

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2011-12

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Mercyhurst Preparatory School, 538 East Grandview Blvd., Erie, PA 16504, is a private Catholic co-educational high school sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy of New York, Pennsylvania, Pacific West.

HISTORY

The school was founded in 1926 as Mercyhurst Seminary. In 1963 it was moved to its present location and the name was changed to Mercyhurst Preparatory School.

The school is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. It was twice recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.

In 1985 Mercyhurst Prep became a member school of the International Baccalaureate organization, offering the finest and most rigorous global curriculum recognized by colleges and universities.

In order to further enhance this global focus, Mercyhurst Prep developed an exclusive affiliation with the newly formed Pennsylvania International Academy in 2010, which enabled a significant number of international students from twelve different countries, among them China, Mexico, Korea, Brazil, India, Uganda, Rwanda, and Pakistan to attend the school.

VISION STATEMENT

As a Mercy-sponsored school we value and manifest the charism of our foundress, Catherine McAuley. Compassionate presence, justice, hospitality, service, and concern for the dignity of all persons impel our mission and incarnate the spirit that is Mercy. Mercyhurst exists to provide an education that affirms the unchanging relevance of Jesus Christ and the power of His love and freedom in each person's search for a meaningful life, for right values, and for positive attitudes.

Mercyhurst Prep is dedicated to providing an environment which promotes personal growth, responsible moral choices, critical thinking, and a passion for the possible.

We are committed to creating a community in which all may deepen their spiritual awareness, broaden their intellectual endeavors, strengthen their personal integrity, enhance their individual talents, and embrace their global responsibility.

MISSION STATEMENT

Mercyhurst Prep School is a four year co-educational Catholic secondary school founded by the Sisters of Mercy to prepare students from all religious and ethnic backgrounds for a successful, productive, and compassionate life in an ever-changing and interdependent world. A Mercyhurst Prep education is based upon the teachings of Jesus Christ, the charism of Mercy, and a modeling of Judeo-Christian values. We strive for excellence in academic and co-curricular programs, we promote service to our local and global communities, and we foster the dedication and active support of the students, parents, faculty, staff, and alumni of the Mercyhurst community.

BELIEF STATEMENTS

We believe that:

- God is the center of our existence and Christ is our model for truth and compassion.
- Compassionate presence, justice, service, hospitality, and concern for the dignity of all persons (the charism of our foundress, Catherine McAuley) are the foundation of our school and of a moral and enlightened society.
- Positive moral and religious values lived out in ethical conduct and service are fundamental to an interdependent society.
- A positive educational environment is necessary for children to succeed.
- Everyone has an obligation to offer his or her gifts in service to others.
- Education is the responsibility of the entire community.
- Self-love and self-discipline are essential for one's maturity.
- The family is the most significant institution in society.

- Tolerance, understanding, and appreciation of cultural diversity are critical to world peace and global harmony.
- Lifelong learning is essential to fulfillment of one's potential in a changing, interdependent world.
- Individual actions influence the world and its people.
- Each person must assume stewardship of this planet.
- Appreciation of the arts enlightens the human mind and spirit.
- Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the academic community.
- Those who have much are obliged to share their resources with those who have less.
- The active pursuit of wellness enhances one's quality of life.

PROFILE OF THE MPS GRADUATE

As young men and women move beyond Mercyhurst Preparatory School, they embody its mission and vision in the lives they lead. They move onward in diverse pursuits, each uniquely equipped with qualities, knowledge, and practices cultivated within these walls.

The core quality toward which all MPS graduates will continue to aspire is integrity. These young persons seek integrity not only in the conventional sense of living by sound moral principles, but also in its broader sense as a state of being complete—wholeness of being.

Their integrity is based upon growing personal conviction built through guided exploration of faith, spirituality, and morality. This conviction, existing in myriad unique forms, has been informed by the ever relevant models of Jesus Christ and Catherine McAuley, and an appreciation of other traditions and faiths. It drives personal ethics and values, equipping the MPS graduate to make responsible moral choices.

Our graduates integrate many qualities as they form their own identities. They enjoy positive self-image and an awareness of their strengths and limitations. They are imaginative, creative, reflective, and enthusiastic thinkers and learners. They are versatile and adaptable. While open-minded, they demonstrate accountability, self-discipline, and time management. They are thus able to succeed academically and in their various roles in the world at large. MPS graduates have cultivated an aesthetic appreciation for the arts and their importance personally and culturally. They strive for health and fitness in all its forms. Lest we forget, they also know how to appropriately enjoy themselves and the company of others. They have fun. These young persons are engaged in the wonderful and fulfilling lifelong pursuit of meaning and wholeness of being.

Integrity expands outward as the individual connects responsibly to the broader communal and global whole. Our graduates have developed a sense of connection and belonging to the Mercyhurst community. They engage in active citizenship and stewardship on levels from local to global, with a maturing awareness of contemporary issues informed by historical understanding. They commit to the charism of Mercy in their connection to others.

MPS graduates have built a strong knowledge base of content, skills, tools, and methodologies in the core disciplines. Furthermore, they have begun to realize the connections among these disciplines and explored elective choices of study. Their competence in technology facilitates and enhances their conceptual knowledge in all fields.

With their commencement, our graduates truly begin to apply their knowledge and character qualities in their chosen pursuits. They effectively employ critical thinking skills as students, citizens, and consumers. They are literate and articulate communicators: readers, writers, listeners, and speakers. Technologically proficient, they are able to adapt and to embrace new advances innovatively. They can solve problems creatively. MPS graduates can pose and implement effective strategies to plan, produce, and evaluate accomplishment in the fields of their choosing. They grow and contribute.

MPS graduates integrate their qualities, knowledge, and practices into a wholeness of being consistent with our mission and vision. Their integrity stretches across the broad spectrum of choices possible in

academic, professional, and personal life. They serve others with their gifts and resources. They show concern for the dignity of all persons. They act to promote justice. They show compassion in word and action. Each of them can do so in unique and wonderful ways.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

MERCYHURST PREP GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS AND COURSE OF STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

Each student must pursue eight courses per term including a minimum of six yearlong classes. The following are the minimum requirements in each academic area. The remaining credits may be earned in any areas of the student's choice. Each student is required to study at least one course at the IB level.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

Theology	4 years
English	4 years
Math	3 years
Science	3 years
Social Studies	4 years
Foreign Language	2 years
Creative Arts	2 terms
Art or Music Appreciation	1 term
Physical Education	4 terms (1 term each year)
Health	1 year (3 terms)
Information Technology	2 terms
Freshman Communications	1 term
Technology Quotient	Minimum 3.5
Community Service	.25 credit per year

RECOMMENDED AS PREPARATION FOR COLLEGE

Theology	4 years
English	4 years
Math	4 years
Science	4 years
Social Studies	4 years
Foreign Language	3-4 years
Creative Arts	2 years (6 terms)
Art or Music Appreciation	1 term
Physical Education	4 terms (1 term each year)
Health	1 year (3 terms)
Information Technology	1 year (3 terms)
Freshman Communications	1 term
Technology Quotient	Minimum 3.5
Community Service	.25 credit per year

Twenty-five hours of community service are required each year.

A summer reading program is required for grades 9-12.

Students prepare their schedules in the spring for the following year in consultation with faculty members, guidance counselors, and parents. Except in extraordinary circumstances they may not change these schedules. **Schedule changes will be considered only if:**

- the student has demonstrated the effort necessary to succeed
- the student is not missing any assignments/tasks
- the academic dean has determined that the student will likely not meet with success
- after dropping the class, the student still has six yearlong courses

(See full Course Drop Policy at www.mpslakers.com).

TECHNOLOGY QUOTIENT

Each graduating student will have achieved a minimum technology quotient of 3.5 on a 5.0 scale. This Technological Quotient (TQ) will be a quantitative assessment of the technological competency accumulated throughout the student's tenure at MPS.

STANDARD GRADING SCALE AND QUALITY POINTS

A student can calculate his/her QPA by multiplying the quality points received in each course by the credit for that course, adding these, and dividing by the number of credits attempted. Quality points are as follows:

	General/College Prep	Honors Course
A = 93 - 100%	4.0	5.0
B+ = 90 - 92%	3.5	4.5
B = 85 - 89%	3.0	4.0
C+ = 82 - 84%	2.5	3.5
C = 75 - 81%	2.0	3.0
D = 70 - 74%	1.0	1.0
F = 69 - Below	0.0	0.0

INCOMPLETE GRADES

Designation of incomplete (I) on a report card indicates coursework not completed due to unusual or unforeseen circumstances. Students have two weeks after the end of the term to submit such work or points given for these assignments/tasks will be zero and averaged in with the rest of the term grades.

GRADE REPORTING

Student grades are continuously available on line at <http://gradebook.mpslakers.com>. Parents and students receive login and password instructions each year that allow them to access current academic standing in all courses. Regular checking is advised.

If at any time a parent wishes to communicate with a teacher about his/her student's progress, an e-mail can be sent using the following formula: initial of first name, full last name, @mpslakers.com.

ACADEMIC STANDING POLICY

Mercyhurst Prep expects all students to meet or exceed minimum academic standards for their own benefit and that of the entire school community. Academic probation is a conditional permission for the student to remain enrolled until such standards are met.

Academic probation: A student will be placed on academic probation whenever s/he receives one or more grades of F at the end of any grading period. A student on academic probation will be expected to work with the appropriate teacher/s and/or counselor to map out strategies to attain academic success.

Dismissal: Any student not in good academic standing at the end of the academic year could be asked to leave.

HONOR ROLL

A student may qualify for the honor roll at the end of each grading period. To qualify for **First Honors**, the student must achieve a 4.0 QPA and no grade below a B. For **Second Honors**, the student must achieve a 3.5 QPA and no grade below a C. **Honorable Mention** is awarded to those students who achieve a QPA of 3.0 and no grade below a C. For honor roll consideration all incomplete grades must be reported by the two week deadline.

CLASS RANK

Valedictorian and salutatorian are determined by cumulative Mercyhurst Prep quality point average from freshman year through second term of senior year. These two top honors are open to students who have been continuously enrolled at Mercyhurst Prep since at least the first day of the second term of freshman year.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM (IB)

Mercyhurst is one of only 3,264 schools in 141 countries around the globe who are part of the prestigious International Baccalaureate Organization.

The IB program is based on the concept that general education at the upper secondary level should promote the development of the lifelong skills of critical thinking, communication, and integration of information through an in depth study of the major areas of knowledge.

Successful completion of the program earns for the student a diploma/certificate recognized for university admission and for course credit at many colleges and universities throughout the world. The IB's greatest value, however, lies in its intrinsic worth as a challenge and a symbol of the greater achievement to which the student has aspired.

COLLEGE PROGRAM

Mercyhurst Prep, in conjunction with Mercyhurst College, offers a special program for academically able students who wish to begin college courses or who want to pursue a subject in greater depth. Eligibility criteria for this program are available in the guidance office. MPS students are granted a very substantial tuition discount by Mercyhurst College for each course. The college grants full credit for such courses and sends a transcript of the student's work to the college of his/her choice.

SENIORS AT MERCYHURST (SAM)

Through the SAM program students have the opportunity to complete their senior year at Mercyhurst Preparatory School and their freshman year at Mercyhurst College concomitantly. Students who are recommended for the program work with both the high school and college counselors for selection of courses and may also be eligible for financial aid.

GUIDANCE

The purpose of the guidance program is to provide a variety of services to students, teachers, and parents in a planned, goal-oriented manner.

The guidance program is an integral part of the educational process. Guidance functions include counseling, consultation, and coordination of services to meet the needs of all students.

The primary purpose of the counseling service is to assist students in understanding, accepting, and enhancing their personal qualities, recognizing and developing their academic potential, and becoming more self-directed, self-confident individuals with the skills required to make wise decisions and formulate realistic goals.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)

MPS is involved in Pennsylvania's Student Assistance Program (SAP) through which faculty members are trained in observation techniques and at-risk symptoms in order to identify students with possible emotional, behavioral, or chemical difficulties. An intervention Core Team made up of guidance, teaching, and administrative personnel, as well as ad hoc resource personnel from an outside provider for mental health services and drug and alcohol prevention services, meets weekly throughout the school year to address faculty, parent, and student concerns. When the situation warrants, referrals are made for assessment purposes to the appropriate ad hoc person after obtaining parental permission. Recommendations produced by the assessment will guide the Core Team in its handling of the matter.

The guidance department has developed an information gathering form which enables guidance counselors and faculty members to address concerns they may have about individual students. The form is referred to as the SAP (Student Assistance Program) form and concerns itself with three areas of inquiry - attendance, general behavior, and academics.

Students may refer themselves and others when they recognize need for support. Parents, teachers, or administrative staff may also act as referral agents by contacting the appropriate grade counselor with parental permission.

Once information is compiled by the counselor, it is reviewed by the Intervention Team at their weekly Core Team meeting. An interview with the student and/or parents may result if the team deems it warranted. Referral may be made to a Core Team ad hoc person if the Core Team feels it necessary. Further recommendations may be suggested by the Core Team to help the student deal with the particular area of difficulty.

PERMANENT RECORDS

A file for each student is kept in the main office. This file includes the student's academic record, attendance record, standardized test score record, and extracurricular record. No information gathered by guidance counselors or assistant principals is kept in the student's permanent record. Students and parents/guardians may have access to permanent records.

FEDERAL EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The purpose of these regulations is to set requirements for the protection of privacy of parents and students under section 438 of General Education Provisions Act, as amended.

Parents or eligible students have the right to

1. inspect and review student's education records
2. request amendment of student's education records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of student's privacy or other rights
3. consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information entered in student's education records, except to the extent that the act and regulations authorize disclosure without consent.

All procedures will be conducted through the admissions/records office of Mercyhurst Prep. A copy of this act will be on file in the office.

PROCEDURAL POLICIES

So that students may secure a well-rounded education and realize their full potential it is necessary that school be an appropriate learning environment. Certain procedures and policies have been established to foster and maintain this environment.

It is the responsibility of each Mercyhurst Prep student and parent to be familiar with the following policies and procedures.

DRESS CODE

The present uniform colors are grey, white, and green. The supplier of skirts, slacks, shirts, and shorts is Flynn & O'Hara Uniform Company.

UNIFORM - Required at all times –

1. Grey slacks or skirt of modest length – **no shorter than 4 inches above the knee** (available from Flynn & O'Hara only). Slacks must be hemmed so that they do not drag on the floor and they may not have split seams.
2. One of the following:
 - a. Ironed white oxford cloth shirt with white buttons and buttoned down collar, long sleeved or short sleeved (available from Flynn & O'Hara and elsewhere), or a
 - b. White knit polo shirt with MPS logo, long sleeved or short sleeved (available from Flynn & O'Hara only).

3. A plain black or brown belt must be worn with any pair of slacks manufactured with belt loops.
4. Only a plain white turtleneck or tee shirt may be worn under the oxford cloth or polo shirts. Long sleeved turtlenecks or tees may not be worn under short sleeved polos or oxfords.
5. Socks or tights (required at all times)
 - a. Girls are required to wear plain grey or black tights with skirts from October 15 to April 15. During the remaining months white, grey, or black solid color knee or crew socks may be worn.
 - b. Boys are required to wear white, grey, or black solid color crew socks.
 - c. All socks must cover the ankle bone.
6. Shoes: a closed toe shoe in condition of good repair. Boots and sneakers may NOT be worn as part of the uniform.

Dress Uniform –

On designated days during the school year, students are asked to wear their **dress uniforms**, which consist of the slacks/skirts, belts, shoes, and socks as described above. The only changes are:

1. ONLY oxford cloth shirts may be worn; no polo shirts.
2. Green or grey striped MPS tie (available from Flynn & O'Hara or from the MPS bookstore) must be worn.
3. Although not required, the only sweaters that may be worn with the dress uniform are:
 - a. Green cardigan with MPS logo available from Flynn & O'Hara and from the MPS bookstore).
 - b. Green v-neck sweater with MPS logo (available from Flynn & O'Hara and from the MPS bookstore).

Optional Items -

1. Green cardigan with MPS logo (available from Flynn & O'Hara and from the MPS bookstore).
2. Green v-neck sweater with MPS logo (available from Flynn & O'Hara and from the MPS bookstore).
3. Dark (hunter) green collared or crew neck sweatshirt with white lettering representing the school, an MPS team or an MPS activity. The sweatshirt may not have a hood or a pouch and may not be ripped or torn. All designs must be approved by the MPS administration. This sweatshirt may not be worn on dress uniform days.

An oxford cloth shirt or a uniform polo shirt must be worn at all times, even when wearing any of the school sweaters or sweatshirts.

4. Navy blue shorts (may be worn before Oct. 15 and after April 15) (available only from Flynn & O'Hara)
5. Solid navy blue socks, only worn with shorts(available from Flynn & O'Hara and elsewhere)

Students are expected to be neatly dressed and well groomed at all times. Each student's personal appearance should be compatible with the school's educational purpose and environment. **Oxford shirts must be pressed and tucked in at all times.**

The following is a partial list of items which may not be worn on uniform days: wallet chains, around the neck key chains, printed or colored tee shirts, non-uniform pants, bandanas, sneaker socks, cropped leggings, scarves, and hats.

No student will be allowed to wear his/her coat during the school day. All coats, hats, and boots are to be left in the student's locker before homeroom each morning and removed from that locker only after the final bell of the day.

****Non-uniform items such as ball caps and non-uniform sweatshirts may be confiscated and returned at the discretion of the teacher.****

Body piercings on a site other than an ear are to be filled with clear studs of the smallest size. Hair colors must stay within the scope of naturally occurring hair colors. Contact lenses must be confined to normal human eye colors and shapes. Tattoos cannot be visible during the school day.

Any uniform violation deemed minor by a teacher and an administrator will result in a demerit. Repeated minor violations can result in a tier 2 detention. Other uniform violations can result in a tier 2 detention or the student will be required to change his/her clothes. Administrators will make the final decision on the appropriateness of dress accessories to our uniform code.

A temporary uniform excuse may be given by the student's homeroom teacher upon the written request of a parent or guardian. Interviews and appointments during or after school hours are not excuses for being out of uniform. As a general rule, students are expected to be in a complete uniform at all times, internships included.

On occasion students will be allowed to wear clothing other than those uniform items outlined above. "Special dress" days will be announced in advance either by the student council or the administration. At such times, appropriate dress guidelines will be issued. On these occasions Mercyhurst Prep students will dress and groom themselves in a manner suitable for the event being sponsored.

Dress up attire: Certain school days are designated as DRESS UP DAYS for specified groups or individuals. The definition of dress up is a non-uniform outfit that is neat, professional, and appropriate to an office/workplace. Includes: slacks (not jeans, sweatpants, windpants), skirts (no shorter than 4 inches above the knee, not stretch or body hugging), dresses (can be sleeveless but not bare shouldered), blouses, sport shirts and golf shirts with collars, dress shoes. **Does not include:** exercise wear, shorts and cut-offs, tank tops, low cut tops, low rise or body hugging pants (includes leggings), spaghetti strap shirts and dresses, tear aways, crop tops, halter tops, tee shirts, sweatsuits, windsuits, hiking boots, sneakers, sport sandals.

Jeans days: Students are reminded that jeans days are school days and that one's attire, while casual, must still comply with the concept of "appropriate to the setting". If students choose to wear components of the uniform they must wear the entire uniform in conformity with the guidelines above. Purchase of a ticket allows students to wear only jeans and shorts of uniform length. It does **not** allow students to wear short shorts, cut offs, halter tops, crop tops, low cut tops, body hugging pants (includes jeggings/leggings), miniskirts or tunics with leggings, pajama pants, sweat pants, tearaways, low rise jeans, clothes with holes, rips, or stains, or clothes that carry slogans or art dealing with sex, drugs, alcohol, or violence. **Hats are not to be worn.**

Birthdays: Students may enjoy either a jeans day or a dress up day on their birthday. See guidelines above. If a birthday falls on a dress uniform day, the birthday privilege must be taken on the next school day.

ATTENDANCE

In order to receive the maximum benefit from the programs at Mercyhurst Prep, students must attend school consistently, although no student is expected to come to class if he/she is seriously ill. It is expected, however, that students of high school age deal with some degree of discomfort and still carry on their daily routine. Students from a school district closed due to inclement weather are granted an excused absence.

School day: The school day begins when the student arrives on the grounds of MPS. Once a student arrives at Mercyhurst, **he/she is not permitted to leave the grounds or go to his/her vehicle during the school day.** Once the morning homeroom bell rings at 8:20, all staff, students, and visitors must sign into and out of the building at the attendance office. Classes begin at 8:20 a.m. with reporting to homeroom for attendance, prayer, and pledge. Classes end at 3:00 p.m. The school day ends when the student leaves Mercyhurst property.

Absences: Parents/guardians are required to call the school office if the student will not be attending school that day. If the parent does not contact the school by 10:00 a.m., the attendance officer will call the home or place of employment of the parent. **There is a 24 hour voice mail system ready to receive parent calls at 824-2210 and 824-2314.**

The parents/guardians are required to notify the teacher if the absent student will miss a test in his/her class. A message to the teacher can be given with the attendance call. **If a student is absent he/she may not attend any school or sport activity on that calendar date.**

Absence excuses: UPON RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER AN ILLNESS, THE STUDENT MUST SUBMIT AN EXCUSE TO THE HOMEROOM TEACHER. The excuse should indicate the reason for and the dates of absence, must indicate the name of the homeroom teacher, and must be signed by a custodial parent or guardian regardless of the age of the student. **IF AN EXCUSE IS NOT SUBMITTED WITHIN THREE (3) DAYS, DISCIPLINARY ACTION WILL RESULT.**

Make-up work: The student will be responsible for making up tests/work in a timely fashion upon return to school. A student who does not take a makeup test/submit an assignment on the day it is scheduled/due may be penalized. **The day the student returns** to school, it is his/her responsibility to contact his/her teachers regarding information covered in class and assignments / tests missed.

At all times students are responsible for the material covered during absence from classes. During an extended absence the student should contact classmates or access the teachers' websites in order to secure homework assignments. The guidance counselor may also be contacted.

College visits: Two college visits are permitted for juniors and seniors. These are considered excused absences unless required by the college for testing or scheduling purposes, in which case they will not be considered absences. Students must bring a note to the assistant principal one week prior to the visit.

Funerals: Dismissals for funerals will be granted if the parent sends a note requesting the early dismissal ONE DAY IN ADVANCE OF THE FUNERAL. Dress uniforms are worn to the funeral when attending as a representative of the school. Students are expected to return to the school unless other arrangements have been made prior to departure. No dismissal shall be granted for visits to funeral homes for viewing during the school day. Students are encouraged to attend viewings with parents and family after school hours.

Vacations/planned absences: Parents and students should not plan vacations or absences during regularly scheduled school time; rather, they should plan around the ample breaks built into the school schedule. Students and parents must recognize that planned absence may result in negative academic consequences. Should parents decide that such an absence is unavoidable, the following regulations apply:

1. Prior to departure the student must present a parent request to the appropriate assistant principal and complete the proper form to document notification of all teachers, the guidance counselor, and the homeroom teacher. The school strongly recommends that this be done at least two weeks prior to the absence to allow students ample time to complete necessary work. Teachers may not be able to provide make-up work without sufficient notice.
2. The responsibility for mastering material missed and making up work rests with the student, who is encouraged to make up as much work as possible prior to the absence. It may not be feasible to offer alternate dates for completion of certain academic tasks due to their very nature. In such instances, students may forfeit the opportunity to earn academic credit at the discretion of the teacher in consultation with the academic dean.
3. All make-up work must be scheduled at the teachers' convenience. Students must keep all scheduled make-up appointments and meet all due dates for make-up work in order to earn academic credit.
4. A student missing school at the end of a term must make up all work prior to the absence.

Early dismissals: Parents are requested to make medical and dental appointments after school hours except in cases of emergency. **If the appointment must be made during school hours, the school must be notified by a written excuse from a parent or guardian. VERBAL REQUESTS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED.** The school will not phone the student's parents to get special verbal permission if the student has forgotten his/her excuse.

A student may be excused from classes only with an off campus permit. Permits will be issued for a funeral liturgy, civic activity, etc. **During homeroom the student must bring a written excuse to the homeroom teacher from parents or guardians. The homeroom teacher will issue an off campus permit and send the written excuse to the attendance office. THE STUDENT MUST SIGN OUT AT THE ATTENDANCE OFFICE WHEN LEAVING AND SIGN IN TO SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY UPON RETURNING AFTER THE ACTIVITY, WITH APPROPRIATE VERIFICATION.** Early dismissals for reasons other than medical or dental appointments are considered half-day absences. No more than five (5) early dismissals are permitted during one term.

Students leaving on field trips or on school business must have written parent permission on file in the attendance office.

Early dismissal due to illness: **If a student becomes ill at school, he/she will be permitted to go home only after a parent has been notified. The student must come to the attendance office to call the parent, and may not call or text from a cell phone without permission.** The attendance officer will then speak to the parent/guardian to obtain permission to send the student home. The parent or guardian is asked to pick up the student at the school in most cases. If the student drives him/herself home, he/she must call the attendance office upon safe arrival. When departing from school, the student must sign out. Students who leave school early for illness will not be able to attend school practices/activities that night.

Nurse's office: Students who need to lie down for a short while due to minor illness may use the nurse's office. **A pass must first be obtained from the class teacher and the student must report to the attendance officer, who will direct him/her to the nurse's suite.** After 40 minutes, the student must return to class or arrange to go home. The nurse's schedule is posted on the door of her office. Students must check in with the attendance officer for needed assistance anytime the nurse is unavailable.

Frequent absenteeism: A doctor's excuse may be requested as explanation for chronic absence. If a student is absent ten (10) days in a given term, that absenteeism may result in term failure. If a student misses thirty (30) days in a school year, he/she may have to repeat the year.

ILLEGAL ABSENCE

The following consequences are in effect for truancy and for leaving the building during school hours without permission:

First offense: one tier 3 detention and notification of parents

Second offense: three tier 3 detentions

Third offense: parent meeting and possible grounds for expulsion

Student will receive no credit for work/tests missed during an illegal absence.

No skip day is sanctioned by the school or by the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Participating in such skip days constitutes an illegal absence, parental permission notwithstanding.

TARDINESS

Students who arrive after 8:20 a.m. **must report to the attendance office** and obtain an admit to homeroom or class. All students **must sign in** when tardy (excused or unexcused). Failure to do so will result in a demerit. When a student comes in after 9:00 a.m., he/she must also see and have his/her tardy slip signed by an assistant principal. Unexcused tardiness of such duration may also constitute cutting class.

ARRIVAL AFTER 9:30 A.M. CONSTITUTES ONE-HALF DAY OF ABSENCE; AFTER 12:30 P.M., A WHOLE DAY OF ABSENCE. ANY STUDENT PARTICIPATING IN OR ATTENDING A SCHOOL RELATED ACTIVITY MUST BE IN ATTENDANCE NO LATER THAN 9:30 A.M. ON THE DAY OF THE ACTIVITY. All students reporting to homeroom/classroom after the second bell are tardy. The following consequences will be in effect for repeated tardies:

- 8 tardies Tier 1 detention
- 13 tardies Tier 2 detention
- 18 tardies Tier 3 detention (\$65 fine), meeting with administration

Each subsequent 5th tardy will result in a Tier 3 detention (\$65 fine).

BELL SCHEDULES

Regular schedule:

HR	8:20-8:27		
1	8:30-9:56		
2	10:01-11:27		
3	11:32-1:29		
	Lunch 1	11:32-12:02	class 12:02-1:29
		2 12:02-12:32	class 11:32-12:02 and 12:32-1:29
		3 12:32-1:02	class 11:32-12:32 and 1:02-1:29
		4 1:02-1:29	class 11:32-1:02
4	1:34-3:00		

AM assembly/liturg

HR	8:20-8:27
1	8:30-9:29
HR	9:34-9:44
liturgy	9:44-11:01
3	11:05-1:05
	Lunch 1 11:05-11:35
	2 11:35-12:05
	3 12:05-12:35
	4 12:35-1:05
2	1:10-2:02
4	2:07-3:00

PM assembly

HR	8:20-8:27
1	8:30-9:21
2	9:26-10:18
4	10:23-11:15
3	11:20-1:15
	Lunch1 11:20-11:47
	2 11:47-12:15
	3 12:15-12:45
	4 12:45-1:15
HR	1:15-1:25
assembly	1:30-3:00

Early dismissal

HR	8:20-8:27
1	8:31-9:20
2	9:25-10:14
3	10:19-11:08
4	11:13-12:03
announcements	12:03
dismissal	12:06

Delayed start

HR	10:20-10:27
1	10:31-11:15
3	11:20-1:20
	Lunch 1 11:20-11:50
	2 11:50-12:20
	3 12:20-12:50
	4 12:50-1:20
2	1:25-2:10
4	2:15-3:00

END OF SCHOOL DAY DISMISSAL

To ensure the safe dismissal of all students, there will be only buses in the driveway lane next to the main and gym entrances of the school from 2:45 until 3:15 pm. Please observe the parking and lane restrictions in order to ensure a safe and orderly dismissal. Parents are requested to arrive after 3:15 to pick up students.

SNOW DAYS OR SCHOOL EMERGENCIES

In the event of very poor weather, students should listen to the local radio and TV stations for news of school closings or delayed starts. The announcement will be made the night before the closing or on the day of closing. If the school year does not include the required number of instructional hours, missed time will be made up. Students in the outlying school districts will be afforded a legal absence if that school district is closed or parents deem conditions too dangerous for travel. In general, Mercyhurst Prep follows the decision made by Millcreek School District. Should a prolonged closing occur, students are advised to check teachers' websites in order to stay current with assignments.

In the event of a bomb threat, the building will be searched and a determination will be made as to whether an evacuation is prudent. Administration will work with local law enforcement to ensure student safety.

In cases of severe weather, teachers will proceed with students to interior halls, leaving 15 feet from exits. All should avoid windows and areas such as library, cafeteria, and gym. Students should face interior walls either on their knees, leaning forward with much of exposed body covered by crossing arms and burying face OR seated cross legged with arms folded over face. It is important to maintain quiet order and listen for announcements.

FIRE DRILLS

AT THE SOUND OF THE ALARM, ALL STUDENTS AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL MUST LEAVE THE SCHOOL BUILDING QUICKLY AND QUIETLY ACCORDING TO THE DIRECTIONS POSTED IN EACH ROOM. SILENCE IS REQUIRED AT ALL TIMES IN ORDER TO ALLOW ANNOUNCEMENTS TO BE MADE.

Lights should be turned off and doors, windows, and fire doors closed if it is possible to do so quickly.

If an exit is blocked, re-route traffic quickly and quietly with as little confusion as possible. The first persons to reach a blocked exit should silently raise their arms, turn, and proceed in an alternate direction.

All teachers and students must wait for word from the assistant principal before returning to the building. Once inside, students should return to the class that was interrupted by the fire drill and wait for any announcements.

During the fire drill, students should be organized and quiet. They should move to a distance twice the height of the building. During regular classes the students should leave the building with their assigned class and go to the designated area for attendance.

During an assembly, students should leave quickly and quietly by the nearest exit and report to designated homeroom areas, keeping a safe distance from the building. The designated areas are as follows:

- Freshmen - east section of front lawn
- Sophomores - mid section of front lawn
- Juniors - mid section of front lawn
- Seniors – west section of front lawn

Designated areas for each class are posted in homeroom. Students must remain with their homerooms for the duration of the evacuation.

ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies and liturgies provide students with the opportunity to experience educational events outside the daily Mercyhurst Prep program. Assembly schedules and programs are planned by the student council, faculty, and administration.

Students are expected to attend, sit in assigned seats, and act respectfully, responsibly, and appreciatively.

LOCKERS

Each student is assigned a locker, owned by the school and loaned to the student, for the care and protection of books and personal supplies. Only the school lock may be placed on the school locker. Students must use lockers for storage of books and coats.

Lockers are to be kept locked at all times. All items stored in a student's locker are the sole responsibility of that student. The school is not responsible for any items missing from lockers. Student lockers are subject to periodic inspection.

Lockers are provided during gym class. Lockers in the locker room are only permitted to be used during class time or practice time. Students may provide their own locks but must remove locks at the end of class or practice.

Lockers are provided for student athletes. Team members must remove personal articles promptly from these lockers at the end of their playing season. Team locker rooms are locked during the school day.

SEARCHES

The courts have upheld the claim that school lockers are school property loaned or rented to the student for the student's convenience. School authorities may search the student's locker without prior warning in seeking contraband because, standing *in loco parentis*, school authorities are charged with the safety of all students under their care and supervision. Such a search is not an illegal search under the fourth amendment to the federal constitution, but a reasonable exercise of school authority in the interests of the health, welfare, and safety of all students. Courts have reasoned that the school extends locker use to students only for legitimate purposes.

The courts have also held that a school official may properly conduct a search of a student's person or belongings if the official has a reasonable suspicion that a crime has been or is in the process of being committed or has reasonable cause to believe that the search is necessary to maintain school discipline or enforce school policies. Vehicles parked on school property may be searched.

STUDENT ID CARDS

Student ID cards will be issued following school picture day in the fall. IDs will be required to borrow books from the Gannon University and Mercyhurst College libraries. (At Mercyhurst College only juniors and seniors may borrow books.)

SCHOOL VISITORS

All visitors must use the main entrance and sign in and sign out at the attendance office, where they will receive a visitor pass. Students from other high schools who have applied to Mercyhurst Prep are permitted to visit. Host students must request permission from the principal or vice principal well in advance and obtain written permission at that time. Visitors must show permission slip to the attendance officer on the day of the visit and thereby notify her of their presence in the building. The visitor is expected to dress and act appropriately and should attend classes with his/her Mercyhurst Prep host.

TRANSPORTATION

Students in the outlying school districts must contact their district offices in order to arrange transportation. The school districts which provide free transportation have the right to withdraw the service should the conduct of the students cause or result in hazardous conditions or violations of the law. Parents and students should be informed regarding their district's policy manual.

Students in the Erie School District may obtain free passes to ride EMTA buses. The passes are distributed by the attendance officer. Students must abide by public laws when riding EMTA buses and must also conduct themselves in a manner which represents MPS well.

PARKING

Student parking is available on a first come, first served basis in the student lot. This parking is a privilege, not a right. At no time may students park beyond the double line which indicates the western boundary of the student lot, nor may they park in the smaller motherhouse lot or the Mercy Terrace lot. All cars must be in **numbered spaces**. Drivers of illegally parked vehicles will pay a \$25 fine and the vehicle may be towed. Students may not park in the faculty lot without permission. If a student becomes injured and requires the use of a handicapped space, s/he may see the assistant principal to have a temporary space assigned.

All drivers are expected to obey all public parking and driving regulations, which include parking **no closer than six feet to a driveway**.

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Students are not to have iPods or similar electronic equipment during the school day. These items must be turned off and stored in lockers. Teachers may confiscate such equipment and return it at their discretion. Guitar amps should not be brought to school without permission from an administrator. The school assumes no responsibility for any equipment that is lost or stolen.

Cell phones may be brought to a school class or activity under the following conditions:

1. Phones must be kept in the OFF position from 8:20 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
2. Cell phones should not be used to call home when ill; rather, the student must make such phone calls from the attendance office.
3. No cell phones may be used for picture taking / viewing.
4. No harassment or threatening of persons via the cell phone is permitted.
5. Cell phones may not be used for game playing, Internet, or e-mail access, text messaging, gambling, or making purchases of any kind.
6. Those who violate any of the rules regarding cell phones will be issued a Tier 2 detention and may forfeit their privileges of bringing them to school.
7. If a teacher is incorporating cell phones/equipment or other device into a learning activity students may have them turned on. When students complete the learning activity all must be returned to the off position and stored according to the policy above.

STUDENT PHONE MESSAGES

The school cannot and will not accept student phone messages except in cases of genuine emergencies.

If a student has a family situation that requires a phone call during the school day, she/he should go to an assistant principal's office to make that call. **Parents should NOT phone or text students between 8:20 and 3:00.**

CAFETERIA

The cafeteria service offers a variety of hot and cold lunches. Students are also permitted to bring their own lunches. No food is to be delivered to students without administrative permission. The cafeteria is to be left in a clean condition after the student is finished eating. Disorderly conduct of any kind in the cafeteria will result in disciplinary action. With the exception of plain water, no food or drink is permitted outside the cafeteria.

Vending machines are available for student convenience. They may be used before and after school as well as during one's assigned lunch. Physical education classes may utilize the machines in the athletic foyer, under the supervision of the PE instructor.

The lavs may be used during the first ten minutes of each lunch period. After this no one may leave the cafeteria without permission of the cafeteria moderator.

All students are expected to report to assigned lunches or to present to the moderator a pass from a teacher or staff person.

GUM

Chewing gum is not permitted in the school building.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found is in the student information center located in the cafeteria. Anyone who finds an article on school property and is unable to return it to the owner should take the responsibility of placing the article in the lost and found. Valuable items should be taken directly to the attendance office.

INFORMATION CENTER/LIBRARY

1. Students wishing to use the Information Center during their lunches must have permission to do so. Permission can be obtained by:
 - a) Requesting a pass from the librarian before 1st period.
 - b) Getting a note from the classroom teacher on whose assignment the student will be working.Permission is granted based on availability of resources. Students must sign into the book on the circulation desk.
2. Books may be signed out for a period of two weeks. Any books a student is not finished using after the initial two week loan period should be renewed.
3. Once books are signed out, they are the responsibility of the student who signed them out. Do not loan your books to your friends; if they lose them, you will be responsible for paying for the loss.
4. Reference books generally do not circulate. Exceptions can be made, but the student must make the request. Loss of these expensive books hurts everyone, especially those who are in need of the materials.
5. A coin-operated copier is located near the entry of the Information Center.
6. Teachers can ask to have materials placed on reserve in the Information Center or in their classrooms. Materials are placed on reserve so that all students who need to use them will have equal access to them. Students must abide by any restrictions on the circulation of reserved materials.
7. The Acceptable Use Policy will be enforced in the Information Center.
8. Scheduled classes have priority in using the computers in the Information Center during the school day. At all other times those needing the computer for school-related work have priority.
9. No food or drink is permitted in the library unless permission has been granted for a special project or occasion.

THE ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

To better prepare young men and women for success in an ever-changing world, we at Mercyhurst Preparatory School have actively pursued making advanced technology readily available to our students. These technologies include a school-wide computer network with printers, scanners, and wireless Internet connections. Integration of technology into our curriculum provides our students with seemingly limitless resources to challenge them and enrich their education.

It is the policy of educational programs governed by the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Erie to require the ethical use of the Internet and related technologies by all employees, volunteers, and students as set forth below. Use of the Mercyhurst Preparatory School computer system and the Internet is a privilege, not a right. A student's activities while using the computer system or the Internet within the school must be in support of education or research for educational purposes. Each student is responsible for the online activities that take place on his/her account while in school. Access privileges may be revoked, school/diocesan disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken for any activities that are unethical or inappropriate for an educational setting.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE COMPUTER SYSTEM

Proper use of the computers and the entire computer system will ensure that all equipment is fully functional and that all students have equitable access to all parts of the system. In order for this to happen, all users of the computer system at Mercyhurst Preparatory School should observe the following rules and procedures:

1. Vandalism of the system or any of its components will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, physical damage to any piece of equipment, attempting to alter the functioning of the network or any station on the network, deleting or adding programs at any station, and tampering with files that do not belong to the user.
2. Security of the system has been established in order to ensure the integrity of the network itself. Do not attempt to circumvent system security in any manner, including creating or deliberately introducing computer viruses, changing settings on any work station, damaging files, or altering or deleting programs that may be installed on a work station.
3. You will immediately notify a teacher or the network administrator if you have identified a possible security problem.
4. Unauthorized use of an office computer is prohibited.
5. Passwords are private and are used to keep each user's account on the system private. Protect your password; this will help protect the security of the system and ensure each user's privileges on the network. Do not give your password to anyone and do not knowingly use anyone else's password.
6. All work will be saved to the user's file on the file server or onto removable drives. Nothing may be saved to the hard drives of any computers. Files that are kept in the user's folder on the server must be related to courses and the curriculum at MPS.
7. Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Teachers and administrators may review student folders to maintain system integrity and insure that students are using the system responsibly.
8. While experimenting with games or graphics tools or reading newsgroups does have educational value, such activities have the lowest priority for station use. Games should not be played during school hours, nor should they be loaded onto the hard drive of any computer on the system.
9. There will be no food or drink in any computer lab or the Information Center except with the permission of the administration.
10. Please help us conserve the consumable computer resources. When printing please make the print request once and wait. If you think there is a problem or that your job hasn't printed, please ask for help. Repeated print requests for the same job waste paper and printer toner.
11. If you don't know how to do something or are unsure of a procedure, please ask for help. Searching for your own solution could create additional problems for yourself and other users.

WIRELESS OPTION

Mercyhurst Preparatory school appreciates that students are willing to bring in computer equipment that is personally owned, to be used for schoolwork and to enhance educational opportunities. The purpose of the wireless network is to facilitate access to the Internet web pages within the realm of educational development and access to student files used during class work. Use of the wireless network is a privilege, not a right. Any misuse will constitute a rescinding of use.

As it relates to privately owned computers being used in Mercyhurst Prep facilities or on the Mercyhurst Prep Network wireless or otherwise, Mercyhurst Preparatory School reserves the right to:

1. Monitor all activity, either Internet access through the school's server or intranet access on the school's file servers.
2. Make determinations as to whether specific uses of the computer are consistent with the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
3. Log network use and monitor storage disk space utilized by users of personal computers on the Mercyhurst Prep network.
4. Deem what is appropriate for use of personal computers on school property or on the Mercyhurst Prep network.

5. Remove the user's access to the network and suspend the right to use the privately owned computer in school's facilities at any time it is determined that the user is engaged in unauthorized activity or is violating the Acceptable Use Policy.

Prior to students bringing in their personal computers to use on the wireless network, students and their parents must read the full policy and sign a contract. These documents may be picked up in the technology office or downloaded at www.mpslakers.com.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF THE INTERNET

Inappropriate or unacceptable uses of the Internet include:

1. Sending or displaying offensive or obscene messages or graphics
2. Violating copyright or otherwise using another person's creations without prior approval or proper citation
3. Circumventing the security of the school's computer network
4. Unauthorized use of an office computer
5. Using the Internet for commercial or non-school purposes, which include political lobbying, sending chain letters or pyramid schemes, sending harassing messages, and creating or downloading computer viruses
6. Providing personal information such as address or phone number to anyone you may meet online or agreeing to meet anyone in person
7. Wasting computer resources, for example, by printing excessively long Internet documents when only a small portion is actually needed

Mercyhurst Prep has the right to restrict or terminate information network access at any time for any reason. Mercyhurst Prep further has the right to monitor network activity in any way that it sees fit to maintain the integrity of the information network.

Consequences of violations include but are not limited to:

- Demerit
- Suspension of computer access
- Revocation of computer access
- Tier 1, 2, or 3 detention
- Expulsion
- Legal action and prosecution by the authorities

Mercyhurst Prep makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the school computer network will be error-free or without defects. Mercyhurst Prep will not be responsible for any loss of data or the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. Mercyhurst Prep will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system.

Extended Technology Hours:

Information Center:

Monday through Friday	7:20 a.m. until homeroom
Monday through Thursday	3:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Connection Center:

Tuesday through Thursday

There will be no extended hours during school vacations or on early dismissal days.

MPS Web Page:

The MPS Web Page (www.mpslakers.com) is Mercyhurst's site on the World Wide Web. The site contains information about all aspects of the Mercyhurst Prep community.

E-MAIL

All faculty can be reached via e-mail by using the following formula: initial of first name, full last name, @mpslakers.com.

CAMPUS MINISTRY

Campus Ministry is a center for hospitality and service which reflects the caring presence of Jesus and the gracious spirit of Catherine McAuley. Six areas in which CM is involved are: **Hospitality:** seeks to offer a welcoming presence in meeting the daily needs of the MPS community. **Community Building:** seeks to build a genuine faith community that cultivates unity, communication, understanding, community involvement, collaboration, and a vision of faith. **Spirituality:** seeks every day to build a Christ-centered spirituality rooted in the charism of Catherine McAuley through daily prayer, liturgical celebrations, and open conversations related to faith issues. **Peace and Justice:** seeks to promote an awareness of social issues in the MPS, local, and global communities so as to further Christ's kingdom of peace and justice in our world. **Comfort in Crisis:** seeks to extend the compassionate, healing presence of Christ to the members of the MPS community. **Service:** seeks to invite and challenge our students to be the heart and hands of Christ in meeting the multiple needs of our world.

The Campus Ministry office is located opposite the dance studio on the first floor. Students may visit before or after school and during lunch time. During the school day students need teacher permission to be in CM; if students are in CM for any other reason, teachers will be contacted.

SERVICE HOURS

Each student at Mercyhurst Prep is required to do a minimum of twenty-five hours of service within the community each year that he/she attends MPS. There are detailed guidelines for service on the service verification form. This form is available in Campus Ministry, in the freshman packet, and at www.mpslakers.com. Both parents and students are asked to carefully read these guidelines before the student performs his/her service. Volunteer opportunities are advertised throughout the year on the Campus Ministry Service Board, on the daily announcements, and on www.mpslakers.com.

If the service requirement is not met,

- the student may not participate in MPS activities such as dances, Touch of Class day, ski trip, etc.
- the student will receive an F for service on the term 2 report card which may affect eligibility for activities
- the student may not graduate without earning .25 credit for every year in attendance at MPS

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A variety of learning experiences outside the daily academic routine is made available to the Mercyhurst Prep student. Successful participation in co-curricular activities has been demonstrated to be related to success in adult life.

Various clubs, activities, and sports serve to assist the student in the development of talent, teamwork, and leadership as well as to offer the opportunity for community involvement. Students are expected to demonstrate responsible behavior, "Marked by Pride and Spirit," whenever they participate in any activities.

AWARDS POLICY

Awards are given by Mercyhurst Prep for achievement in academics and co-curricular activities. Awards presented are certificates of participation, gold pins, and letters. A student will be awarded only one varsity letter. Should he/she earn letters in other areas, a pin representing that sport or activity will be presented.

The criteria for an award are participation, service, and attitude. A student is recommended for an award by his/her coach or moderator and approved by the principal.

The awards are presented at special assemblies recognizing achievement of the students.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Mercyhurst Prep Student Council is a representative body of students elected by the students to serve as a liaison among administration, faculty, and students. The Student Council consists of one elected or appointed representative from each homeroom and four officers elected by the student body. Parliamentarian and historian are appointed by the executive body.

CLASS GOVERNMENT

Each class at Mercyhurst Prep has its own officers and government. Class governments are responsible for developing class activities, developing fundraiser activities to meet the needs of the class, and providing a year-end summary report to the activities director, which includes a list and description of class activities and a treasurer's report on the class funds.

ATHLETICS

Mercyhurst Prep provides a quality athletic program for its students. Athletics can play an integral part in the development of characteristics needed by the individual who will make responsible choices, contribute to society, and become a well-rounded person.

In order to have a quality program, athletes who voluntarily participate in programs provided by the school must know their rights and responsibilities. Guidelines must be established to ensure a combined effort by school, coach, and athlete toward making our teams the best they are capable of being. Athletic guidelines and team guidelines are presented to athletes and parents at a general meeting held prior to each season. Additional information concerning these guidelines and expectations is available at www.mpslakers.com.

Students who participate individually in other types of athletics not offered at Mercyhurst Prep and who do so in the name of Mercyhurst Prep may receive credit on their permanent records for such participation and may earn awards or certificates upon verification.

ELIGIBILITY POLICY

Mercyhurst Prep offers a wide variety of co-curricular activities including interscholastic athletics, student government, performing/visual arts, literary, club, and service organizations. All students are encouraged to participate in these activities in order to round out their education. Certain responsibilities must be met by all students who participate.

A student must pursue an approved schedule which meets the necessary academic requirements of the high school and maintain a good record of high school citizenship, integrity, and attendance. Eligibility to participate on a team or activity may be suspended or revoked for unsuccessful academic progress, repeated infractions of school rules, poor attendance, or behavior/attitude in conflict with school philosophy and mission.

Academic/Activities Probation

A student is generally placed on academic/activities probation if:

- s/he is failing one or more subjects
- her/his attendance is poor
- s/he has repeatedly ignored school rules/policies
- her/his behavior/attitude is in conflict with school philosophy and mission

A student on probation is still eligible to participate in activities provided that s/he meets the following requirements:

- s/he must choose a mentor by the announced deadline in order to write an action plan for academic improvement
- s/he must turn in the completed action plan to the academic dean by the announced deadline
- s/he must meet weekly with her/his mentor to discuss progress and strategies for improvement

- s/he must show continuing evidence of effort and adherence to her/his action plan
- s/he improves her/his attendance, behavior, or attitude in order to meet school requirements.

If a student fails to do the above, s/he will be immediately placed on activities suspension. (See *suspension* below)

Continued Probation

A student who has already been placed on probation will have that probation lifted if:

- s/he is no longer failing
- her/his attendance is good
- s/he exhibits adherence to school rules/policies
- her/his behavior/attitude is consistent with school philosophy and mission

If poor performance is still occurring, the student's probation will be continued for another grading period.

There are six grading periods in a school year: Term I until mid-term, Term I mid-term until end of term, Term II until mid-term, Term II mid-term until end of term, Term III until mid-term, Term III mid-term until end of term. Eligibility for the first six weeks of the fall season is determined by academic standing (determined by T3 grades and GPA) at the end of the previous school year.

Activities suspension

A student is generally placed on activities suspension if:

- s/he is failing two yearlong courses, 3 term courses, or three courses that are a combination of yearlongs and term courses
- s/he has failed to maintain a 2.0 grade point average for two consecutive terms
- her/his attendance is poor
- s/he has repeatedly ignored school rules/policies
- her/his behavior/attitude is in conflict with school philosophy and mission

A student on suspension is ineligible for participation in sports, clubs, and other co-curricular activities until the end of the grading period. Students wishing to regain eligibility at the four week mark after mid-term/end of term should see the academic dean for the necessary information. In order to continue at Mercyhurst, the student must fulfill the following requirements:

- s/he must choose a mentor in order to write an action plan for academic improvement by the announced deadline
- s/he must turn in the completed action plan to the academic dean by the announced deadline
- s/he must meet weekly with her/his mentor to discuss progress and strategies for improvement
- s/he must show continuing evidence of effort and adherence to her/his action plan. If a student fails to complete all of the above, s/he must meet with the principal to discuss her/his future at MPS.
- s/he improves her/his attendance, behavior, or attitude in order to meet school requirements.

Continued suspension

A student placed on suspension will have that suspension lifted if:

- s/he is no longer failing more than one course
- her/his grade point average is above a 2.0
- her/his attendance is good
- s/he exhibits adherence to school rules/policies
- her/his behavior/attitude is consistent with school philosophy and mission

A student failing to meet the above requirements will have her/his suspension continued throughout the next grading period.

The above program has been structured in order to offer academic support to our students. It is our intention that, by following the guidelines listed, academic progress will improve and the student will acquire better organizational/study skills and be able to enjoy the benefits offered by co-curricular activities.

ALL STUDENT ATHLETES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FAMILIARIZING THEMSELVES WITH SCHOOL POLICIES REGARDING ACADEMICS AND ATHLETICS AS WELL AS PIAA REGULATIONS.

DISCIPLINE POLICIES

We believe that the behavior code, based on the Mercy charism, will aid our students in acquiring the following values and habits, which will enable them to be contributing members of this community and successful in future endeavors.

Honesty	Self-restraint
Personal accountability	Good judgment
Tolerance	Cooperation
Self- respect	Stewardship
Respect for authority	Punctuality
Courtesy to others	Good grooming

Belief statements:

- The purpose of a behavior code is to promote desirable behaviors and to change or modify those behaviors that are unacceptable.
- An effective behavior code is based on an approach of mutual respect.
- Consequences must be issued in a manner that preserves the dignity of all parties.
- Consequences must be consistent and just.
- Consequences must be reasonable and must not be arbitrary.
- In order for a behavior code to be effective, faculty and staff must model and enforce the desired behavior with consistency.
- A behavior code must be flexible in order to allow fairness in extraordinary circumstances.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Mercyhurst Prep has the authority to make reasonable and necessary rules governing the conduct of students in the school.

It is the responsibility of Mercyhurst Prep students to:

1. Be aware of all rules and regulations for student behavior and conduct themselves in accordance with them;
2. Respectfully comply with all faculty/staff directives;
3. Treat all guests, including substitute teachers, with respect, cooperation, and hospitality;
4. Exhibit respectful behavior in group presentations and assemblies;
5. Assume that until a rule is waived, altered, or repealed, it is in full effect;
6. Be willing to contribute in matters relating to the health, safety, and welfare of the school community and the protection of school property;
7. Dress and groom themselves in conformity with the uniform code of the school;
8. Assist the school staff in operating a safe and clean school for all students enrolled therein;
9. Be aware of and comply with federal, state, and local laws;
10. Exercise proper care when using facilities and equipment of the school;
11. Attend school daily except when excused and be on time for all classes and other school functions;
12. Make all necessary arrangements with classroom teachers for making up work when absent from school;
13. Keep all appointments requested by any member of the faculty or staff;
14. Pursue and attempt to complete satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by state and local school authorities;

15. Avoid inaccuracies and indecent language in student publications;
16. Express ideas and opinions in a respectful manner so as not to offend or slander others;
17. Represent the **Mark of Pride and Spirit (MPS)**.

TEACHER CONFERENCE

A teacher may choose to schedule a student-teacher conference before, during, or after school for the purpose of addressing a behavioral issue before it becomes a serious problem. Students must be given 24 hours notice, are required to attend, and are encouraged to approach a teacher conference as an opportunity to remedy the problem before it results in disciplinary action. If a student does not report as scheduled, however, s/he will receive 1 demerit and the conference will be rescheduled.

DEMERITS AND DETENTIONS

TIER 1 OFFENSES are less severe in nature and the consequence for each will be 1 demerit. This tier includes unintentional infractions and those acts that do not endanger the well being of the school community or adversely affect the education of others.

The issuing teacher or staff member will complete a demerit slip that the student is required to sign in acknowledgement. If a student accumulates 5 demerits, s/he will be required to serve an **after school detention on Tuesday from 3:10-4:10**, which will be scheduled by the assistant principal.

Tardies and demerits are cumulative over the course of the school year. **The assistant principal has the discretion to determine further consequences for students who repeatedly accumulate demerits for the same offenses.** These may entail tier 2 or tier 3 detention, contract, parent conference, or other means that may help the students adopt better habits.

Tier 1 offenses may include but are not limited to:

- Uniform/dress code violation
- 4th through 12th tardies to homeroom (tardies are cumulative throughout the school year)
- 4th and subsequent tardies to class
- Tardiness to detention
- Chewing gum
- Failure to return loaned materials (1 demerit per class or homeroom day late)
- Failure to present parent notes for planned absence to assistant principal according to policy on pages 12-13
- Failure to present completed forms for planned absence to assistant principal according to policy on pages 12-13

- Failure to submit a form, fee, excuse by the requested date (1 demerit per class or homeroom day late)
- Food and drink (except plain water) outside the cafeteria
- Using computers for non-school business
- Carrying unauthorized electronic equipment during the school day
- Tampering with classroom equipment
- Failure to report to a teacher conference
- Failure to sign out for an excused absence from the building
- Failure to sign in when arriving tardy
- Public displays of affection
- Unintentional obscenity
- Minor class disruption
- Failure to secure one's locker
- Leaving a backpack unattended in the halls or common areas of the building

TIER 2 OFFENSES are those in which the student intentionally behaves in a way that is contrary to Mercyhurst Prep's philosophy, mission, and beliefs or those that may cause a disruption to the education of others or may detract from the atmosphere we seek to create as a Mercy school. The consequence for these offenses is a **tier 2 Saturday detention from 10 AM– 12 noon** and may be issued by any faculty or staff member or the administration. The assistant principals have the discretion to determine further consequences for students who have accumulated multiple or repeated tier 2 detentions. These consequences may include parent conference, tier 3 detention(s), contract, or expulsion.

*Tier 2 offenses may include but are not limited to:

- 13th through 17th tardies to homeroom
- Failure to report to a tier 1 detention
- Cutting class or a portion of a class (student will receive no credit for work missed)
- Failure to report to assigned location
- Unauthorized use of electronic equipment during the school day
- Cell phone turned on during the school day
- Leaving a class without permission
- Inappropriate bus conduct
- Inappropriate cafeteria conduct
- Noncompliance with teacher/staff member/substitute teacher directive
- Inappropriate assembly/liturgic conduct
- Inappropriate conduct on school grounds at any time
- Repeated tardies to classes
- Obscenity in word, gesture, or drawing
- Smoking in the neighborhood
- Major class disruption (includes cell phone ringing)
- Discourteous/uncooperative behavior
- Lying, cheating, forgery
- Repeatedly neglecting to secure one's locker
- Repeatedly leaving a backpack unattended in the halls

*Although the items above are listed as tier 2 offenses, the administration reserves the right to treat them as tier 3 offenses, depending on the severity of the circumstances.

CHEATING

Intellectual honesty requires the submission of work that represents the original efforts of the individual student. Conversely, **cheating** is defined as representing another's work as your own and enabling others to use your work as their own. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- copying any part of a homework assignment prepared by another student
- looking at another student's quiz or exam
- copying any part of another student's quiz or exam
- using a textbook, notebook, or any form of "cheat sheet," including a programmable calculator, an iPod or a cell phone during an exam when it is not authorized
- plagiarizing another's work; for example, submitting a term paper, report, essay, project, lab report, computer project/assignment, language tape, artwork, journal, or any other work written or prepared, in whole or in part, by another
- using any material from a previous term or year prepared by another student on a quiz or exam or submitting any such material as your own
- obtaining unauthorized written or oral information about a quiz or exam
- allowing work in your name to be submitted as a group project without having contributed equally to that project

Enabling or helping others to cheat is also cheating. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- allowing your quiz, exam, homework, or any other assignment to be copied and/or submitted by another student
- writing a term paper, report, essay, lab report, journal, assignment or preparing a project or language recording for another student
- passing along previous term's or year's work, notebook, lab report, homework, exam, or quiz
- sharing unauthorized written or oral information about a quiz or exam. This includes sharing information with students who have not yet taken an announced or unannounced quiz or exam.
- failing to report cheating by others

The student will receive no credit for the assignment, but it must be redone. In the case of a graded task, exam or quiz, the student will receive a zero. The teacher and/or administrator will communicate with the parents and a record of the episode will be filed with the assistant principal. Tier 2 or tier 3 Saturday detention will be assigned, depending on the gravity of the offense. Student may be suspended from activities at the discretion of the assistant principal. Repeated or very serious offenses could result in expulsion.

A teacher who suspects cheating, copying of another student's homework, or plagiarism will confiscate the work. A student who allows his/her independent work to be copied will also be disciplined according to the above policy.

LYING

Trust is the foundation upon which caring communities are built. **Lying**, defined as presenting false information with the intention of deceiving, undermines this trust and will not be tolerated. Lying includes but is not limited to:

- intentionally relaying false information
- lying by omission; that is, neglecting to relay pertinent information when questioned
- forging the signature of another
- submitting a false excuse

Enabling a lie to be told by another is also lying.

TIER 3 OFFENSES are serious offenses that may have legal implications. The minimum consequence for this tier is a **tier 3 Saturday detention from 8AM-2PM and a \$65 fine**. Appropriate authorities may be contacted. The maximum consequence is expulsion.

Tier 3 offenses may include but are not limited to:

- 18th and subsequent tardies to homeroom
- Failure to report to a tier 2 detention
- Leaving the building or grounds without permission
- Leaving the field trip group without permission
- Illegal absence
- Use, possession of tobacco products on school property or at school sponsored functions
- Failure to properly register prescribed medication
- Distribution or sale of prescribed medication
- Use, possession, sale, or distribution of illegal drugs, controlled substances, or drug paraphernalia
- Appearance at school or at a school related function under the influence of an illegal drug or a controlled substance
- Production, possession or distribution of pornographic materials (also includes computer/cell phone use)
- Vandalism
- Theft

- Blatant disrespect for authority
- Harassment
- Bullying/Cyberbullying
- Verbal aggression
- Fighting
- Hazardous driving
- Direct verbal or physical threat
- Possession of a weapon
- Endangering the safety of the school community or disrupting the quality of the school environment

SMOKING OR CHEWING TOBACCO

Mercyhurst Prep is a smoke-free school. No smoking materials or chewing tobacco are permitted in school or on the school grounds at any time. Smoking materials or chewing tobacco in school, at school-sponsored functions, or on school grounds will result in the following consequences:

First offense: Upon review of the circumstances the assistant principals will determine the consequences that are appropriate to the severity of the offense. The minimum consequence will be notification of parents, a \$100 fine, and a tier 3 detention. The maximum consequence will be a parent conference, a \$100 fine, and 3 tier 3 detentions.

Second offense: grounds for immediate dismissal.

The fine is imposed to thoroughly discourage those tempted to disregard the health and well being of themselves and others and is in keeping with the fire code. The fine must be paid or arrangements for payment made at the time of the parent notification.

DRUGS/ALCOHOL/MEDICATION

The possession, use, sale, and/or distribution of illegal drugs, look alike drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, or medication or appearing at school or at a school function under the influence of same will cause the student to be searched and escorted to an administrator.

First offense: school notifies parent(s) and schedules an appointment with the drug and alcohol counselor; student serves minimum one, maximum three tier 3 detentions.

Second offense: school notifies parents to pick up student. Once the administration has concluded its investigation it will inform the family of appropriate consequences. Being caught with a controlled substance for the second time is grounds for immediate dismissal. The Student Assistance Program (SAP) handbook will be followed.

Students may not carry medication on their person during the school day. A student who needs to take any type of medication (even aspirin) must present the medication **in the original prescription or over-the-counter bottle** and a written note from a parent or guardian to the principal's office. The note must contain the student's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, and the duration. Students needing to take medication must report to the principal's assistant, who will log the time and dosage dispensed. The school cannot dispense any type of medication to a student unless this procedure is followed.

VANDALISM

Stewardship is a mark of Mercyhurst pride and spirit and is the responsibility of each member of our community. **Vandalism** is defined as willful or malicious destruction of public or private property and will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- intentionally defacing, destroying, and/or causing not to function any part of the school building, its furnishings, and items contained in the building or on the grounds; for example, writing on desks, walls, lockers, textbooks; removing dispensers from lavatory walls; driving on the lawn; forcefully slamming and/or kicking lockers
- intentionally disabling computer hardware and/or software
- intentionally deleting and/or altering material stored on a computer hard drive and/or disk
- intentionally destroying or defacing displayed materials, such as student artwork, bulletin boards, posters

Enabling such destruction to take place by aiding the vandal in any way is vandalism. Failure to report the vandal (when known) will result in the same consequences.

Students found guilty of vandalism will be required to make restitution or pay damages, may be issued a tier 3 detention, or may be expelled, depending on the gravity of the offense. Parents will be contacted and the student may be presented to the appropriate authorities or agencies to see if help is necessary.

THEFT

Stealing is a further violation of the trust required for true community. Defined as taking without right or permission, stealing demonstrates a lack of respect and empathy for others and will be regarded as totally unacceptable behavior at MPS. Stealing includes but is not limited to the following:

- taking without authorization any item not belonging to you such as textbooks, laboratory supplies/instruments, library books, computer disks, artwork, office equipment, clothing, money, calculators, classroom supplies
- taking items of food from the cafeteria without paying the designated fee
- failing to purchase the required ticket for special events such as jeans days or dances
- downloading computer programs and/or information without authorization

Enabling a theft to take place by aiding the thief in any way is also stealing. Failure to report the thief (when known) will result in the same consequences.

Students found guilty of theft will be required to make restitution, may be issued a tier 2 or 3 detention, or may be expelled, depending on the gravity of the offense. Parents will be contacted and the student may be presented to the appropriate authorities or agencies to see if help is necessary.

HARASSMENT POLICY

Respect for the dignity and worth of each individual is a basic precept of Mercyhurst Prep. Each faculty member, staff member, student, or other individual who is in a working relationship with the school is entitled to work or to attend school in an environment free from discriminatory practices including sexual harassment and harassment based on race, creed, color, age, disability, or religion. All will be held to standards of conduct which ensure that the school is free from sexual and other forms of harassment. Students are encouraged to report any complaints or concerns regarding harassment of any type to their teachers, counselors, or school administrators for investigation and possible disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Any type of harassment, cyber bullying, and/or threatening language that takes place via text messaging, e-mail, social networking, etc., in or out of school, will be handled according to the policy outlined above.

More detailed information about this policy is available to students from their guidance counselors or from school administrators.

False reporting: Allegations and complaints of harassment are very serious matters and are not to be taken lightly. Any person who knowingly files a false allegation or complaint against another individual in an attempt to demean, harass, abuse, or embarrass that individual will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action or expulsion.

FIGHTING (or any act of physical aggression)

Fighting during school or at school sponsored functions will result in the following consequences:

First offense: parent notification and two tier 3 detentions

Second offense: grounds for immediate dismissal

WEAPONS

It is a violation of the policy of Mercyhurst Prep for a person to possess a weapon in the buildings of, on the grounds of, or in any conveyance providing transportation to or from the school or school event or at any school-sponsored functions. Any person possessing a weapon (as defined by the principal in conjunction with local law enforcement agencies) shall be in violation of the weapons policy and will be charged with possession of a weapon on school property by the proper authority. Notification shall be made in a timely manner to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student(s) involved in an incident. The principal will issue appropriate consequences which may include tier 3 detention or expulsion.

The following is a partial list of items that may be defined as weapons: wallet chains, knives of any kind, laser pointers, pepper spray, mace, razor and utility blades, and guns of any type (toys included).

DETENTION

Detentions will be monitored by a teacher and silence is mandatory. Students will be asked to read and reflect on their behavior and write a formal essay or action plan for improvement. They should also bring study materials, as some of the time will be spent in silent study. Cell phones must be turned off for the duration of the detention. In the event of a weather related school closing on Friday, Saturday tier 2 and tier 3 detentions will be cancelled and rescheduled. **All detentions must be served in a cooperative and respectful manner, or they will have to be repeated.**

Tier 1 Tuesday 3:10 – 4:10 Room 211

Tier 1 detentions are issued only by an assistant principal. Students are required to attend and to arrive promptly. Because detention is considered an extension of the school day, students must remain in proper uniform and may not leave the building before reporting. **Generally detention dates are not changed due to work, activities, athletics, or transportation.** If a detention date must be changed, it can only be changed by the assistant principal who assigned it. The student must present him/herself **in advance** to request that it be rescheduled. A tier 1 detention can be rescheduled only once. Students arriving tardy to a tier 1 detention will be issued a demerit at a rate of one demerit per 5 minutes tardy. Students who do not report to a tier 1 detention must serve a tier 2 detention on the Saturday of the same week. If a student is absent on the date of his/her detention, the detention must be served during the next regularly scheduled detention.

Tier 2 Saturday 10 AM – 12 Noon Health Room

Students must be prompt and are required to attend. They may wear jeans day attire as explained elsewhere in this handbook. Late arrivals will be issued demerits (1 demerit for every 5 minutes tardy). Students who do not report to a tier 2 detention must serve the next scheduled tier 3 detention.

Any teacher, administrator, or staff member may issue tier 2 detentions. The student will receive the pink form; the white and yellow forms will be presented to the appropriate assistant principal. **Generally tier 2 detentions will not be rescheduled due to athletics, work, or other activities.** However, if a detention must be rescheduled, it can only be rescheduled at the discretion of the issuing person and it may only be rescheduled once.

Tier 3 Saturday 8 AM – 2PM Health Room

Tier 3 detentions are issued only by an assistant principal. Students are required to attend and to arrive promptly. Late arrivals will be issued demerits (1 demerit for every 5 minutes tardy). Students serving a tier 3 detention are charged a \$65 fine, which is payable on or prior to the detention date. **Students may not participate in any school activities on that calendar day or evening. Students who are assigned multiple tier 3 detentions may be excluded from participation in extracurricular events until the last detention has been served.**

Students who do not report to tier 3 detention may not attend classes or activities until a parent conference is held and the detention is rescheduled. Students will not receive credit for class work missed during this time.

EXPULSION

Mercyhurst Prep reserves the right to expel any student whose actions, attitudes, or values are contrary to our stated philosophy and mission.