be made as soon as possible.

ACCELERATION

Acceleration of the student may be cautiously granted on the recommendation of the teacher, at the discretion of the principal, and with the approval of the parent(s). The child's social and emotional maturity must be seriously evaluated whenever acceleration is considered.

HONOR ROLL (GRADES 4-8)

Each academic quarter, students who earn either all "A's" or "A's and B's" in all academic subjects will be placed on the Honor Roll.

- High Honors: Students in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade who achieve all "A's".
- Honors: Students in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grade who achieve "A's" and "B's".
- Any student with an unsatisfactory grade (D+ or lower) in conduct or effort will not be eligible for the Honor Roll.

EIGHTH GRADE PROMOTION/GRADUATION

Graduation from the 8th grade requires the following:

- Achievement of a passing grade in all subject areas
- Completion and submission all assignments
- Completion of the SLE Portfolio
- Return all school property in good condition
- Return of athletic uniforms (if any)
- Payment of all financial obligations to the school, including fines, by May 15th

Eighth Grade graduation marks an important transition from elementary and middle school to high school, but it should be remembered that this promotion should not eclipse graduation from high school.

School graduation celebrations (activities and ceremonies) are a privilege reserved for eighth grade students in good standing. Students on either academic or disciplinary probation may not be allowed to participate in celebrations. Students who pose a disruptive influence will not be allowed to participate in the commencement exercises.

A graduation fee of \$50, due by May 1st, helps to cover the costs associated with the many events surrounding graduation.

The School Day and Attendance

SCHOOL and OFFICE HOURS

7:00am-4:00pm

CLOSED CAMPUS

Our Lady of Mercy School is a closed campus. Once students arrive on campus, they may not leave at any time during the school day unless they are signed out by an authorized adult. At the end of the day, students must follow the dismissal guidelines outlined below.

ARRIVAL

Students may be on campus at 7:30 AM. Earlier arrivals must go to the auditorium where a faculty member is scheduled to supervise. Any child on the school grounds before 7:30 AM will be sent to the office for supervision.

DISMISSAL

- All students must be picked up promptly after school unless they are to remain for athletics or other supervised activities. After 15 minutes, students will be sent to Extended Care for supervision, and parents will be billed accordingly.

- If students are taking part in an athletic or other after-school supervised activity and must remain for practice, game, or other event, they will be under the supervision of the coach or other adult supervisor. However, siblings who are enrolled at Our Lady of Mercy School cannot, and will not, be supervised by the coaches or other adults and must be enrolled in the Extended Care Program (with prior arrangements having been made with the director) for the period of time that the activity requires; parents will be billed accordingly.
- Written permission is required for all students leaving school without being accompanied by a parent (e.g., student is walking or cycling home, etc.).
- No student may leave the school grounds once he/she has arrived at school.
- Children are to remain in uniform when leaving school unless they are in an after school athletic activity.
- In the case of early dismissal (i.e. dental or doctor appointment), parents must provide the office with written notice indicating the reason and the name of the person who will be picking the student up.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the school of custody status and subsequent changes.
- School personnel will not release a child to any adult who appears incapable of providing safe conduct or when the child demonstrates anxiety or fear in being released to the adult. In such an instance, school personnel will call others on the approved list to come to pick up the child; law enforcement may be called.

DROP-OFF and PICK-UP PROCEDURES

PARKING

Please park in the designated areas provided in the back of the school. The circular drives in the front and back are for loading and unloading only. Cars are never to be left unattended, nor are they to remain parked longer than necessary to load or unload. The designated parking areas are the lot behind the library and the street side in the front of the school. Do not park in the red zone.

WALKERS and BIKE RIDERS

Students who walk or bike to school must have written parental permission on file in the School Office. Students riding bicycles must wear helmets. Bicycles may not be ridden on school grounds but must be walked on and off campus. Bicycles are not to be left at school overnight. The school is not responsible for bicycles left on campus, and students are encouraged to use locks to secure their property. Students who walk or ride to school may not leave campus once they have arrived.

MINIMUM DAYS

Certain school days are designated minimum days; dismissal is at 12:30pm. These days are noted on the calendar.

ABSENCES

- If a student is absent, a parent/guardian must notify the school before 8:30am on the date of the absence with the reason. If the office does not receive a phone call, parents/guardians will be contacted.
- Parents/guardians must notify the office if a child has been diagnosed as having a contagious condition (e.g., chicken pox, strep, lice, etc.) so that precautions can be taken and notifications sent home. Student confidentiality will be observed.
- A written excuse from the parent/guardian stating the reason for an absence must be presented to the office by the student upon returning to school.
- Medical/dental appointments are considered excused absences. Parents must send a note to the office prior to the appointment informing the teacher and the office that the student will be leaving the school premises or arriving late. Before leaving the school grounds and upon returning, the parent/guardian or designated adult must sign-in the student at the school office.
- A student must attend at least half the school day to be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activity scheduled that same day (e.g., athletic games, class parties, field trips, etc.).

TARDIES

- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to see that their children arrive by 8:00am. A child is considered tardy if he/she is not in line or in the classroom by the 8:00am bell.
- The parent/guardian must sign-in the tardy student at the office; students must not be taken directly to the office. Students who are tardy must receive a tardy slip from the office prior to admittance to class.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCE and TARDINESS

- Excessive absence is considered a total of 18 days per school year.
- Excessive absence for reasons of illness will be handled on an individual basis.
- Excessive tardiness or absence will result in a parent conference with the teacher and/or principal. Persistent tardiness or absence may, at the discretion of the principal, result in decreased academic credit or disciplinary action including dismissal from school.
- Any student who is absent from school without a valid excuse or who is tardy in excess of thirty minutes may be considered truant. The principal may contact an appropriate government entity if there is concern regarding neglect.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

- Perfect attendance is defined as attending school every day and all day. (Arriving after 9:00am or leaving before 2:00pm is not considered all day)
- No more than two tardies per quarter.

ABSENCES AND MAKE-UP WORK

- Missed assignments are the student's responsibility.
- Students who are absent due to illness have one day for each class period absence to make-up the missed assignments, quizzes, or tests. For example, a student who was absent three days would be given three school days upon return to complete the missed work.
- When a student is absent for three or more days due to illness, a parent may call the school office before 9:30 a.m. to arrange for the pick-up of homework assignments.
- Any absence that is not due to personal illness or injury, medical/dental appointment, funeral, or for religious observances/celebrations is considered unexcused. When parent(s) wish to take their child out of school for several days for personal reasons, they should discuss the student's progress with the teacher and principal who will advise them of the effect such an absence would have on the pupil's school work.
- The school is under no obligation to provide tutoring, makeup work, or special testing schedules for unexcused absences. The principal, in consultation with the teacher, has final and absolute discretion to determine the conditions and terms governing the way such absences will be addressed.
- If a student must leave school prior to the last day of school and a make-up period is no longer available, an incomplete grade may be given in any affected subject areas. All work necessary to clear the incomplete from the transcript must be completed during the summer in order for grades to be entered for the third trimester for the year. The principal has final and absolute discretion to determine the conditions and terms governing such absences.
- The school calendar provides for extended weekends and vacations throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process.

Appearance and Student Uniform Requirements

INTRODUCTION

Student dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness impact the image of Our Lady of Mercy School. It is a part of school tradition to wear uniforms to avoid class distinction and over-interest in fads. Besides representing school families, the clean, up-to-code uniform draws students' attention to community responsibility. A neat, clean, and tasteful appearance with well-groomed hair creates an atmosphere of confidence, respect, and learning. Moreover, it is an opportunity to uphold, reflect, and respect the dignity of the human person. In adhering to the Our Lady of Mercy School uniform and dress code, students practice the virtues of humility, modesty, obedience, and respect.

It is the joint responsibility of parents and students to see that the uniform and dress code of the school is carried out daily; it is the responsibility of the teacher and staff to monitor and report non-compliance. Every student is expected to be in proper uniform every school day unless otherwise authorized. The uniform should be neat, clean, and in good repair. Violations of any uniform, dress code, and appearance requirements are subject to school disciplinary sanctions.

The school cannot anticipate every fashion trend that may develop and therefore reserves the right to make judgments regarding the application of these general guidelines to specific items at any time.

The approved uniform must be worn every day. Substitutions are not allowed. Uniforms are to be kept clean and pressed. Preschool children need not wear uniforms. Students must have a note from a parent if out of uniform unless it is a "Free Dress" day. Please adhere to these uniform regulations. If you enroll your child at OLM School, you agree to comply with this uniform dress code.

UNIFORM DRESS CODE FOR GRADES K THROUGH 8

Boys

- Shirts: Light blue, long or short sleeve, front button, dress or knit shirt with collar, or light blue turtleneck shirts. Mock turtlenecks are not allowed. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- Pants: Navy blue cords. Relaxed fit (husky) pants are allowed. The baggy look is not allowed. Cargo pants are not allowed. Pants must be worn at the waist. Faded or torn pants are not allowed. Belts must be worn in grades 4 through 8.

THE NAVY BLUE CORDS MUST BE WORN ON ALL MASS DAYS.

- Walking Shorts From Dennis Uniform Company only. Shorts may be worn during May, August, September, and October only.
- Jewelry Only small religious medal or cross on small metal chain may be worn. A watch may be worn. No bracelets, rings, or pierced earrings are allowed.

No colored undershirts may be worn. Tattoos are not allowed.

Girls

- Blouses Plain, white or navy blue long or short sleeve, front button, dress or knit blouse with collar, or white or navy blue long sleeve turtleneck shirts instead of white or navy blue blouse. Mock turtlenecks are not allowed. Blouses must be tucked in at all times.
- Dress Grades K through 4-Lloyd plaid jumper with bib.
Grades 5 through 8-Lloyd plaid skirts.
The length of the jumper/skirt should be no shorter than the top of kneecap. Shorts worn under the skirt are not to hang below the skirt, and must be dark blue in color.

THE LLOYD PLAID JUMPER/SKIRT MUST BE WORN ON ALL MASS DAYS.

Walking Shorts	From Dennis Uniform Company only. Shorts may be worn during May, August, September, and October only.
Pants	From Dennis Uniform Company only. Pants may be worn during December, January and February only.
Jewelry	Only small religious medal or cross on small chain may be worn. A watch may be worn. Only small pierced earrings are acceptable, one per ear lobe.
Bows	Only a small blue, white, or red bow may be worn in the hair.

No makeup or nail polish may be worn. Tattoos are not allowed.

All Students

Socks	White, navy blue, or black, ankle, mid-calf or knee socks without decoration or logo. Girls may wear tights of the same color without decoration. Low cut sports socks are not allowed. All socks must be above the ankle. If wearing high top shoes, socks must be seen above the shoe.
Belts	Black, brown or navy blue, plain leather or webbed.
Shoes	Black, brown, navy blue, light blue, gray or white. Sandals are not allowed. Boots are not allowed. Skate shoes (shoes with rollers) are not allowed. Shoes must be a solid color (black, brown, navy blue, light blue, gray or white) without embellishments, designs, characters, or lights. All shoes are subject to the discretion of the principal.
Shoelaces	Black, brown, navy blue or white only.
Over wear	Only the navy blue cardigan sweater, navy blue vest sweater or OLM School emblem sweatshirt may be worn.
Sweatshirts	Only the OLM School emblem sweatshirt may be worn.
Hats	No hats may be worn at school.
Jackets	Jackets may be worn only outside of the classroom.
Hair	No artificial hair color is allowed. Hairstyles should not be distracting to other students or teachers, nor should the length impair vision. Boy's hair length should be cut over the ears, be at least ½ inch above the eyebrows, and not touch the collar of the shirt. Girl's hair must not hang or fall in front of the eyes. No spiked or Mohawk hairstyles allowed. Boys must be clean shaven. No mustaches or beards are allowed.
Sunglasses	No sunglasses unless prescription.

**Only required on Mass days or formal dress days specified by the principal/teacher.

<u>P.E. (5th – 8th)</u> and OLM tee shirt.	Grades 5 through 8	Navy blue shorts(no shorter than 3" above the knee)
		Athletic shoes only (no slip-ons or dress shoes)
		Plain white, black, or navy socks only – must be visible above the shoe
		Optional PE Items: Blue school sweatpants

school sweatshirt (any color)

P.E.: (K – 4th)

Students wear regular school uniform

Girls must wear shorts underneath skirts

Must wear athletic shoes with laces or Velcro

GENERAL DRESS CODE and UNIFORM REGULATIONS

- All clothing should be marked clearly with student first and last name
- Uniform items need to be size-appropriate and may not be modified in any way (e.g., purchasing smaller sizes than are appropriate or hemming skirts, etc.).
- No distracting shoes such as with lights, buzzers, or skating, etc.
- Sandals and open-toed shoes are never allowed.
- Only school uniform sweatshirts may be worn.
- Outer coats may be worn over the uniform while outside, but not in the classroom (sweaters only).
- No other clothing is allowed including Scout uniforms, or high school/college sweatshirts.
- Students must call home for a change of clothes if out of uniform.
- If circumstances prevent a student from coming to school in uniform, a note must be sent to the teacher. The substitute uniform should be as similar to the uniform as possible.
- NO HATS
- NO TATTOOS, permanent or washable
- No fake nails, nail polish, or French manicures.
- A clean, well-groomed appearance is required for students. Students sent to school without attention to cleanliness, uniform, or neatness may be sent home to be properly prepared for school.
- Make-up, lipstick, or colored lip gloss are not permitted for the school day.
- Clear lip balm only is permitted.
- Hairstyles are to be simple, clean, and neat. Hair must be its natural color with no highlights, no fads, distinct layers, or distracting hairstyles.
- Boys' hair must be out of the eyes, above the ears, and off the collar.
- Boys must be clean shaven (when applicable).
- The only acceptable forms of jewelry that may be worn at any time include a wristwatch (for boys or girls), one pair of matching stud earrings for girls only (to be worn one in each earlobe only), a holy medal, cross, or crucifix on a chain, a scapular that is worn inside the shirt or blouse (for boys or girls), or a medical alert necklace and/or bracelet when necessary (no other bracelets may be worn).

SPIRIT DAY DRESS CODE

School sweatshirts, cardigans, and sweaters can be worn with any school t-shirt. Pants and shorts, for both girls and boys, can be navy blue, tan, beige, or khaki. Denim pants and shorts are acceptable. School logo shorts and sweatpants are also acceptable. In addition, girls can also wear school skirts or skorts or khaki skirts or skorts. Capri pants may be worn. Pants that are skinny may not be worn. Shoes

that are non-distracting (e.g., no predominately neon or bright colored sneakers or shoelaces can be worn). Only black, navy, or white socks may worn – no other colors are acceptable.

FREE DRESS

Please use discretion and check what your child selects to wear for free dress days. Free dress does not mean that we forget we attend OLM School. At all times we should look respectable and model Catholic values.

- Modesty and simplicity are guiding principles for free dress.
- No extreme fads
- Jeans in good repair (with no holes, intentional or otherwise) will be acceptable for casual “free dress” (not on “dress up” days or addressing the student body at Mass).
- Pants of any kind must fit appropriately (i.e. not skin tight, no spandex and no skinny jeans).
- Pants should be worn at the waist (no sagging).
- Halters, tank tops, or spaghetti straps are not allowed.
- No midriff shirts, loose baggy trousers, cutoffs, see-through shirts, or bike shorts are allowed.
- Objectionable clothing displaying images (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, drugs, controversial rock groups, or themes) are not allowed.
- Flat soled shoes only; shoes must have a closed toe. NO BOOTS.
- Sandals are not allowed.
- Socks must be worn at all times.
- Shorts or skirts may not be more than 4” above the knee.
- If there is doubt as to what is appropriate, a plain T-shirt (w/ sleeves) and jeans in good repair should be acceptable.
- No hats unless it’s a specific dress-up day. On those special hat days a cap must be worn with the bill front ways.

Health and Safety

IMMUNIZATIONS AND STUDENT MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

Referenced in the ADMISSIONS section

EMERGENCY CARDS

Each child must have a completed emergency form on file in the school office. These forms must be kept up to date. Any change in address or phone number must be reported to the office to ensure timely contact should a student become ill or hurt; these contacts must be immediately updated on Option C.

SCHOOL INSURANCE COVERAGE

All Our Lady of Mercy School students are covered by insurance for injuries incurred on the school grounds, during school-supervised activities, and to and from school and school-supervised activities. The registration fee includes coverage by the Myers-Stevens and Toohey Company for all students. In

the event of an injury, parents may obtain a claim form from the school office. The injury must be brought to the attention of the office the day the incident occurs. This coverage is secondary to family primary insurance coverage. Insurance information is sent home the first week of school to familiarize parents with the coverage.

ILLNESS and NOTIFICATION

- Parents should notify school office personnel on the first day of a child's illness.
- Parents should notify the school immediately if they receive a diagnosis that their child has a communicable disease.
- Students who are obviously sick or feverish may not attend school; a child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- A handwritten absence note from the student's parent or guardian is required upon the child's return to school.
- An absence of three or more days requires a doctor's note upon the child's return to school.

MEDICATIONS

- The school does not provide medications of any kind.
- Students are prohibited from having any medications, prescribed or over-the-counter, on their persons on school grounds, and all such medications must be kept in the school office. If a student's condition potentially requires epi-pens for severe allergic reaction or inhalers, the school will develop a plan with the parent and physician for the maintenance and potential use of those medications.
- Prescribed or over-the-counter medications must be brought to the school office by the parent in the original container.
- Only in RARE instances will the school permit a student to take medication at school. The parent is urged, with the help of the family health care provider, to work out a schedule of taking medication outside of school hours. The only exceptions involve special or serious problems where it is deemed absolutely necessary to take the medication during school hours.
- If it is essential that medications be administered at school, these medications must be administered from the school office only.
- NO member of the faculty or staff in the school office is permitted to administer any medication without the following:
 1. A signed written statement from the parent or guardian of the child
 2. A written statement from the physician detailing the method, amount, and schedule by which the child will come at the designated time with specific instructions included for emergency treatment if an allergic reaction should occur.
 3. All medication must be kept in its original container which must be clearly identified with a prescription label with the child's name, drug identity, dosage instructions, physician's name, and prescription date (for over-the counter medications, the

original commercial container will suffice); the prescription must be current (and over-the-counter medications within the expiration limits).

4. Medical treatment is the responsibility of the parent and the family health care provider. While office personnel will make every attempt to administer medications as requested, the school will not be held responsible for missed doses or mis-administration of any kind.

MEDICATION FORMS

The school office can provide the appropriate medication forms that cover the above requirements. These forms must be updated annually. A new form **MUST** be completed by the physician and parent each school year if the need continues.

ILLNESS at SCHOOL, INJURY, and FIRST AID

Should a student become ill or injured, the school will make every effort to contact the parent(s) of the student for information and instructions. However, the school may contact emergency agencies (911) first depending on the nature of the situation. This action does not obligate the principal or the school to assume financial responsibility for the treatment of the student.

- All injuries to the head, no matter how small, must be made known to the parent as soon as possible.
- Students who become ill or injured at school may not leave the school on their own; parents (or other designated adult on the emergency form) are required to pick up an ill or injured student as soon as possible after being notified.
- In the case of an injury at school, school staff will render first aid, with or without parental consent, using a reasonable and ordinary standard of care.
- If a student is stabilized, school staff will await instructions from parents or emergency staff regarding further action.

STUDENTS with SEVERE ALLERGIES

Families with students who have identified severe allergies should work with the school as follows:

- Provide written notification (health record) to the school of an at-risk student's allergies that pose a serious threat to the student.
- Confer with qualified school representatives to develop a plan that *reasonably* accommodates the at-risk student's needs throughout the school campus and facilities.
- Provide the school with written medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by a physician or health care professional.
- Include a photograph of the student on the written form.
- Provide properly labeled medications and replacement medications, as required after use or upon expiration.
- Review policies/procedures with the school representatives, the child's physician, and the student (if age-appropriate) after a reaction has occurred.
- Provide and update current emergency contact information.

- Educate the child in the self-management of his/her allergy including the following:
 - safe and unsafe foods and exposures
 - strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods or other items such as sharing foods with others or consuming food or drink where ingredients are unknown
 - symptoms of allergic reactions
 - how and when to tell an adult he/she may be having an allergy-related problem
 - how to read food labels (if age-appropriate)

HEAD LICE

Head lice (or pediculosis) is a common occurrence in elementary and middle schools. When it is identified, procedures that follow must be taken. The school understands that pediculosis may not be an indication of neglect or lack of cleanliness, and where possible, confidentiality will be observed.

- When a student has been identified as having nits and/or lice, the school will contact the parents/guardians to pick up their child for immediate treatment.
- The siblings of the infected student will also be screened.
- The classmates of a student identified as having nits and/or lice may also be screened.
- The student and family will receive information about pediculosis and instructions on treating their child and their home to remove all nits and/or lice.
- Upon return to school, the student will need to be screened at the school office by a school employee for nits and/or lice before being allowed to return to the classroom.

MANDATED REPORTING

Our Lady of Mercy School is legally required to comply with the *Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act*. Those employees of the school who are designated “mandated reporters” by law are responsible to report suspected occurrences of child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities (Child Protective Services, police department, sheriff department, etc.). Although such reports are typically confidential, if a parent/guardian discovers the identity of a school employee who made a report of child abuse, the parent/guardian may not retaliate against the employee in any way for making the report.

STUDENT THREATS OF HARM TO SELF OR OTHERS

Our Lady of Mercy School will treat student threats to inflict harm to self, to others, or to destroy property, very seriously. Practical jokes or offhand comments of a threatening nature will be considered serious and will be investigated. Threats that are substantiated may result in disciplinary actions, up to and including dismissal.

- Anyone hearing or becoming aware of any threat is to report it directly to the principal or his/her designee.
- Threats of harm to self will be treated differently than threats of harm to others.
- The student making the threat will be removed to the office and kept under adult supervision at all times; the student may be suspended pending an investigation.
- All threats will be reviewed and investigated in a prompt and thorough manner, and the investigation will be kept confidential to the extent practicable.

- If the threat is judged credible and serious, the principal will notify the following groups/individuals of the threat: parents, pastor, potential victims and their parents, the Office of Catholic Education, and the police or health care professionals as appropriate.
- The student will not be allowed to return to school until the investigation has been completed and final disciplinary or therapeutic action, if any, has been determined.
- If the principal, after investigation and consultation, determines there is sufficient evidence of a risk of harm by a student, to others, and/or to property, the principal will continue the student's suspension and not consider the readmission of the student to the school until appropriate counseling which is acceptable to the school occurs; the guidelines for this procedure will be handled on an individual basis.
- In some cases, the nature and credibility of the threat is such that the principal may request withdrawal of the student, or expel the student, without possibility of returning to the school.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

Families are required to observe the following guidelines to provide a safe, quick, orderly, and consistent dismissal and arrival process:

- Drivers should not exceed 5 mph while driving on campus.
- Children are to exit/enter vehicles from the passenger side ONLY during the morning and afternoon.
- Parents must not deviate from the prescribed drop-off and pick-up locations and procedures *even if it appears safe* as these have been carefully determined to keep students out of traffic lanes. See DROP-OFF and PICK-UP PROCEDURES in ATTENDANCE above.
- All instructions of supervising staff must be followed at all times.
- No traffic will be allowed on the playground during school hours except during the designated drop-off and pick-up times.

SEVERE ILLNESS OUTBREAK

If the school administration should decide that illness among students and/or staff is severe enough to make the running of the school either unsafe or infeasible, school will be closed until safety and feasibility can be reasonably restored. Interim steps prior to the closing of school may include any of the following measures:

- Custodians will disinfect surfaces and door handles.
- Preschools may act independently from schools.
- Instructional Assistants may act as substitute teachers.
- Classes not part of the core curriculum may be cancelled and teachers of special classes may act as substitute teachers.
- School administration, office staff, and extension staff may act as substitute teachers.
- Classes may be combined.

Concussion Policy

CONCUSSION DEFINITION

A concussion is a complex injury that causes a disturbance in brain function. It usually starts with a blow to the head, face, or neck, and is often associated with temporarily losing consciousness. However, it is important to understand that a blackout is only one possible symptom. When an athlete suffers a concussion, the brain suddenly shifts or shakes inside the skull and can knock against the skull's bony surface. If left untreated, a concussion can lead to a slow brain bleed.

SYMPTOMS

The signs and symptoms of a concussion can be subtle and may not show up immediately. Symptoms can last for days, weeks, or even longer. Common symptoms after a concussive traumatic brain injury are headache, loss of memory (amnesia), and confusion. The amnesia usually involves forgetting the event that caused the concussion. Signs and symptoms of a concussion may include:

- Headache or a feeling of pressure in the head
- Temporary loss of consciousness
- Confusion or feeling as if in a fog
- Amnesia surrounding the traumatic event
- Dizziness or "seeing stars"
- Ringing in the ears
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Slurred speech
- Delayed response to questions
- Appearing dazed
- Fatigue
- Loss of consciousness
- Seizure or convulsions

The injured person may have some symptoms of concussions immediately. Others may be delayed for hours or days after injury:

- Concentration and memory complaints
- Irritability and other personality changes
- Sensitivity to light and noise
- Sleep disturbances
- Psychological adjustment problems and depression
- Disorders of taste and smell

Symptoms in younger children:

- Appearing dazed
- Listlessness and tiring easily
- Irritability and crankiness
- Loss of balance and unsteady walking
- Crying excessively
- Change in eating or sleeping patterns
- Lack of interest in favorite toys or hobbies

With a loss of consciousness, it is clear that emergency medical services are needed. However, the non-blackout symptoms listed above must not be ignored. Unfortunately, a pervasive mindset in some sports is that getting “dinged” is part of the game and the athlete needs to tough it out. This thinking is dangerous because it exposes the child to further injury when his or her brain needs a rest and prevents him or her from obtaining a proper medical assessment as soon as possible.

FOLLOWING INJURY

The following steps must be followed (by the athlete, parents, teammates, and coaches) whenever an athlete has experienced a bump or blow to the head or body and evidences any of the symptoms or signs of a concussion:

1. Remove the athlete from play immediately.
2. Call 911 and/or administer first aid as appropriate.
3. Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion and provide them with the CDC fact sheet on concussion.
4. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by a health care professional.**
5. Keep the athlete out of play and practice the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, states in writing that the athlete can safely return. The arrangements and cost of the health care provider are the responsibility of the parent.
6. Athlete should limit all forms of physical activity.
7. Athlete should minimize the use of all electronics (including cell phones, computers, TV, etc.) and be in a quiet atmosphere as much as possible. Social interaction, sporting events, concerts, etc., can all have a negative impact on recovery.

**"Health care professional" means a physician of medicine, physician of osteopathic medicine, licensed nurse practitioner, licensed physician assistant, or licensed physician of psychology; any of these medical professionals MUST have had training in neuropsychology or concussion evaluation and management.

RETURN to SPORT

Players with even the MILDEST concussion symptoms should NOT return to a game or practice. They should be assessed by a physician immediately. If symptoms do not appear until several hours after the game, the child should still seek medical assessment. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES CAN AN ATHLETE RETURN TO PRACTICE OR GAME WITHOUT CLEARANCE FROM A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL.**

Anyone who has suffered a concussion needs to rest the brain until all the symptoms are gone. This means the athlete should be able to read, do math, and think at his or her usual pace with no

headaches, fatigue, or other symptoms. This can mean a few days resting at home, not doing school work, and refraining from any exercise.

There is no timetable chart to follow; each athlete needs a treatment program tailored to his or her symptoms and circumstances. Younger children seem to take longer to recover than adults, and it is not unusual for children to be out of sports for a month after suffering a concussion. If a player suffers one concussion, he or she is more likely to sustain future concussions. Researchers believe the younger the child, the more vulnerable the brain may be to these repeat concussions.

SECOND IMPACT SYNDROME

If someone with a concussion too hastily returns to contact sports or activities, a second concussion can result in Second Impact Syndrome — a potentially fatal condition. Second Impact Syndrome is when another blow to the head (even a minor one) results in the brain losing its ability to control its own blood flow, which increases pressure in the head and can lead to death, usually within 2 – 5 minutes. Second Impact Syndrome most often affects young athletes (in junior and senior high school), but any athlete who returns to a sport too soon is at risk.

RETURN to SCHOOL

Following concussion, NO student may return to school until cleared to do so by the physician. Because the needs for recovery from concussion are dependent on many factors, parents should work with the school and physician regarding a plan for returning to school and full academic work. Students recovering from concussion may not attend field trips, dances, etc., until they have been fully cleared by the physician. Reasonable accommodations regarding gradual re-entry to class and full academic activities may include the following:

- Extra time to complete classwork, homework, and tests
- Reduction of workload
- Postponement of high-stakes testing, large projects, and standardized testing
- Provision of hard copies to limit iPad use or online access
- Wearing of sunglasses for sensitivity to light
- Supervised breaks during the day
- Modified/shortened school day
- Incomplete grades (rather than zeroes) until recovery takes place

In extreme cases, a student may need to be placed on home study.

Emergency Procedures

EMERGENCY CARE PLAN

The school's emergency care plan follows clear and practiced safety procedures in the event of fire, earthquake, lockdown, active shooter, bomb threats, and other emergencies.

- In the event of an actual school-wide emergency, the automated Option C system will provide parents/guardians rapid notification by text message and/or email.
- Parents should not call the school directly but wait for notification; school lines need to be used for calling out only.
- Parents should not block access to the school—access needs to be available for emergency vehicles.
- Should it ever become necessary to evacuate and relocate off campus, Our Lady of Mercy School has arranged safe haven at Ada Givens and Hoover Middle School
- In the event of a city/countywide disaster, parents should tune to a local Emergency Broadcast Station to receive emergency instructions.
- All students will be accounted and cared for by school staff and necessary emergency steps will be taken. Parents will be notified as soon as possible through Option C emergency features and/or school emergency phone contacts.
- No student will be released until all Our Lady of Mercy School students are accounted for. No student will be allowed to leave school care unless an appropriate, competent adult comes to sign a release.

EMERGENCY DRILLS and EVENTS

- FIRE
Fire drills take place regularly. The school will follow instructions of the Fire Department.
- EARTHQUAKE
An earthquake drill will take place periodically after fire drills once the students return to class. In the event of an actual earthquake, school staff will remain on site until parents can be notified, all students are accounted for, and all students have been released to appropriate adults. Parents should be aware that routes to school may be blocked or impassable.
- LOCKDOWN/ACTIVE SHOOTER
Lockdown drills will take place periodically. In event of an actual lockdown, law enforcement will be involved as soon as possible (or may call for the lockdown). The school will notify parents via Option C as soon as possible. However, the safety of students is the primary importance; this may mean that the school needs to be made secure before parents can be contacted.

- **BOMB THREAT**
Law enforcement will be called and the school will follow their instructions. Parents will be notified when the school is instructed to do so.
- **FLOOD**
The school will follow emergency agency instructions. Students may be evacuated if called for. Parents should await notification via Option C.
- For any other emergencies, the steps of the Emergency Care Plan above will be followed.

Student Discipline

GENERAL POLICY

The values of Catholic education are the foundation for all interactions and relationships at Our Lady of Mercy School. A student is considered at all times and places a member of the Our Lady of Mercy School student body. This is an honor and privilege and therefore, students must be conscious of their actions at all times, whether on or off campus, including but not limited to, games, dances, rallies, assemblies, service projects, field trips, and other gatherings. Courtesy and respect should be manifested at all times. Any behavior or attitude that stands in opposition to Catholic Christian values, on or off campus, toward anyone in the community, will be viewed as a very serious violation of the school's code of conduct. Our Lady of Mercy School reserves the right to review and consider instances of student conduct and actions, regardless of when or where such conduct or actions occur, if they express or show an incompatibility with the mission and philosophy of the school; such actions may result in a student being barred from participation in school activities and may subject a student to the full range of disciplinary sanctions up to and including termination of enrollment.

EXPECTATIONS

Students at Our Lady of Mercy School are expected to conduct themselves according to principles of Catholic Christian behavior:

- To be honest in all dealings with fellow students, teachers, and school personnel;
- To cooperate positively with fellow students, teachers, and school personnel;
- To respect always the person and the rights of all;
- To obtain permission from the proper authority for the use of any of the school facilities or materials (other than those typically used under staff supervision);
- To be courteous, attentive, and respectful when fellow students, teachers, administrators, visitors, or performers address individual classes or the assembled student body;
- To be responsible for the care of all materials loaned to the student for the course of studies during the year; and
- To respect parish and school property at all times.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Personal academic integrity is essential for building community and promoting social justice. To cheat is to act dishonestly or in violation of established rules, procedures, or codes of conduct. In an academic environment, there are three principle forms of cheating:

- Violating the procedures of a test, including, but not limited to, copying answers, accessing test keys, using a copy of a previous test, using notes or materials not allowed, or altering answers on a corrected test which has been returned.

- Plagiarizing, which pertains to the rights of intellectual property; plagiarism is the appropriation of another's ideas and/or language, in part or whole, without necessary assignment or credit. Plagiarism includes copying homework/labs, and quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing another's written work including sources off the internet or oral statements without proper citation.
- Knowingly enabling another student to cheat.

Sanctions for cheating are the discretion of the teacher (and, if necessary, the principal) and may include receiving a zero on the exam or work in question, loss of privilege, or suspension.

VANDALISM

Students and their parent(s) are liable for all damage to equipment or school property caused by the student and appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken.

BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

The school may take disciplinary action if a student conspires or engages in any of the following activities on or near campus or at any school function:

1. Any disruptive behavior or conduct at school or in public that reflects adversely on the school.
2. Personal appearance of dress code violations.
3. Disobedience, insubordination, or disrespect for authority.
4. Lack of cooperation with the school's attendance policies including but not limited to unauthorized absence or excessive absences/tardiness, cutting classes or school with or without permission of parents.
5. Forgery of any person's signature, falsification or misrepresentation of phone calls, notes, forms, or other school related documents.
6. Cheating.
7. Obscene acts, possessing or distributing obscene materials, or engaging in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
8. Attempting, threatening, or actually injuring, intimidating, degrading, or disgracing any student, member of the staff, or visitor to the school. The school's disciplinary response may include restitution.
9. Attempting to damage or actually damaging school or private property. The school's disciplinary response may include restitution.
10. Attempting to steal or actually stealing school or private property. The school's disciplinary response may include restitution.
11. Possessing or selling firearms, knives, explosives or other dangerous objects.
12. Possessing, using, being under the influence, furnishing, or selling controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, intoxicants, or tobacco products of any kind. (see policy 4980).
13. Committing any serious offense against civil or church law.
14. Violating any other school policy, procedure, or practice.

RIGHT to SEARCH

While students generally possess the right of privacy of person and personal effects, that right must be balanced against the school's responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the whole school community. Because school officials have a legitimate interest in personal safety and protection of all students within their care and custody, the school administration reserves the right to conduct searches when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will reveal evidence that the student is violating the law or school policies. School officials do not need a warrant or permission from a parent or guardian to conduct such a search.

School officials therefore reserve the right and responsibility to conduct, and a student must submit to, a search of his/her person, automobile, clothes, bags, cell phone, and electronic equipment when reasonable suspicion exists. A search of a student's person would occur only with appropriate supervision by a faculty or administration member of the same sex, and the school will notify the parents/guardians of the fact that the search was conducted. The school also reserves the right to search any area of campus and school property including all lockers and school computers and all electronic devices. Refusal to comply with a search process will be grounds for disciplinary action, which may include expulsion.

INTERVIEWS by OFFICIALS

- Law enforcement officers have the right during the school day to interview students who are suspects or witnesses. Child Protective Services representatives may conduct interviews to investigate reported child abuse or neglect.
- Before releasing a student for an interview, the school employee in charge must confirm that the person seeking the interview is properly authorized and presents appropriate identification as well as confirm that the interview is being conducted as part of the interviewer's professional duties.
- The school employee in charge will inform the parents/guardians that such an interview will take place, except when law enforcement or the agency has a specific reason not to inform the parents/guardians. In all events, an adult, either a parent/guardian or a school staff member, will be present for any interview unless the student being interviewed elects otherwise.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS and SANCTIONS

The principal and other school personnel may interview students at any time for the purpose of investigation. Parents may not attend such investigations unless they are invited to do so by the principal. The following sanctions may be imposed upon students in the sole discretion of the school in any order:

- Parent and student conference
- Denial of specified privileges
- Detention: Students are assigned to a ½ or 1 hour after-school detention/service by a member of the faculty or school administration. Detentions/Services are served after school on the day assigned or the day after only. During detention/Service, a student may be assigned work to do

around the campus. Detention/Services takes precedence over any co-curricular or extracurricular activity. Written notification of all detentions will be given to the student. Failure to serve detention will result in additional disciplinary action.

- Probation: The principal may place a student on behavioral probation; the student and parent will be notified in writing of the reason for probation, resulting consequences and/or restrictions, the period of the probation, and how the probation may be ended.
- Suspension (see below)
- Withdrawal: Parents may be given the option to voluntarily withdraw their child rather than face expulsion.
- Expulsion (see below)

SUSPENSION

Suspension is a disciplinary action to be used at the sole discretion of the principal. Suspension is not intended to be corrective in and of itself; instead, suspension sends the message that the offending behavior does not belong at school. A student may be placed on suspension for serious misconduct or continuing misconduct on or off campus. Suspension is typically served off campus but may be served on campus at the discretion of the principal. Suspension ordinarily should not exceed five consecutive school days. However, a student may be suspended from campus longer than this in certain circumstances which may include, but are not limited to, the following: awaiting results of a pending investigation, awaiting documentation of professional evaluation, or when isolation is deemed to be in the best interest of the suspended student or the community. Parents will be notified immediately and are expected to pick up the student as soon as possible; parents will remain involved in the process through verbal or written communication or conferencing. Suspension does not carry an academic penalty, and the student should keep up with classwork and homework.

Since the grounds for suspension ordinarily differ in degree from the grounds for expulsion, parents and students will be informed that continued or repeated misconduct may result in a recommended withdrawal or expulsion.

REASONS for IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION

At the discretion of the principal, the following offenses committed by students are potential reasons for immediate suspension which may also lead to expulsion. This list shall not be considered as exhaustive:

1. Serious disobedience, insubordination, or disrespect for authority including, but not limited to, the following:
 - refusal to obey school rules;
 - refusal to follow directions;
 - refusal to answer when spoken to directly;
 - giving sharp, rude answers in a disrespectful tone of voice;
 - causing interruption in classroom procedures;
 - cheating, plagiarism, or dishonesty of any kind;
2. Language or behavior which is immoral, profane, vulgar, or obscene on or off campus;

3. Use, sale, distribution, or possession of drugs, alcohol, or any other legally controlled substance or drug or vaping paraphernalia;
4. Injury or harm to persons or property, vandalism, or serious threat to same;
5. Sexual, physical, visual, or verbal harassment/bullying or abuse of staff, students, parents, or guests of the school;
6. Hazing;
7. Sale of any material on school grounds without proper authorization;
8. Unauthorized absence or continued tardiness;
9. Assault with, or possession of, a lethal instrument or weapon;
10. Serious theft or dishonesty;
11. Outrageous, scandalous, or seriously disruptive behavior;
12. Conduct at school or elsewhere which would reflect adversely on the Catholic school or church;
13. Not adhering to the internet use agreement, hacking into the school computer system, or viewing or attempting to view material through the internet that is deemed inappropriate per the Internet Use Agreement; or
14. Sexting (the sending, receiving, or forwarding of sexually explicit messages, photographs or images between digital devices or the sharing of such communication with others).

EXPULSION

Expulsion is an extreme and permanent disciplinary action enacted for the common good; the authority to expel resides solely with the principal. Ordinarily, an expulsion is the result of continued disciplinary offenses, on or off campus, that have not been remedied by lesser disciplinary actions such as detention, probation, or suspension. Immediate expulsion could result from actions, on or off campus, which are a violation of criminal law, which are serious enough to shock the conscience or harm the reputation of the school or parish community, or which pose a threat to the health, welfare, or safety of the student or the school community. The student will typically be placed on suspension (see above) if he/she is not already suspended, and parents will be notified immediately. Conferencing will take place with the principal, parents, appropriate staff, and the pastor of the parish if he or the family so desire; the student may be included for part of the conference. If a decision is made to terminate the student's enrollment, the parents may be given the option to voluntarily withdraw the student by a specified date. Otherwise, the student will be expelled. Full credit will be given for all work accomplished by the student up the moment of withdrawal or expulsion.

DISCIPLINARY RECORDS

Disciplinary records are private documents of the principal and are kept separate from the student's cumulative file and will not follow the student beyond enrollment at Our Lady of Mercy School; they are not available to students or parents.

Information and Communication Technology Policies

ONLINE SOCIAL MEDIA and NETWORKING POLICY for PARENTS and STUDENTS

Our Lady of Mercy School recognizes that many different social networks exist on the Internet (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, among others). Millions of people, including students and parents, utilize one or more of these networks on a daily basis for both professional and personal purposes. These services provide different methods of communicating and interacting with other users, in both public and private ways. These tools include message and photograph posting, emailing, instant messaging, group discussions, blogging, and video/photo sharing.

Due to the popularity of social networking sites and the way they can facilitate effective and efficient communications between users, the use of social networking in connection with Catholic school activities presents many opportunities for enhancing the experience of students and their families. Without proper controls these communications are often unlimited, potentially affording access by unknown third parties (including those who would prey upon young people via the Internet). The nature of social networking sites leaves open the possibility of abuse and misuse (including by students and their parents), necessitating the following standards of conduct for all individuals connected with Catholic schools.

ETHICS AND RESPONSIBILITY

When a Catholic school student or parent is using online social media (of any variety), that individual must always bear in mind that the material he or she posts reflects upon the school, the parish, the Diocese, and the Roman Catholic Church as a whole. As a consequence, it is imperative that all students and parents conduct themselves in an ethical and responsible manner when using online social media. Specifically, the following standards of conduct should be observed at all times:

- Any official organization of the school, such as School Advisory Board, Parent Club, Boosters Club, etc., may only develop online media with the permission of the school administration. If approved by the school administration, it must be a link from the official website of the school. All materials placed on it must receive prior approval from the school administration. Failure to do so by any organization of the school could result in the organization being disbanded.
- Content that has the potential to be a source of scandal for the Church should never be posted. Examples of such content include, but are not limited to, obscene, harassing, offensive, derogatory, or defamatory comments and images that discredit or cause embarrassment to the school, the Diocese, or the Catholic Church, or to other students, parents, diocesan (school) employees, or parishioners.
- If a student or parent regularly identifies him or herself as a student or parent of the school in a personal website, blog, or social media account, he or she should make it clear on those personal sites that the views expressed there are his or hers alone and that they do not necessarily reflect the views of the school, the parish, or the Diocese. For example, he or she can post the following notice, in a reasonable prominent place: "The views expressed on this site are solely my own and do not necessarily reflect the view of Our Lady of Mercy School, or Parish, or the Diocese of Fresno."

- Students and parents should be ethical and responsible participants in social media. They should at all times attempt to be accurate, truthful, and respectful in any public postings.
- Students and parents may not use school, parish, or diocesan trademarks, or reproduce any school, parish, or diocesan materials or logos without express permission from the principal, pastor, or their designees.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS

Because digital images are easily created and reproduced, photographs and video files are extremely common on the web, and they are freely posted and passed along by users of online social media. It is the policy of the Diocese that privacy concerns, particularly as they relate to images of minors, are to be observed and respected in online social media use connected to its schools.

Our Lady of Mercy School has no desire to intrude into or restrict the rights of parents and students to freely post personal photographs on their online social media sites as they see fit. If, however, they intend to upload photographic images or video files related to Catholic school activities, then students and parents must all observe the following guidelines:

- Prior permission should be obtained from any third parties depicted in photographic images or video files prior to being uploaded. If individuals decline such permission, their privacy should be respected and the image should not be posted.
- If photographs or videos, particularly those of minors, are posted with or without permission, and the student or parent asks that it be removed, the student or parent's wishes should be observed.
- Even if parents have granted permission for the use of photographs or video images of their children, care should be taken to ensure that any such postings do not identify the child by name, unless there is specific permission granted by the parent for the additional connection.

DISCIPLINE for the Policy above

Failure to observe the foregoing guidelines may result in disciplinary measures being imposed by the school. Discipline in this context will be determined by the school, based upon the particular facts of any incident, but can mean suspension or expulsion (for student misconduct) or involuntary withdrawal of a child from the school (for parent misconduct).

ACCEPTABLE USE of TECHNOLOGY for STUDENTS

To ensure that all students comply with school rules regarding electronic equipment, the following policies and procedures have been established for using school computers, electronic devices, the wireless network, the Internet, and all peripherals. No set of policies and procedures can provide rules to cover every possible situation. Instead, what follows is designed to express a framework and to set forth general principles when using electronic media and services. All policies are inclusive of the use of computers and electronic devices including, but not limited to, iPads and other tablets, chromebooks, the wireless network, the network, the Internet, and all peripherals.

SOCIAL MEDIA USE

- Use of social networks at school may be limited by school personnel.
- Students who use social media must adhere to the discipline policies in this handbook, the Technology Use Policy, the Diocesan Online Social Media and Networking Policy for Parents and Students, and the Harassment and Bullying Policy.
- Students are reminded that they are always Our Lady of Mercy School students, both on and off campus, and that ALL electronic content is both public and permanent.
- Our Lady of Mercy School reserves the right, at its discretion, to review and/or request removal of any student's social media content. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.
- Permission of the school administration is required for the use of the school's name, initials, logos, pictures, property, or representations of the faculty, staff, students, or other individuals. Deliberate publication or postings of such material on the Internet without permission may result in serious disciplinary action, including dismissal from the school.

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES OWNED or ISSUED by the SCHOOL

- Electronic devices owned or issued by the school are to be used for academic purposes only.
- Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in their use of the school's electronic equipment or network (or a personal electronic device at school).
- The school reserves the right, upon reasonable suspicion that the search will reveal evidence that the student is violating the law or school policies, to review any student's electronic devices, files, and messages including, but not limited to, email, photos, texts, video, and other applications to ensure compliance with all school rules. Students must comply with all requests for access.
- All users are only permitted to log on to their own school-issued account. Sharing of account and/or account information is prohibited and may result in the account being disabled.
- All users may never move, change, or disconnect any of the hardware or wires/cables.
- Regardless where it takes place, students have no right to add, copy, delete, or alter any operating system software, application system software, and system setup or equipment configurations of devices owned or issued by the school.
- Use of technology on campus or at school functions or events is subject to inspection and audit by the school administration, which may include a physical inspection of material contained on, or accessible by, the device. Students agree to cooperate with any such inspection.
- All students must agree to abide by the following Acceptable Use Pledge.

ACCEPTABLE USE PLEDGE COVERING ELECTRONIC DEVICES

- I will use my chromebook or any of my other electronic devices in ways that are appropriate, educational, and meet Our Lady of Mercy School expectations as outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook.
- I will use appropriate language when using emails, journals, blogs, or any other forms of communication.

- I will not create, or encourage others to create, discourteous or abusive content.
- I will not use electronic communication to spread rumors, gossip, or engage in any other activity that is harmful to other persons.
- I understand that my chromebook/ipad and school computers used by me are subject to inspection at any time without notice and remain the property of the school.
- I understand that my other electronic devices (including but not limited to my cell phone) are subject to inspection at any time based on a reasonable suspicion that they contain information pertinent to a violation of law or school policies.
- I will take proper care of my chromebook/iPad.
- I will never leave the chromebook/iPad unattended, and I will know where it is at all times.
- I will protect my chromebook/iPad by keeping it stored in the provided case at all times.
- I will never loan out my chromebook/ iPad or give my password to other individuals.
- I will not let anyone else use my chromebook/iPad other than my parents or guardians.
- I will charge my chromebook/iPad's battery daily and arrive at school with my device fully charged.
- I will keep food and beverages away from my chromebook/iPad since these may cause damage to the device.
- I will clean the screen with a soft, antistatic cloth ONLY and will use no cleaners.
- I will not disassemble any part of my chromebook/iPad or attempt any repairs.
- I will not place decorations (such as stickers, markers, etc.) on the chrombook/iPad or chromebook/iPad cover, or do anything to permanently alter the chromebook/ iPad in any way.
- I will not remove or deface the serial number or other identification on any chromebook/iPad.
- I will be responsible for all damage or loss caused by neglect or abuse.
- I agree to return the chromebook/iPad, case, and power cords in good working condition.

CONSEQUENCES for VIOLATIONS of INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

Students who violate the rules set forth in these policies will be subject to all customary disciplinary actions, including but not limited to, the following:

- Payment for labor charges and/or parts necessary to undo changes or restore any equipment or system to its proper operating configuration as determined by the network administrator and Our Lady of Mercy School administration.
- Removal of the student from a course of instruction, suspension, and/or expulsion from Our Lady of Mercy School.

Harassment and Bullying

Our Lady of Mercy School affirms the Christian dignity of every person, the right of each person to be treated with respect, and is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from harassment/bullying. Harassment/bullying of or by any student is prohibited. Every school will treat allegations of harassment/bullying seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner. Allegations that are substantiated may result in disciplinary actions, up to and including dismissal.

1. Elementary and secondary students are undergoing a period of rapid growth in their maturity and social skills. It is not unusual for a student to make a mistake in his or her social interaction with another student. Any mistake should be corrected so that the student may learn from it and treat other students respectfully. An honest mistake should not be considered harassment/bullying. Part of any investigation into a charge of harassment/bullying will be to determine if the incident was a mistake, or something deliberate or repeated.

Harassment/bullying is unacceptable conduct that is deliberate, severe, and repeated (conduct that falls under the following categories that is not repetitive may, at the discretion of the principal, still be subject to the same consequences/sanctions as ongoing conduct).

Harassment/bullying occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment that is hostile, offensive, or intimidating based on such factors as an individual's sex, race, religion, color, national origin, or physical or mental ability. Harassment/bullying can occur any time during school, school related activities, and outside the school. It includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- A. Verbal Harassment/Bullying: Derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory words, whether oral, written, or electronic;
- B. Physical Harassment/Bullying: Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking of movements, or intimidating interference with normal work or movement;
- C. Visual Harassment/Bullying: Derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, pictures, web pages or gestures;
- D. Sexual Harassment/Bullying: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following: sexually demeaning comments, sexual statements, or jokes; suggestive or obscene letters, phone calls, texts, or e-mail; deliberate, unlawful physical touching; leering, gesture, or display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.
- E. Cyber-Harassment/Bullying: Willful and repeated harm inflicted on other persons through various forms of electronic media; provocative material, pictures, images, or attempts to be harmful or cruel to another student or individual through offensive electronic distribution using a cell phone, camera, the internet, or other electronic devices; or sexting (the sending,

receiving, or forwarding of sexually explicit messages, photographs or images between digital devices or the sharing of such communication with others).

- F. Hazing: Any method of initiation, pastime, or amusement engaged in with respect to a student organization which causes, or is likely to cause, bodily danger or physical harm, or tends to degrade or disgrace a student attending the school. May be a one-time occurrence and not be ongoing.
2. Any individual seeing or hearing about any incident of harassment/bullying is encouraged to follow the procedures below. If the harassment/bullying stems from the principal, the person being harassed/bullied is to contact the pastor and the superintendent in cases of diocesan schools.
 3. The following procedures are to be followed for filing and investigating a harassment/bullying claim:
 - A. Students who feel aggrieved because of conduct that constitutes harassment/bullying should, depending on the severity of the conduct, directly inform the person engaging in such conduct that such conduct is offensive and must stop.
 - B. If the student does not feel comfortable with the above, is unable to do so, or the offensive conduct does not stop, he/she shall direct his/her complaint to the principal or to a member of the school staff, who will then report it directly to the principal. Parents of students involved are to be contacted as soon as possible and will be kept apprised of the status of the response efforts of the school as those steps are undertaken.
 - C. The student(s) alleging harassment will be asked to complete a written complaint. Students at the primary level may verbally explain their complaint rather than writing it. The claim will be investigated thoroughly, and confidentiality will be maintained to the extent practicable.
 - D. The investigation will include a meeting with the student alleged to have harassed/bullied, sharing with that person the nature of the allegations, as well as the name of the person bringing the allegations. Where the school deems it appropriate, witnesses may also be interviewed.
 - E. Once the facts of the case have been gathered, the principal, in consultation with the Pastor or Superintendent, will decide what, if any, disciplinary action is warranted. The disciplinary action will relate to the nature, context, and seriousness of the harassment/bullying and can include all disciplinary actions up to and including immediate expulsion; if appropriate, law enforcement may also be contacted.
 - F. If a party disagrees with the decision, he or she has the right to appeal the outcome to the Office of Catholic Education of the Diocese of Fresno. The OCE

will address the appeal according to its procedures in effect at that time, which will be provided to all those involved in the appeal.

4. If the complaint is against a non-employee or non-student, such as a parent, volunteer, or vendor, the school will take steps, within the extent of its power, to investigate and eliminate the problem.
5. **REPRISAL AND/OR RETALIATION:** Reprisal or retaliation against any complaining student or witness, by any student or parent, is strictly prohibited. Any student or parent who engages in such a reprisal or retaliation will be subject to an appropriate disciplinary response, up to and including immediate expulsion from the school.

Controlled Substances

Our Lady of Mercy School emphasizes a commitment to a positive, faith-based environment for learning and the continued good health and safety of its students. Therefore, students, on or off campus, may not be in possession of, under the influence of, and/or use controlled substances, look-a-likes, or paraphernalia, nor engage in solicitation or distribution thereof.

The term “controlled substance” for the purposes of this handbook typically refers to any illegal drug, marijuana, alcohol, tobacco, tobacco products, e-cigarettes and vapor products, or the intentional misuse of prescription medication. The intentional misuse of other types of substances may also be addressed under this policy, at the discretion of the school administration. A full listing of drugs that are illegal under federal law can be found in the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. §§ 801, et. seq.).

The school expects parents and students to support all policies on the use of controlled substances:

- Parents/guardians and older siblings or family members are legally and morally responsible any time they provide to or allow the use of controlled substances by underage minors.
- Students may not possess, solicit, use, or be under the influence of controlled substances or paraphernalia, on or off campus, or at supervised or unsupervised activities or events.
- Students may not host an event where controlled substances are present or used.
- The presence of students any time controlled substances are used or distributed presumes some level of participation and may result in the same consequences as those using or distributing the substances.
- Students participating in any activities, real or pretend, involving paraphernalia or “look-alikes” associated with controlled substances may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Students may not sell or distribute any controlled substance on or off campus.
- Any student (or parent/guardian on behalf of a student) who freely approaches a counselor, administrator, teacher, coach, or other staff member for help regarding a controlled substance problem will be assisted in the spirit of counseling (unless the student is found to be using the counseling mechanism to avoid disciplinary action). However, this “spirit of counseling” will require strict adherence to all policies regarding controlled substances; requirements will be handled on an individual basis.
- The presence of students at after-hours school events (such as school or parish fundraising dinners) where alcohol is served to adults does not constitute a violation of this policy.

Upon at least reasonable suspicion that a student has violated this policy, any of the following actions may be taken, as deemed necessary by the school:

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified.
- A search of the student’s belongings (backpack, bag, clothing, electronic device, etc.), desk, locker, or cubby may take place.
- The student may be suspended from school pending an investigation.

- The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) will conference with the principal and/or other school officials.
- The student may be asked to be drug tested once or periodically at a location approved by the school; the cost of drug testing is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- The student may be placed on a behavior contract which may include professional evaluation, counseling, involvement with a support group, rehabilitation if recommended by the evaluation, random drug testing, and any other provision deemed necessary by the school administration.
- The student may be suspended following an investigation.
- The school may ask the parent(s)/guardian(s) to withdraw the student.
- The student may be expelled
- Law enforcement and/or child protective services may be contacted.

DISCLAIMER: Nothing in the school's controlled substance policy should be construed to mean that, as a result of this policy, Our Lady of Mercy School has undertaken a duty to detect, prevent, or treat drug or alcohol use by students, even if such use becomes apparent.

Extra-Curricular Activities

STUDENT COUNCIL

- Students in grades 4-8 are eligible to serve on student council. They be elected or appointed.
- A student serving on student council must maintain a B- grade in conduct and effort and have no grade lower than a C- in all academic subjects.
- A student serving on Student Council may be relieved of his or her duties or position either permanently or for a stated time at the discretion of the principal.

SOCIAL EVENTS/DANCES

Our Lady of Mercy School sponsors supervised social events and dances to help students develop appropriate social skills in a Christian, Catholic context. Such events will be held on school or parish premises and are only open to students enrolled at the school. A fee may be charged. Rules and guidelines will be published prior to any event.

STUDENT PARTIES OUTSIDE of SCHOOL (not sponsored by the school)

Parents who may sponsor dances and/or parties outside of school time are asked that, if the party is to be advertised at school (e.g., invitations handed out at school), such parties are inclusive of the entire class. Parents and students are reminded that behavior rules and sanctions of the school apply.

Athletics

ATHLETIC TEAMS

Students in grades K - 8 are given the opportunity to participate in the athletic program. An athletic fee of \$30.00 is charged per player, per sport. This fee covers the cost of tournament fees, equipment, uniforms, and referees. The following sports are offered:

Cross Country grades K-8

Track grades 3-8

Girl's Volleyball grades 5-8

Boy's Volleyball grades 5-8

Girl's Soccer grades 5-8

Boy's Soccer grades 5-8

Girl's Basketball grades 5-8

Boy's Basketball grades 5-8

Girl's Softball grades 5-8

Boy's Baseball grades 5-8

PARTICIPATION on ATHLETIC TEAMS

Students enrolled in 1st – 8th grade who are planning to on participate in school sports are required to have a sports physical form completed annually by their physician. This form must be on file in the school office prior to the student participating in any sport game or practice. In addition each family is

required to attend a sports meeting before the child can participate. Participation in after-school sports is contingent upon the following:

- Availability of qualified volunteer personnel
- Try-outs, if deemed necessary by the coach
- Payment of the athletic fee (\$30.00 per sport)
- Parental permission emergency form
- Maintain a B- in conduct and effort
- Maintain a C- in all academic subjects
- Student's continuing satisfactory deportment both in school and on the team
- Physical examination form completed by physician, required yearly, prior to the beginning of participation in practice or competition.
- A student must attend at least half of the regular school day to participate in that day's practices or games.

The following is a list of attributes we wish our children to develop through Our Lady of Mercy's Athletic Program.

- To build a community which strives to image Christ;
- To develop Christian spirit, school spirit, team spirit and personal acceptance;
- To instill Christian sportsmanship in the life-styles of the participants;
- To teach the participants the proper attitude towards winning, losing and competing with dignity;
- To develop acceptance and appreciation of others;
- To train, instruct and follow athletic/sport rules;
- To develop the students' physical abilities and coordination;
- To help form well-rounded students by fostering good health habits;
- To provide a Christian environment and outlet for youthful energy;
- To teach the positive value of athletic participation; and
- To show the necessity of practice, hard work, and time management.

These goals are founded upon the principle of the infinite worth of each person because he/she is created in the image and likeness of God.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

- Players must have a "C-" or higher in all academic subjects and at least a "B-" in conduct and effort from every teacher to be eligible to play.
- A student must attend at least half of the regular school day to participate in that day's practices or games.
- Students on behavioral or academic probation are ineligible.
- Students not regularly attending practice sessions will not be allowed to participate in games.

CONDUCT of PLAYERS DURING GAMES and PRACTICES

Athletes are expected to conduct themselves appropriately at all games and practices. Athletes are expected to represent Our Lady of Mercy School in a manner that exemplifies good sportsmanship, pride, and respect. Athletes displaying inappropriate behavior will be removed from the game and face disciplinary consequences.

CONDUCT of PARENTS and FANS

- Parents and fans are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship and respect for the coach, athletes on both teams, and other parents and fans.
- Parents should not offer coaching instructions to their children during a practice or game.
- Parents should not confront coaches with demands or complaints concerning strategy or playing time for their children during a game. Instead, parents are asked to observe a 24-hour cooling off period after a game before contacting the coach with a concern.
- All children are to be supervised by an adult during games and practices.
- Parents and fans must comply with requests from coaches, the athletic director, the principal, or other site-supervisors during a game or practice; if compliance is not demonstrated, the participants will be asked to leave the premises.
- Non-compliance with the above guidelines may place the enrollment of the students in jeopardy.

PLAYING TIME

Playing time is the prerogative of the coach who will follow guidelines on this issue; coaches are encouraged to play every player as much as possible. Players cannot expect to play in games if they have not been attending practices and giving 100% effort throughout these practices.

REPORTING INJURIES and SPECIAL LIMITATIONS

Parents and athletes must report all injuries to the coach as soon as possible. Before the sports season begins, parents should discuss with the coach any special limitations their child may have. Any sports limitations should be listed on the student's Medical Release Form on file with the school.

CONCUSSION

Please see the section titled "Concussion Policies" following the "Health and Safety" section.

COMMUNICATION with COACHES

- Players are to report all injuries to the coach as soon as possible.
- Students should express any concerns to the coach first before involving parents.
- If student concerns are not resolved after speaking with the coach, parents should contact the coach to express concerns.
- If resolution cannot be achieved, all parties should involve the athletic director.
- The principal should only become involved if none of these steps has achieved resolution. Decisions of the principal in athletic matters are final.

UNIFORMS

Sport uniforms must be turned in within a week of the last game of the season. Uniforms must be laundered and bagged, and the bag should be labeled with the athlete's name. Uniforms may only be worn during games and not during practice. Participants are responsible for their uniform. If uniforms are returned late, damaged, or dirty, the student will be assessed a replacement fee for the uniform.

TRANSPORTATION

All drivers who are transporting students to sports events must follow all school volunteer driver regulations. All students who require a ride to any school-sponsored sport activity must have written authorization from their parents/guardians allowing them to ride with drivers the parents/guardians have authorized. No student may ride in a car to or from a school-sponsored game with an adult who has not been pre-authorized by his/her parents/guardians. Students should not drive themselves or other students to any school activity.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

All parents/guardians of athletes are required to sign up for work hours in the snack bar, for games/tournaments held at Our Lady of Mercy School.

Transfer, Custody, and Student Records

TRANSFER of STUDENTS

Students clearly unable to profit from the school by reasons of ability, serious emotional instability or other condition, or the conspicuously uncooperative or destructive attitude of students and/or parent(s)/grandparent(s)/ guardian(s) will be asked to transfer.

- The school will first make reasonable efforts to meet the needs of the student.
- Conferences will be held with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to advise them concerning the possibility of withdrawal for academic or other reasons and to discuss possible remedial actions and/or educational alternatives.
- The final decision is made by the principal in consultation with the pastor, teacher(s), and parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Every effort is made to assist the parent(s)/guardian(s) in finding other schools or agencies with facilities to help the child.

TRANSFER of STUDENTS BECAUSE of PARENTAL BEHAVIOR

Normally a child is not to be deprived of a Catholic education or otherwise penalized for actions of the parent(s). However, the principal and/or pastor may recommend transfer of a student when parent(s)/grandparent(s)/guardian(s) are consistently uncooperative and conduct themselves in a manner that is disruptive of the harmonious relationships in the school, as such conduct is itself a violation of the school's policies. Parental interference in matters of school administration and abusive language toward principal, pastor, or teacher(s) are some of the reasons for recommending a transfer. If parent(s) refuse to accept the recommended transfer, the procedures for disciplinary expulsion will be followed.

TRANSFER OF STUDENTS BETWEEN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Prior to accepting a student transferring from one Catholic school to another Catholic school, the receiving principal will contact the principal of the originating school to discuss student performance, parent financial obligations, family involvement, etc.

CUSTODY OF MINORS

Unauthorized organizations, agencies, or persons shall never be allowed to assume custody of any student on school premises during school hours or immediately before or after school, unless the assumption of custody is explicitly authorized in writing by the parent(s) or guardian(s).

1. Normally, principals should ask one other adult (e.g. pastor, teacher, secretary) to witness the presentation of the authorization unless the principal is absolutely certain that the authorization is bona fide.
2. In case of any doubt as to the validity of the authorization, custody shall not be granted.

3. In order to cooperate with student and family needs, the school should be informed of custody arrangements. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to inform the school of custody status and subsequent changes and arrangements. The school must ask for legal verification of these arrangements.
4. In the absence of any court order, the school will make every effort to remain neutral, and will assume that both parent(s) have custody of a student, and the student may be released to either parent. As part of this policy of neutrality, any parent claiming a custody right superior to the other parent will be required to present a current and valid court order or agreement demonstrating and explaining that right. Only upon receipt of satisfactory documentation will the school recognize the rights of one parent over the other with regard to a custody provision that relates to the student's enrollment at the school (such as decisions regarding enrollment or who may alter the authorized) .

RIGHTS of NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide all the child's parents, custodial or non-custodial, with equal access to the child and equal access to academic records and other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is no information to be given, no contact with the child, etc., it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

STUDENTS NOT LIVING WITH PARENTS or LEGAL GUARDIANS

Students are expected to reside with their parents or legal guardians. If circumstances arise necessitating a student to live elsewhere, the school must have the parent's approval in writing or a court order. The new location must meet with the school's approval. Students must reside with a responsible adult of at least 25 years of age; this does not include a boyfriend or girlfriend of the parent or guardian.

ACCESS to STUDENT RECORDS

Custodial Parent(s)/Guardian(s) have access to all permanent records (the Cumulative File) maintained by the school related to their children. Students, 18 years of age or older, have this same right of access.

- Permanent records may be withheld for non-payment of fees.
- Parent(s) may request an appointment during school hours to inspect and review the cumulative file for their children.
- The principal or other school staff member will be present for such a review.
- Anecdotal notes (such as a behavioral record) and psychological test results are not part of a permanent record. Parent(s) do not have a right of access to these records, nor do these records follow the student.
- Parent(s) may request and receive a copy of their child's permanent records contained in the cumulative file; parents must allow school personnel a reasonable length of time to accomplish

this task. The copy will be clearly marked as a copy. Originals or the original complete file cannot be released to parents at any time.

- The Cumulative File is only forwarded to the next school at that school's request; otherwise, it remains on site.
- Schools will comply with any court order (subpoena) requesting a copy of the permanent records.

Miscellaneous Information and Policies

CLASSROOM PARTIES/BIRTHDAYS

Class parties are limited to three scheduled parties each year-Christmas, Valentine's Day, and End of the Year. Younger siblings may not attend. These parties consist of simple treats, i.e. cookies and juice, or ice cream. Any exceptions to this policy must have prior approval by the Principal.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones are to be turned off and kept out of sight during school hours. They may only be used after school is dismissed, and with a teacher's permission. Cell phones will be confiscated for misuse, and can be picked up from the Principal by the parent.

LOST and FOUND

It is essential that all sweatshirts, P.E. clothes, etc. be visibly marked with the student's full name. Found items will be placed on a clothes rack outside of room 16. Students or parents may claim the lost items from this rack before or after school.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Our Lady of Mercy School does not participate in the federal lunch program. Children may bring their lunch or purchase a lunch. **Milk tickets** may be bought for **\$2.50** for five days. Hot lunch is available on a daily basis. **Lunch tickets** may be bought for **\$17.50** for five days. Tickets are sold each morning in room 7 before classes begin. Late lunches are to be brought to the office. Canned or bottled sodas are not allowed.

2020-2021 Parent/Student Handbook Agreement

[Please detach, sign, and return by the August 21, 2020

When a family signs the statement below, it is understood by the parents/guardians and student(s) that they have read the current Parent/Student Handbook on file and agree to comply with all policies, regulations, and directives stated therein as well as any updates and revisions made to the handbook during their time of enrollment. Students may not attend classes or participate in any activities until this agreement is signed and returned by August 21, 2020.

By enrolling in Our Lady of Mercy School, all students and parents grant to the school the irrevocable and unrestricted right to use, reproduce, and publish photographs or video images of the student, for slide/video presentations, publications, advertising, brochures, or website(s), or any other purpose, and in any manner and medium, to alter the same without restriction, and to copyright the same. In granting this permission, parent and student also release the school from any and all claims, actions, and liability of whatever nature and relating to the use of said photograph(s), video(s), or related materials.

School administration reserves the right to amend this handbook as needed; notification of such amendments will be made to parents and students in a timely manner.

I have read and understand the information contained in the Parent/Student Handbook and agree to abide by the rules set forth therein.

Please *print* Family Last Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Signature(s) (when age-appropriate):

Date:

Volunteer Agreement Form

Diocese of Fresno

Volunteer name (please print): _____

Parish / School location name: _____

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have chosen to volunteer at the Parish/School location named above, in the following capacity:

In connection with my volunteer service, I make the following express representations:

1. I understand and acknowledge that my time and services as a volunteer are being donated by me to the Roman Catholic Church, specifically the Parish/School location named above, without contemplation of compensation or future employment, and that I provide these services for religious, charitable, or humanitarian reasons.
2. I understand that as a volunteer I will earn no wages or benefits in connection with the volunteer services I wish to provide, and that I will not seek any such wages or benefits. I further understand that I will not be entitled to unemployment insurance benefits upon the discontinuance of my volunteer services (regardless of whether such discontinuance is initiated by me or by the Parish / School), nor will I be covered under the Parish's/School's workers' compensation insurance in the event I am injured while engaging in the volunteer services I will provide.

I acknowledge that I have read this agreement, have voluntarily signed it, and that no oral representations, statements, or inducements apart from the contents of this agreement have been made to me.

Date: _____

Volunteer signature

Date: _____

Volunteer signature

Date: _____

Authorized Parish/School Representative

ACCEPTABLE USE PLEDGE COVERING ELECTRONIC DEVICES

- I will use my chromebook or any of my other electronic devices in ways that are appropriate, educational, and meet Our Lady of Mercy School expectations as outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook.
- I will use appropriate language when using emails, journals, blogs, or any other forms of communication.
- I will not create, or encourage others to create, discourteous or abusive content.
- I will not use electronic communication to spread rumors, gossip, or engage in any other activity that is harmful to other persons.
- I understand that my chromebook/ipad and school computers used by me are subject to inspection at any time without notice and remain the property of the school.
- I understand that my other electronic devices (including but not limited to my cell phone) are subject to inspection at any time based on a reasonable suspicion that they contain information pertinent to a violation of law or school policies.
- I will take proper care of my chromebook/iPad.
- I will never leave the chromebook/iPad unattended, and I will know where it is at all times.
- I will protect my chromebook/iPad by keeping it stored in the provided case at all times.
- I will never loan out my chromebook/ iPad or give my password to other individuals.
- I will not let anyone else use my chromebook/iPad other than my parents or guardians.
- I will charge my chromebook/iPad's battery daily and arrive at school with my device fully charged.
- I will keep food and beverages away from my chromebook/iPad since these may cause damage to the device.
- I will clean the screen with a soft, antistatic cloth ONLY and will use no cleaners.
- I will not disassemble any part of my chromebook/iPad or attempt any repairs.
- I will not place decorations (such as stickers, markers, etc.) on the chrombook/iPad or chromebook/iPad cover, or do anything to permanently alter the chromebook/ iPad in any way.
- I will not remove or deface the serial number or other identification on any chromebook/iPad.
- I will be responsible for all damage or loss caused by neglect or abuse.
- I agree to return the chromebook/iPad, case, and power cords in good working condition.

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Parent

Date