

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission Statement/Philosophy	3
Spiritual Life	3
Service at the Academy	5
Code of Ethics	6
General School Regulations	6
Academic Integrity	6
Plagiarism	7
Attendance Policy	7
Absences – Definition	7
Waiver	7
Notification of Student’s Absences	7
Absence Procedure	8
Absence Policy	8
Planned Absences	8
Truancy	8
Lateness to School	8
Dismissals	9
Field Trips	9
Passes	9
Library Policies	9
Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Policy	10
Student Assistant Program (SAP)	10
AOD Strategy	11
AOD Procedure	11
AOD Core Team	11
Zero Tolerance Statement	11
Tobacco Procedure	11
Drug Testing	11
Medications	12
Class Discipline and Dismissal from Class	12
Office Detention/Teacher Detention	12
Physical Fighting	12
Disciplinary Probation	12
Academic Probation	13
Dress Code	13
Dress Code Violations	13
Guidelines	13
Dress Code for Males/Females	14
Academic Policy	14
Graduation Requirements	14
Exams	15
Grading Scale and Related Topics	15
Honor Roll Requirements	15
Turn it in.com Policy	16
International Students	16
Volunteer Community Service Requirements for Graduation	16
Homework	16
Procedure for Course of Study Changes	16
College Visits	17
Wellness Policy	17
Electronic Communications Policy	17

General School Procedures:	18
Books	18
Cafeteria	18
Chapel	18
Fire Drills	18
Emergency Evacuation	18
Lock Downs	18
Lockers	18
Student Insurance	19
Student Driving	19
Study Periods	19
School Dance Rules	19
Weapons Policy	19
Bomb Threats	19
Student Government	20
National Honor Society	20
Extracurricular Activities	21
Fund Raising	22
Additional Policies:	22
Payment Plan	22
Completed Payments	22
Financial Responsibilities	22
Harassment Policy	22
Hazing Policy	25
Bullying Policy	25
School Visitation Policy	26
Nondiscrimination	26
Approved Independent School	26
Confidentiality	26
Family Education Records and Privacy Act	26
Weather Closure	26
Necessary Changes	26
Agreement Form	27

**MISSION STATEMENT  
Of  
Mount St. Joseph Academy**

Mount St. Joseph Academy provides a personal, Catholic school community in the heart of Vermont. Founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph, MSJ focuses on the education of the whole person by integrating spiritual development, academics, extra-curricular activities, and community service into everyday life. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Mounties are self-confident and resolute. Our mission is to create a just world.

Jan. 2005

**PHILOSOPHY  
Of  
Mount St. Joseph Academy**

Mount St. Joseph Academy is a Roman Catholic, state approved secondary school. The Academy is “A Place to Belong” that welcomes all students, and provides a quality education based on Catholic Christian principles.

As an academic community our main goal is to educate the whole person through intensive curricular, co-curricular, and athletic programs. The Academy invites all students to share their gifts and talents for the betterment of the community and the world.

We believe in the principles of compassion and justice. Mount St. Joseph believes in creating a religious and moral environment where young people grow to a faith-filled, Catholic Christian maturity that helps them to achieve personal wholeness and to provide effective service to others.

Feb. 2004

**Spiritual Life**

Central to our mission as a school is the strengthening of the spiritual life of each person who is part of our community. A strong spiritual life requires an on-going commitment both to *prayer* and to selfless *service*.

**Prayer at the Academy**

**Mass and Eucharistic Adoration**

Mass is the central prayer of the Church. Thus, worship focused on the Eucharist is key to our prayer life here at Mount St. Joseph Academy. The parents, alumni, friends of the Academy and the general public are invited to attend Eucharistic celebrations in our Chapel of the Immaculate Conception.

Students are expected to keep holy the Lord’s Day. Mass is offered at all Roman Catholic parishes in the Diocese of Burlington on Saturday evening and/or Sunday.

Also, Mass and other forms of prayer are provided at parishes at various times during the week.

Students at the Academy participate in Mass once a month, usually on Wednesdays. Mass also is celebrated on holy days of obligation when they fall on school days. These holy days include the feasts of All Saints, the Immaculate Conception and the Ascension of the Lord.

Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament occurs once a month at the Academy.

### **Sacrament of Reconciliation**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available monthly. The schedule of available priests is posted in the office, Religious Studies classrooms and in other areas around the school. Reconciliation services are also held during Advent and Lent.

### **Daily Prayer**

Prayer begins and ends each school day. Members of the school community are invited to share their intentions and to offer their prayers to the Lord. Some of the formal prayers offered at the Academy include the following:

#### Act of Love

My God, I love you above all things, with my whole heart and soul, because you are all-good and worthy of all my love. I love my neighbor as myself for love of You. I forgive all who have injured me, and I seek pardon of all whom I have injured. Amen.

#### Our Father

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdoms come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

#### Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and the hour of our death. Amen.

#### Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and forever shall be, world without end. Amen.

#### Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father the Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he arose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

#### Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace: where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.

Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life. Amen.

#### Suscipe (Receive) / Prayer of St. Ignatius of Loyola

Take, O Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and all my will, all that I have and possess. You have given all these to me; to you I restore them. All are yours; dispose of them according to your will. Give me your love and your grace; having only these I am rich enough and ask for nothing more. Amen.

#### Prayer of St. Augustine

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy.  
Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy.  
Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy.  
Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy,  
Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen.

Prayer of St. Julian of Norwich

God, of your goodness, give me yourself for you are enough for me. And only in you do I have everything. Amen.

Prayer of St. Catherine of Siena

Eternal Trinity, mystery deep as the sea, you could give me no greater gift than the gift of yourself. For you are a fire ever burning and never consumed, which itself consumes all the selfish love that fills my being. Yes, you are a fire that takes away the coldness, illuminates the mind with its light and causes me to know your truth. And I know that you are beauty and wisdom itself. The food of angels, you gave yourself to us in the fire of your love. Amen.

Prayer for Life (Pope John Paul II)

O Mary, bright dawn of the new world, Mother of the living, to you do we entrust the cause of life. Look down, O Mother, upon the vast numbers of babies not allowed to be born, of the poor whose lives are made difficult, of men and women who are victims of brutal violence, of the elderly and the sick killed by indifference or out of misguided mercy.

Grant that all who believe in your Son may proclaim the Gospel of Life with honesty and love to the people of our time. May we bear witness to a civilization of truth and love, to the praise and glory of God, the creator and lover of life. Amen.

Grace before Meals:

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Service at the Academy:**

Mount St. Joseph Academy seeks to foster in the members of its community a sense of gospel-based service. This service is rooted in the two greatest commandments “to love God with your whole heart and soul” and “to love your neighbor as yourself.”

All students are required to complete a service project each year of attendance at the Academy.

Students and parents should consult the current information from the service coordinator about the current service requirements. Presently, freshmen are required to complete (40) service hours and sophomores, juniors, and seniors are required to complete (20) service hours. Dates service hours are required are indicated on the school calendar.

Service opportunities may include long-term commitments to a parish community or social agency (e.g., soup kitchen, Loretto Home, Dismas House, Open Door mission, etc.). Also, service commitments may include leadership in and involvement in peace and justice organizing and activities that are related to local, national and international concern. See your Religious Studies teacher and/or the Service Coordinator about available opportunities.

All students and parents are required to complete and sign the required service forms. These forms must be completed by the required deadlines. (All forms are posted on the web.)

## PARENT/GUARDIAN-STUDENT HANDBOOK Code of Ethics

At Mount St. Joseph Academy we are proud of our strong American Catholic heritage. It is one we seek to share, thus it is a real pleasure to welcome you into the traditions that have helped our school to create and maintain its reputation for academic, the arts, and athletic excellence. By electing to attend MSJ, you have chosen to live by the Code of Ethics set forth in this handbook. This text is meant to be a guide as well as a set of expectations, which we suggest you keep as your code of honor.

### GENERAL SCHOOL REGULATIONS

1. Everyone at MSJ is expected to act with respect and responsibility toward themselves, others and material things. All students shall act in a manner that doesn't disrupt, hinder, or impede teaching and/or the learning process.
2. All students leaving before the end of the day must check out at the main office.
3. Students should enter the school chapel quietly and prayerfully.
4. Appropriate behavior is required at mass, prayer services and all school sponsored events including athletic events and assemblies.
5. No shouting and/or running in classrooms, corridors, or stairwells.
6. Conduct and language must witness the Christian values.
7. Theft of any nature is a serious offense. Stealing school property or the possessions of another student is strictly forbidden.
8. Defacing school property - Students are expected to take pride in their school and its appearance. In addition to student discipline, defacing school property may result in the student being responsible for the repairs or replacement of damaged school or personal property.
9. Refrain from inappropriate display of affection in public.
10. No food or drinks are allowed in classrooms, the library or in the hallways.
11. Tolerance and respect for the diversity of others.
12. **CELLULAR / PICTURE TELEPHONES / MUSIC PLAYERS** – Mount St. Joseph Academy prohibits the use of cellular phones and music players, IPODS, during the regular school day. All calls including emergency calls must be made in the main office. Student use of cell phones (calculator, time, text messaging, pictures, or phone calls etc.) and music players during school hours will result in the phone / player being confiscated and sent to the office. The office keeps the item two days and a fine of \$2.00 is due at the time the item is picked up.
13. **Laptop Computers** – the use of laptop computers in the classroom requires administrative approval and faculty agreement. All laptop computers should remain in laptop briefcases when not in use.
14. **Backpacks** – All backpacks must be left on top of your locker or in your locker. For safety reasons backpacks and purses should not be left near any stairs or be brought into the classroom.

**Notice** – Mount Saint Joseph Academy is listed as a “Safe School” with the Rutland City Police Department under Title 25, Chapter 9, Sections 4610-4614. MSJ will be free of drugs (including alcohol), violence, vandalism, and the unauthorized use of firearms and or any weapon. In addition, MSJ will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning. Any student found violating this ordinance is subject to all penalties and fines established by the Rutland City Police Department. A copy of this ordinance is available for student and parental review in the main office. In addition, all violations of the above regulations will subject a student to disciplinary action including detention, parent conference, work detail, suspension, and in a severe case, expulsion. **Suspensions are at the discretion of the Administration and may be designated as out-of-school or in-school, and may be with or without the loss of academic credit.**

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is a fundamental part of our school. All students are expected to act honestly in all aspects of their academic lives. Plagiarism, copying another person's work from any source without giving proper credit to the author, or copying work from another student, including homework, are forms of cheating. Any assistance, other than teacher directed, in any form during an exam, test, quiz or homework assignment is considered cheating. Any student who willingly cooperates or assists others in the act of cheating will be held equally accountable. Dishonesty, stealing and fraud are unacceptable behaviors.

The procedure for a possible breach of integrity follows: Step 1 - A student conference with the Principal and/or Dean and the teacher who witnessed the incident. Step 2 - Based on the information presented by both parties, the Dean of Students will make a judgment whether or not the incident was a breach of academic integrity. If it is determined that a student has plagiarized, cheated or assisted in the act of such, she/he will be subject to the following disciplinary action:

1. A grade of "F" will be given on the work involved.
2. A letter will be sent to the parents, signed by the teacher and the Principal.
3. The letter will become a part of the student's record for the duration high school.
4. After the first violation of integrity, the possible result may be suspension or expulsion. A parent conference will be requested.

### **PLAGIARISM**

Students are required to document all sources of information in papers written in each discipline. This school follows the MLA (Modern Language Association) format. A reference for documenting sources can be found at [www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/](http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/)

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

The importance of regular class attendance cannot be overemphasized. What happens in the classroom is essential to the educational process. Time lost from the class can never be regained. Regular attendance enhances learning by exposing students to a greater amount of academic content, instruction, and time to apply new concepts and skills. It allows for teacher explanation and the interaction between students and between teacher and student. Since the classroom is the primary area of learning, it is apparent that attendance is a valid, reasonable requirement. Teachers cannot teach students who are not present. Therefore, students are expected to make a commitment to regular class attendance, and parents are strongly urged to assist the school by supporting our attendance policy.

If a student is absent for more than 10 days of a semester course or 20 days for a full year course, credit may be not awarded for that course. In certain courses, the amount will be dependent upon the number of times a class meets per semester/year. Total absent days include excused absences.

In the event of a loss of credit, the course and grade will be entered in the transcript with a notation of zero credits earned. The course will not be computed in the GPA. If it is a required course for graduation, the course will have to be taken again.

Written excuses for absences, signed by a parent or guardian, are required by the State of Vermont, and should be brought to school on the day a student returns.

### **WHAT ARE NOT INCLUDED AS ABSENCES**

Co-curricular activities such as field trips, club conferences, athletic competitions, etc., will not be considered absences. Any situation where the school has requested that the student be somewhere other than class is not considered an absence.

### **WHAT ARE INCLUDED AS ABSENCES**

Any other reason for absence from class, such as class cuts, normal illness, family vacations, etc. will be counted as absence. A student missing more than 50% of a class period will be considered absent for that class.

Requests for attending funerals during school time must be in writing. The parent must specify if their student will be visiting the bereaved family after the funeral. The parent must also specify the time the student is expected to return to school.

### **WAIVER**

Waivers may be granted by the school administration only for medically documented cases of chronic illness, long-term illness (3 or more consecutive days), and school-related functions. Exceptional and extraordinary situations may be cause for a waiver to be granted by the Principal.

### **NOTIFICATION**

Parents and students are reminded that the number of school absences is reported on the end of the quarter Report Card. This may, however, differ from the number of absences in individual classes. Attendance reports will be mailed to parents after the 7<sup>th</sup> absence for a semester class (one notification) and after the 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> absences in a year class (two notifications).

## **ABSENCE PROCEDURE**

On the day a student is absent, parents are expected to call the school before 9:00 AM (775-0151). Please state the reason and estimated length of absence.

## **ABSENCES AND TARDIES**

The following is an outline of the ABSENCE POLICY for the 2008-2009 school year.

- 20 absences will be allowed in a full year course. NO CREDIT will be given on the 21st absence.
- 10 absences will be allowed in a semester course. NO CREDIT will be given on the 11th absence.
- Seniors are allowed (3) college visits. The guidance office must confirm all visits.
- A student missing school is considered absent, unless a waiver is authorized by the school administration. (See: Waiver Policy)
- Only school-related functions, i.e., field trips, club conferences, athletic competitions, or other school related activities will be given consideration for a waiver by administration.
- A student who is absent from school is NOT allowed to attend or participate in any co-curricular, athletic, or social activities after school on the day of the absence.
- A student listed as absent is NOT allowed to enter the school building during that day/evening.
- Students should be on time for school and for each class. A student who accrues three tardies will receive one hour of detention. If tardy, students are to report to the Attendance Office to get a pass. If detained by a teacher, the student is to get a pass from that teacher before going to his/her next class.
- In "Attendance" means that the student is present by 9:00 AM. (class). If the student comes in after 9:00 AM, he or she will not be allowed to participate in any activity that day. If a student has a doctor's appointment later in the morning, that student will be expected to be in school prior to the appointment.

## **PLANNED ABSENCES**

Under unique or unusual circumstances, a student may request to leave school prior to the marking period or for a period of time during the marking period for reasons not covered under acceptable reasons for school absence. When a parent or guardian decides to take a student out of school under such circumstances, the student should obtain a "Special Absence Form" from the Main Office at least ONE WEEK prior to the planned absence. The following steps must be followed:

1. Parent signs form with reason stated for absence.
2. The main office acknowledges and signs request. Approval does not erase the absences; they are still part of the student's total absences for the semester/year and could result in loss of credit.
3. Student meets with individual teachers for assignments and comments.
4. Student gives the main office the assignment sheet from teachers.
5. Within a week of the student's return, he/she will bring all assignments to their teachers and have them initial the form.
6. Return the completed form to the main office once completed (Note #5).
7. Failure to comply with any of the above will result in grades of "F" for all missed work.

## **TRUANCY**

Students absent for all or any part of the day without knowledge and permission of their parents and without prior approval from the Principal will be considered truant and subject to detention or work detail. The time made up will be double the time lost. Students will receive an "F" for missed work.

## **LATENESS TO SCHOOL**

Promptness to school and to class is a high priority at Mount St. Joseph Academy. We believe this reflects the minimal expectations, which our communities, businesses, organizations, and industries expect. If a student arrives to school after the first period, he/she must report directly to the main office. Students must bring a note to explain the reason for their tardiness. Students arriving tardy to their first class must get a pass from the Attendance Office. On the **third** tardy the student will be assigned one hour of detention.

## **DISMISSALS**

All students, REGARDLESS OF AGE, must follow this dismissal policy. A written parental excuse stating the reason for dismissal must be brought to the Main Office BEFORE 8:00 AM if the dismissal is desired during the school day.

The following are the procedures that are to be taken:

1. The note must include the student's full name, time of dismissal, and a phone number where the parent may be reached.
2. The student must receive a pass from the Main Office, which is presented to the classroom teacher for dismissal.
3. The student must check back into the Main Office if returning to school.
4. THE STUDENT MUST ALWAYS CHECK OUT AT THE MAIN OFFICE BEFORE LEAVING THE BUILDING.

In the event of an emergency, a student may be excused from school by a telephone call from the parent, or a parent may come to the Main Office and directly request dismissal.

The administration reserves the right to question the reason for a student being dismissed during the normal school day. Parents should avoid making appointments for their children with doctors, dentists, etc., between the hours of 8:00 AM and 2:50 PM.

In the case of accident, illness, or dismissal, the school will inform the parents, guardian, or emergency contact by telephone. All students must be picked up by a parent or a responsible person designated by the parent when notified. A student may walk/drive home with a parent's permission.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Absences from classes due to school-related field trips or guidance programs are considered part of the education program. To be eligible for these programs, students must:

1. Obtain Field Trip Parent Permission Form. No permission slip means No Trip. No telephone calls will be accepted as permission on the day of a field trip (Note: faxes are acceptable).
2. Before the planned absence, the student takes the responsibility for getting assignments from or making academic arrangements with the teacher(s) whose class (es) will be missed before the planned absence.
3. Students may be denied this privilege if there is a discipline problem.

## **PASSES**

No student may leave a class or study period without a pass from his or her teacher. Passes must accompany the student to his or her destination and either be returned to the teacher issuing the pass or given to the teacher at the student's final destination.

## **LIBRARY POLICIES**

**The MSJ Library faculty, staff and students work together to promote an environment of learning and cooperation among all library users. We work together to ensure the library atmosphere is focused and enthusiastically supportive of our educational needs.**

Our library is a place where silent study, research and reading take place. Proper conduct in the library will ensure that students respect everyone's need to work and study in an atmosphere that is clean, quiet and well organized. We'll all work together to maintain those standards.

Only five students per study hall use the library at one time. If students are coming from a non-study hall classroom, their work in the library must be pre-arranged with the librarian and/or the teacher must accompany them.

The following guidelines for library use will assist all of us to make the library the best place for study and research:

1. Engaging in any activity in violation of any law or library policy
2. Engaging in conduct that disrupts or interferes with the normal operation of the library, or disturbs library staff or other library users, including, but not limited to, conduct that involves the use of abusive

- or threatening language or gestures, conduct that creates unreasonable noise, or conduct that consists of loud or boisterous behavior or talking.
3. Interfering with the free passage of the library staff or customers in the library.
  4. No beverages or food, or their containers, are allowed in the library even if not being consumed at the time.
  5. Library customers may not use cell phones, pagers, IPODS, or any other communication devices.
  6. Students are expected to sit on the seats of chairs and not put their feet on any furniture. Exceptions for groups to sit on the floor may be pre-arranged by individual teachers for specific instruction. Lying down or sleeping on any floor, table or seat in the library is prohibited.
  7. No one should be making loud noise or noises.
  8. Running, pushing, shoving or throwing objects in prohibited.
  9. Group activities that are disruptive to the library environment are prohibited. Working in small groups is permitted when pre-arranged with the librarian to ensure that the group's work does not impose any difficulties on other student's work. Talking quietly among a few students is allowed when it supports the studies of all students involved in the conversation.
  10. Defacing or otherwise damaging library property is prohibited.
  11. Push in chairs, clean up papers, and put away reference materials before leaving the library.
  12. Hand in passes when entering the library or returning from restrooms.
  13. Cooperate fully with direction of faculty and/or librarian.

#### **Books/Periodicals/Other Materials:**

1. All reference materials remain in the library at all times.
2. Materials on reserve may not be taken from the library.
3. Damaged or lost books and materials will be completely reimbursed by the person responsible.
4. The librarian or adult in charge signs out all circulating books/materials for 2 weeks. The books/materials may be renewed for 2 additional weeks if there is no standing request for that material.
5. Students with overdue books/materials will not use the library until the materials are returned.
6. Place returned books on the "Return Books" rack in the front of the desk.

#### **Computer Use:**

1. Ask for assistance if unfamiliar with the use of school computers.
2. Abide by the student handbook when using computers including laptops.
3. Access only appropriate and approved materials. If in doubt, ask questions.
4. Transmitting is not allowed unless previously arranged with the librarian.
5. Personal laptops should be WIFI compatible for internet access and may be plugged into outlets around the perimeter of the room if a power source is needed.
6. The only device that may be plugged into school computers are flash drives and they may only be used for saving documents. No other hardware, for example headsets, may be used. Anyone who damages or unplugs hardware from any school computer may be banned from using computers for up to one week and could be responsible for replacement of damaged or missing parts.

#### **Copies:**

The librarian or faculty member in charge will make copies for students.

#### **ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS (AOD) POLICY**

Mount St. Joseph Academy is listed as a "Safe School" with the Rutland City Police Department under Title 25, Chapter 9, Section: 4610 – 4614. Any student found violating this ordinance would also be subject to all penalties and fines established by the Rutland City Police Department. A copy of Title 25, Chapter 9, Section: 4610 – 4614 is available for student and parental review, in the main office.

#### **STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP) PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

Mount St. Joseph Academy SAP counselor(s) support students who may be affected by personal and mental health problems and other factors that place them at-risk. MSJ values the welfare of its students and takes a firm stance with respect to the use of alcohol, and other drugs (AOD). The intent of the AOD policy is to address issues of substance

abuse through education, intervention, and discipline, with assistance from our SAP counselor(s).

### **AOD STRATEGY**

MSJ has no tolerance for students violating the AOD policy on school grounds or at school sponsored events. Any student found possessing, selling, or under the influence of alcohol or other illegal drugs (including tobacco) on school property, or at school sponsored events or field trips during school hours will be suspended from MSJ. The CORE team will determine the period of suspension, within two school days of the offense. The CORE Team consists of the SAP counselor(s), the Principal, Dean, and the Guidance Counselor, and will review all violations of the AOD policy.

### **AOD PROCEDURE**

This policy will be in effect during the academic year on school grounds and at any school-sponsored activities/events where and when the student is representing Mount St. Joseph Academy.

The principal/or designee:

- Will call the police.
- Will call the parent(s)/guardian(s), of the student(s) involved.

The student:

- Will automatically be released into the care of the parent(s)/guardian(s) or law enforcement.

### **The CORE Team:**

- Will meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student(s) within two school days of the offense to determine the length of time of suspension and/or appropriate action.
- Will inform the coach/activities advisor of the action taken.

### **Mount St. Joseph Academy Zero Tolerance Statement**

#### **Athletes, Extracurricular Activities and Societies**

In order to deal with the issue of illegal drug and alcohol usage by MSJ students, any MSJ student who is caught using drugs or alcohol will be immediately removed from any extracurricular activity, society, or athletic event that they may be participating in at the time of their violation. In order to deal with the issue of illegal drug and alcohol usage by members of MSJ athletic teams, any MSJ athlete who is caught using drugs or alcohol will be immediately removed from the team. This penalty will be for the remainder of the season. There will be no reinstatement onto the team for the remainder of the current season. The offense must be verifiable. The determination of verifiability and the final decision of the student's eligibility for participation in an extracurricular activity/society rests with the Principal of the Academy. The student will then be required to perform in-school community service (20 hours) and attend SAP sessions, as well as any other requirements determined necessary by the Principal.

By signing this handbook document, both the student and parent/guardian acknowledge that they have read it and understand the penalty. If a student violates the MSJ zero tolerance drug/alcohol policy, he/she accepts the consequences.

### **TOBACCO PROCEDURE**

The use of tobacco products on school grounds (including the parking lot) or at school events is prohibited. Tobacco violators will be suspended from school for one day, and be responsible for any fines associated with breaking the 'Safe School' ordinance. Use of tobacco is not permitted on school grounds or at school events.

### **DRUG TESTING**

The MSJ administration may require that parents have their student tested for drugs whenever a questionable situation arises. Testing for alcohol is at the discretion of the MSJ administration or the local law enforcement agency present at any school sponsored event. Students involved with alcohol or other drugs will be expected to participate in the Student Assistance Program (SAP).

### **MEDICATIONS (Prescription and Over the Counter)**

For safety reasons all medications (**Rx and OTC**) must be left at the main office. Students needing medication may come to the main office and self-administer the medication as prescribed. MSJ does not employ a school nurse.

## **CLASS DISCIPLINE AND DISMISSAL FROM CLASS**

The classroom teachers or staff members handle disciplinary problems that occur in the classroom, library, tech center, guidance office, lunchroom, gym or chapel. A student who is disruptive and **sent out of class must report immediately to the main office**. The student will remain out of the class for that period. No credit for work missed will be given to that student. The student will be responsible for collecting the homework assignments for that particular class period. Finally, the classroom teacher will fill out a disciplinary referral addressing the student's behavior in writing. That referral will then be given to the principal or dean of students. The referral will be placed in the student's file.

## **OFFICE DETENTION/TEACHER DETENTIONS**

Office detentions will be served for one hour beginning at 2:50 PM and ending at 3:50 PM on regular schedule days. On days when the schedule is changed the detention period will begin ten minutes after the final bell and will last for one hour. Detentions occur Monday through Thursday. No excuses will be accepted for not completing an office detention, including work, practice, games, sports, or any other extracurricular activity. A quiet atmosphere is required. An unexcused failure to appear for an office detention will receive an additional hour of detention. **Parents/Guardians will be notified**. If the next detention is skipped, the student will be given an extra hour of detention and is still required to make up the hours of detention that were skipped. If a student has 5 detentions due to skipped or accrued detentions, that student will be placed in in-school suspension for one day. The student's family will pay a fee of \$50.00 for the supervisor of this detention. The student will receive no credit for the day spent in in-school detention. The student will not be allowed to attend extra curricular activities on the day of in-school suspension. There will be no morning detentions. For valid reasons, an administrator may reassign the detention date and day.

Teacher detentions given by a teacher for disruption in class or for homework/class work-related reasons will occur in the teacher's classroom. No excuses will be accepted for missing a teacher-scheduled detention, including work, sports, or any extracurricular activities. Missing a teacher detention will result in an office detention. See the above paragraph for details and responsibilities regarding office detentions.

## **PHYSICAL FIGHTING**

Fighting is not permitted on school property or at school-related events. If a student is caught fighting, the following procedure should be followed with the perpetrator:

1. The student should be reported to the administrator or teacher in charge.
2. A written incident report will be given to the principal or dean of students.

The following consequences will apply:

### First Offense

1. Notification of a conference with parents/guardians.
2. Written documentation in file.
3. The incident will be reviewed by the CORE TEAM and a decision about the incident and its consequences will be determined within 2 days.

## **DISCIPLINARY PROBATION**

Probation is a set time period, usually a quarter or semester, in which a student's behavior is monitored for improvement based on the terms of a written contract.

A student will be placed on probation using the following terms:

1. The first written disciplinary referral will be placed in the students file and an office detention will be given.
2. The second disciplinary referral will be placed in the student's file, an office detention will be given and a meeting with the principal or dean of students will occur.
3. The third disciplinary referral will be placed in the student's file, an office detention will be given, and the student will meet with the principal or dean of students. The student will write a letter explaining how he or she plans to correct his or her disciplinary behavior. The dean of students or the principal will write up a contract, which reflects the student's plans. The student will read and sign the contract.
4. The fourth disciplinary referral will be placed in the student's file and the student will be placed on disciplinary probation.

Disciplinary probation consists of the following:

1. First offense: the first time the student violates disciplinary probation he or she will be given a 1 day in-school suspension in which his or her family will be responsible for the supervisor cost of \$50. There will be no credit given for work missed on that day and the student will not be allowed to participate in extra curricular activities, including sports, on that day.
2. Second offense: the second time the student violates disciplinary probation, he or she will be placed on a 3 day out of school suspension. The student will be responsible for all missed work and will be unable to participate in extra curricular activities during this time period.
3. Third offense: the third time the student violates disciplinary probation, he or she will be immediately removed from all extra curricular activities including sports teams and may be suspended or the expelled for the remainder of the year or forever. This decision will be up to the principal and the dean of students. The decision will be made within 2 days of the incident.

### **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

A student may be placed on academic probation if he/she consistently refuses to complete required work (tests, quizzes, projects, papers, class work, homework, etc.) or fails a course. The principal, in consultation with the guidance counselor and teacher(s), will determine the length of the probationary period. A written statement of the terms of probation will be made. Lack of improvement based on the written terms could result in dismissal from the Academy.

### **DRESS CODE**

A dress code is part of our MSJ tradition. It identifies us as a school with student expectations beyond the ordinary. Our image is that of a school with students who have pride in both their abilities and their appearance. We believe students generally perform academically and behaviorally in accordance with their appearance. MSJ promotes a conservative appearance for students at all times. Acceptable attire is expected both in school and at school activities and events, as determined by this policy and in compliance with the standard of the particular event or team where they represent our school.

In the first period and throughout the day, all faculty will be responsible for identifying compliance and violations of the dress code.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S DECISION ON ALL MATTERS CONCERNING THE DRESS CODE IS FINAL.

### **DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS**

Anyone violating the dress code will receive an office detention.

### **GUIDELINES**

Student dress and grooming must be neat, clean, and appropriate at all times. The following are unacceptable and will be considered a violation of the dress code:

1. Body piercing with the exception of earrings.
2. Poorly groomed or exaggerated hairstyles or unnatural hair color.
3. Oversized, baggy pants below the hip. No visible undergarments.
4. Excessively tight clothing including spandex, lycra shorts, pants, or capris.
5. Shorts or pants that are denim blue jeans, skater, camouflage, military, or sweats.
7. Skirts that are tight and skirts shorter than two inches above the knee.
8. Shorts more than two inches above the knee, or worn low on the hips hanging below the knees.
9. Clothing that reveals "A.B.C." (armpits, belly – midriff, cleavage).
10. Due to safety concerns, MSJ discourages students from wearing flip-flops and high-heeled shoes.
11. No visible tank tops are permitted.

### **Dress Code for both Males and Females**

**Pants:** Khaki or Black appropriate fitting casual dress pants (purchased anywhere). Cargo pants (appropriate color and fit) are also acceptable.

**Shorts:** Khaki or Black appropriate fitting casual dress shorts (purchased anywhere) Cargo shorts (appropriate color and fit) are acceptable. Capri and Gaucho pants are also acceptable.

**Skirts:** Dress Skirts that are not tight may be worn and must be no higher than two inches above the knee. Khaki, Black or Print skirts of your choice are acceptable. Blue denim skirts are not within the dress code.

**Sweatshirts:** Any athletic or school sweatshirt e.g. sports teams, college or university or MSJ, may be worn as long as the sweatshirt is in good condition. If a student wishes to remove the sweatshirt, the student must have on a MSJ regulation shirt.

**Athletic Apparel:** Sweatshirts and jackets purchased through participation in MSJ athletics may be worn as long as the attire has been approved by the administration. The clothing must be neat, clean and in good repair. On game days, a regulation shirt must be worn under athletic attire.

**Fleece Jackets:** Any color fleece jacket may be worn. If the jacket has a logo, the logo should be small. A dress code shirt should be worn under the jacket.

**Fleece Vest:** Any color fleece vest may be worn. If the vest has a logo, the logo should be small. A dress code shirt should be worn under the vest.

**Polo Shirts:** Long or short sleeve polo shirts of any color may be worn. Shirts should fit properly; they should not be too tight or too loose. No colored T-shirts or printed T-shirts may be worn under polo shirts.

**Oxford Shirts:** Long or short sleeve oxford shirts may be worn tucked in by males and females. Males must wear a tie. Females may wear an oxford with slacks or a skirt. Tucked in oxford shirts may be worn without a tie with shorts.

**Sweaters:** Pullover, cardigan and sweater vests of any color may be worn with a polo or oxford shirt. A polo or oxford shirt must be worn under all sweaters.

**ACADEMIC POLICY:** *Beginning August 26, 2003, the weighted grading scale will be in effect for all classes.*

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS 24 Credits**

### **CORE CREDITS:**

Theology	4.0	(Required)
English	4.0	(Required)
Science	3.0	(Must include Biology)
Math	3.0	(Required)
Social Studies	3.0	(Must include US History)
Phys. Ed / Health	1.5	(Required)
Computer Technology	.5	(Required)
Fine / Performing Arts	.5	(Required)
*Language	3.0	(Required)
<b>Elective Credits:</b>	1.5	

**NOTICE: Release of transcripts and receipt of a diploma will not occur until all tuition balances have been paid.**

**\*Language** – Three years must be completed in the same Foreign Language.

In recognizing the demand in our American society, which requires a firm foundation in ethics and the touchstones of ethical decision-making, MSJ places Theology firmly into the core credits required for graduation.

## **EXAMS**

Mid-term and final exams comprise a half-day schedule over a four-day period, with the first exam beginning at 8:00 AM in the morning and the second exam at 11:00 AM each day. A half-hour break occurs before the beginning of the second exam.

## GRADING SCALE AND RELATED TOPICS

The letter grading system is specifically designed to represent a quality of achievement.

- A excellent/significantly above average work
- B very good/above average work
- C average work
- D below average/poor work
- F not passing

RANGE	GRADE		QUALITY POINTS	
		<u>Not weighted</u>	<u>Honors</u>	<u>A.P.</u>
93 – 100	A	4.00	4.50	5.00
90 – 92	A-	3.67	4.17	4.67
87 – 89	B+	3.33	3.83	4.33
83 – 86	B	3.00	3.50	4.00
80 – 82	B-	2.67	3.17	3.67
77 – 79	C+	2.33	2.83	3.33
73 – 76	C	2.00	2.50	3.00
70 – 72	C-	1.67	2.17	2.67
67 - 69	D+	1.33	1.83	2.33
63 – 66	D	1.00	1.50	2.00
60 – 62	D-	0.67	1.17	1.67
59 – 0	F	.00	.00	.00

### Please note:

1. Students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses are required to take the A.P. exam in order to receive AP credit(s).
2. To receive credit for any course, a student must have a .67 index average at the end of the year. The semester exams count 20% of the semester grade.
3. An incomplete status cannot be maintained after two (2) weeks following a marking period. A grade must be submitted at this time or an automatic "F" will be recorded. Quarterly, semester, and semester exam grades will not be given-out by any faculty or staff member of MSJ prior to the student receiving their report card.
4. "F" Grades/Study Hall: Students who fail a class either at progress report time or at the report card time will not be permitted to go to the library. Special written permission on a given day may be requested from the Principal.

### HONOR ROLL REQUIREMENTS:

Honors will be awarded to students who achieve the required GPA and who score a C or above on the mid-term exam and on the final exam.

**High Honors:** No incomplete grades, with a grade point average 3.67

**Honors:** No incomplete grades, with a grade point average 3.33.

### To be on either honor roll, students must have no grade lower than a "C".

In determining class rank, only semester averages are used. The Valedictorian is a student who attended MSJ for four full years and has the highest cumulative grade point average. The Salutatorian is a student who attended MSJ for four full years and has the second highest cumulative grade point average.

*Transfer student credits:* All credits granted by the sending school will be accepted at MSJ provided the sending school is an accredited secondary school. Students transferring to MSJ after their freshmen year will be required to meet graduation requirements other than four years of theology. However, they must complete one year of theology for each year at MSJ.

## **TURNIT IN.COM**

All research and term papers written at MSJ must be turned in to turnitin.com. This link will be provided on the MSJ website. All information regarding this will be given to students on the first day of classes. Assignments outside of research and term papers may be required to be submitted to this website as well. Which assignments and when will be decided by the individual teachers.

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

An international student who enrolls as a senior at MSJ will receive a Certificate of Attendance. In order to receive a diploma, the student must be enrolled more than one year.

All international students must be affiliated with an International Student Placement Agency in order to be accepted into the International Program at MSJ.

All students enrolled in the International Student Program must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 in order to continue to participate in the program. Students and their agencies will be notified by the International Student Program Director of a grade report with a GPA below 2.0 for the quarter. A conference will be held between the student, the International Student Program Director and the International Student Advisor to formulate an academic plan for the subsequent quarter. The International Student Advisor will decide the appropriate course of action (i.e. teacher conferences, tutoring, etc.) and will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the academic plan. Any students that then have a GPA below 2.0, after being on an academic plan, at the end of the academic quarter will be dismissed from the International Student Program at the discretion of the International Student Program Director and the Principal and he or she will be sent home at his or her own expense.

All final exams must be completed on their scheduled dates at their scheduled times. No exceptions will be made to accommodate early departure.

## **VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY SERVICE REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION**

In addition to Federal, State of Vermont, Diocesan, and Mount St. Joseph Academy academic requirements, and in keeping with the Philosophy of the Academy. Please see page 5.

## **HOMEWORK**

Any assignments handed in after their deadline **will not** receive full credit. Students are to adhere to their individual teacher's policies for the grading of late assignments.

## **PROCEDURE FOR COURSE OF STUDY CHANGES**

The Academy's policy is that a student will remain in the course he/she has chosen and been assigned. Only in extraordinary cases and with the Guidance Office direction can a course be changed. Students must follow the proper procedure in order to be allowed to transfer into or out of a course. The Guidance Department will make exceptions only after consultation with the instructor and parents and/or administrators.

In order to withdraw or change an assigned course, the student will obtain the written consent of the following persons:

1. The individual teacher of the course dropped and/or added.
2. The student's parent or guardian.
3. The Guidance Director.

Forms for course changes are available in the Guidance Office.

If a student withdraws from a course after the first marking period, **WF** (withdraw fail) **WNP** (withdraw no pass) **WP** (withdraw pass) will be indicated on the student's report card. Withdrawing from a course will not affect the grade point average in that semester.

## **COLLEGE VISITS**

The Guidance Director must approve college visitations during school time in advance. A letter from the parent requesting time away from school for a college visitation must be submitted at least three (3) days prior to the visitation. Under the new Absence Policy, only 3 days for college visits will be excused.

## **WELLNESS POLICY**

MSJ believes in educating the whole child. Physical Education requirements may be met through completed sports season participation, PE class (if available) and / or some other organized external athletic activity with administrative approval. Nutrition education is taught in Health, which is a required course (0.5 credits) for all sophomores. In addition, the school's food service occasionally offers nutrition education through information and by providing healthy meals that meet federal guidelines.

## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

Mount St. Joseph Academy may use electronic resources including the Internet to support and enrich the curriculum, all in keeping with the mission and philosophy of our school. MSJ believes that the benefit to students from access to appropriate electronic informational resources and opportunities for collaboration far exceeds the disadvantages. The computer's hardware and software are the property of the school, and the administration has the right to check all communications from its property.

### **General Information**

MSJ supports access to informational resources by students and staff. This policy complies with the statutory requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Access to school electronic resources including the Internet will be available to students and staff who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner and abide by the requirements of this policy, including the Acceptable Use Agreement.

Violations of this policy and the procedures developed in accordance with this policy may result in disciplinary action or referral to local, state, or federal law enforcement officials.

### **Users Responsibilities**

All students/users will maintain and sign a current Acceptable Use Agreement form.

During school hours, users may access electronic resources including the Internet for educational purposes only. The term "educational purpose" includes use of the system for the classroom activities, career development, and curriculum driven research.

Students will not post personal contact information about themselves or other students/people and agree to follow communications safety requirements outlined in the Acceptable Use Agreement, when using electronic communications including the Internet.

Students/Users will respect the rights of copyright owners and will not plagiarize works they find on the School electronic network including the Internet by representing them as their own.

Students/Users should not expect that any files, emails, and records of their online activity created on the School's system are private. There will be regular supervision and monitoring of activities, by the administration. Since there is a limitation of privacy, students/users may not access materials for any purpose that the School deems to be potentially harmful, inappropriate, illegal, and non-educational. This includes materials that are inappropriate, obscene or child pornography.

### **Parental Notification and Responsibility**

MSJ will provide written (annually) notice to parents/guardians about student use of school electronic resources including the Internet and emails, the policies and procedures governing their use, and the limitation of liability of the school. Parents/guardians must sign an agreement to allow their child (ren) (all students 18 years of age or older must sign an their own agreement) to access School electronic resources including the Internet and return this signed agreement to the school before access will be granted. Signing of the school handbook by the student and parent/guardian constitutes the recognition and understanding of acceptable Internet / Electronic use.

### **Limitation/Disclaimer of Liability**

The school is not liable for unacceptable use **or** violations of copyright restrictions or other laws, user mistakes or negligence, and costs incurred by users. The School is not responsible for ensuring the accuracy, age appropriateness, or usability of any information found on the School's electronic resources network including the Internet. The school is not responsible for any damage experienced, including, but not limited to, loss or data or interruptions of service. The School is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through or stored on the electronic resources system including the Internet, or for financial obligations arising through their unauthorized use.

## **GENERAL SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

### **BOOKS**

Books are the responsibility of the student. Books are to be purchased online through the MSJ website using the book link. Book returns will be announced as scheduled.

### **CAFETERIA**

Student behavior in the dining area should be based on courtesy and cleanliness. Students are to remain in the cafeteria until they are dismissed. During the assigned lunch period, all students must be present in the cafeteria. Any waiver must come from the administration. There is to be NO FOOD beyond the cafeteria.

### **CHAPEL**

The chapel is located on the first floor of the 1927 building. Students are encouraged to visit the chapel before classes in the morning and after classes in the afternoon. The chapel is our place of worship. It is a place of quiet, for reflection and a place of reverence. *Students are expected to enter the chapel quietly and respectfully for prayer services, Mass, and Reconciliation.*

### **FIRE DRILLS**

Fire drills are held at regular intervals throughout the school year, for the safety of everyone. Everyone should:

1. Check the instructions posted in each classroom indicating "how to leave the building" in case of fire.
2. Walk silently and move quickly with teacher and classmates to the designated area, where attendance will be taken.
3. Clear the building and Convent Ave.

### **EMERGENCY EVACUATION**

In the extreme case that the MSJ building needs to be evacuated and reoccupation is not acceptable; students can be picked up at St. Peter's parking lot, located on the corner of Meadow and River Street, or at the College of St. Joseph. An effort will be made to notify the parents/guardians or other responsible party of this situation.

### **LOCK DOWN PROCEDURES**

Lock down procedures are reviewed with students at the beginning of the year. During a lock down, students should remain away from all windows and doors. Doors to classrooms should be closed and locked and students should sit on the floor away from doors and windows. Strict silence should be maintained during a lockdown. One lock down is scheduled each semester.

### **LOCKERS**

Lockers are assigned to each student and each student must use the locker assigned to him/her. **Students are responsible** for anything found in their lockers. The Principal may open lockers for inspection at any time. **Students are highly encouraged to keep their lockers locked at all times.** To leave a locker unlocked does not lessen the responsibility of the student.

### **STUDENT INSURANCE:**

Students who participate in interscholastic athletics and extra-curricular activities are required to have health or accident insurance. Insurance is available through the school.

## **STUDENT DRIVING**

While parking cars in the student lot, students should be considerate not to block the exit of another car. Parking is to be parallel to Convent Avenue. Students may use the back parking lot as well as that opposite the Academy. Students are not permitted to park on Convent Avenue. If an accident should occur in the parking lot, students must report the incident to the Main Office **IMMEDIATELY**. Student drivers are required to fill out a form and pick up parking permits in the Main Office.

## **STUDY PERIODS**

Study periods are for study, thus an atmosphere of quiet, serious work must prevail at all times. There will be no food or drinks allowed in a study hall.

## **SCHOOL DANCE RULES** (Dances are generally 8:00 - 11:00 PM with an 8:15 PM curfew.)

1. Dances are to be alcohol, drug and tobacco free events.
2. Students leaving the dance will not be readmitted.
3. The student group sponsoring the dance will submit a list of parent chaperones to the Dean of Students one week in advance for approval.
4. Dress must be neat, clean, and appropriate.
5. Students will remain in the part of the building reserved for the dance.
6. Students shall respect the authority of the chaperones and the administration.
7. Students not attending the dance may not be on the premises. This includes Convent Avenue and the parking lot across from the school.
8. There will be no open dances. However, any MSJ student may invite one (1) guest from another school to attend. He/She must be signed up ahead of time and arrive at the dance with their MSJ host. The MSJ host is responsible for the actions of his/her guest. Guests arrive and leave with their host.
9. There will be a curfew which will be no more than 15 minutes following the announced starting time of the dance. Students who cannot be there by that time because of work must sign up ahead of time stating where they work and what time they will arrive.
10. A clean-up committee must be organized by the sponsoring group. This list should be submitted to the administration and the head custodian.
11. Students must attend a full day of classes in order to attend a dance or prom. Students may not leave school early for the purpose of getting ready for the dance or prom. Please refer to Student Attendance, bullet 6, page 9.

## **WEAPONS POLICY:**

It is the intent of MSJ to provide a safe environment for students to learn. Any student who brings a weapon (gun, knife, explosive, tool designed to injure, etc.) to school (or any setting which is under the control and supervision of the Academy such as, school grounds, playing fields, field trips, etc.) shall be brought to the Academy Administrator for immediate investigation. The student may be suspended immediately if such is warranted. In the event of a school-sponsored event away from the Academy, the adult in charge shall confiscate the weapon and isolate the individual if possible, and notify Academy authorities as soon as possible. A student found guilty will be expelled (termination of educational services) by the Principal. Any student bringing a weapon to school shall be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

## **BOMB THREATS**

Students found guilty of bomb threats against the school will be expelled (termination of educational services) by the Principal.

## **STUDENT GOVERNMENT**

All elections are run under the direction of the Student Government Advisor.

Each student who aspires to be a class officer or senator must follow this procedure to become a recognized candidate:

1. The prospective candidate (by petition or write-in) must be a registered student for the year effected by the election outcome.
2. The prospective candidate must obtain a petition from the Student Government Advisor and gather a minimum of fifteen (15) signatures from students in his/her class.
3. This petition must include the prospective candidate's name and the office to which he/she aspires.

4. To become an eligible candidate, the completed petition must be returned to the Student Government Advisor by the announced date.
5. Elections Student Government will take place in the Fall.
6. Elections for class officers will take place in the Spring.
7. Department: Students elected to office by their peers act not only as representative for their peers but for the school as well.

Because they act as role models, they are to be held to a higher accountability for their actions.

A select committee of faculty, administration, and students has the right to remove from office any Class Officer or Senator who:

1. Is in possession of drugs/alcohol or under the influence of drugs/alcohol
2. Shows disruptive or disrespectful behavior in school.
3. Fails to live up to the duties of his/her office.
4. Has been given an in-school suspension.
5. Violates student handbook guidelines.
6. Does not maintain academic eligibility.

Students who fail to meet the minimum standard of behavior will be presented before a select committee consisting of a Class and Student Government Moderator, Administrator, and President or Vice-President of the Student Government. The committee will decide the fate of the officer in question. A student removed from any office, may not hold a position for the balance of the year.

### **National Honor Society**

MSJ has been inducting students into the National Honor Society for many years. It not only recognizes a student's scholarship, but the qualities of leadership, service, and character.

### **Criteria for Selection**

**Scholarship:** To be eligible for election to the National Honor Society, a Junior or Senior must have earned a grade point average of 3.5 (90%) or higher. No D's or F's may appear on the student's transcript as a final grade in previous years or for quarterly grades during the year of selection.

Seniors will be selected on the basis of their qualifications through the first marking term of their senior year. Selection will be made during the second marking term.

**Leadership:** Consideration is given to the positions of leadership a student has held in school and community organizations or athletics. Leaders exert a wholesome influence on school and community by taking the initiative in activities. A leader has self-confidence and a willingness to yield personal interests for the interests of others.

**Service:** Proven willingness to work without recognition for benefit of school or community indicates a student's commitment to service.

**Character:** A demonstrating quality of reliability, honesty, sincerity, and making the right choices proves by example that a student values character. Chronic discipline problems are not the characteristics expected from a National Honor Society member.

There are very definitive National Honor Society guidelines for selecting and dismissing students that the committee uses. Once a student is dismissed, that student will never be eligible again.

### **Selection Guidelines**

1. Students must meet the MSJ grade point average requirement of 3.50.
2. All faculty are invited to make comments on candidates. However, the five appointed members of the Faculty Council must make the actual selections.
3. The Faculty Council reviews information on each candidate and by consensus determines the NHS inductees.

### **NOTE:**

The NHS handbook is available to review from the NHS advisor.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

As an MSJ student who has chosen to participate in extra-curricular activities including athletics, you have voluntarily elected to abide by the following guidelines. Students who choose to participate in extra-curricular activities are held to a higher code of conduct. The privilege to participate fosters responsibility and the realization that each student represents his/her family/school, community, and him/herself on and off the courts, fields, rinks, stage, etc. The following are the **General Rules and Regulations** for MSJ activities.

The participant is required to:

- Refrain from consuming or possessing alcoholic beverages, tobacco products and/or drugs. All athletes should sign contracts before the season begins. No practice without a contract.
- Travel to and from events in transportation authorized by the MSJ administration.
- Achieve "C-" average and **no failures** during the previous marking period and at progress report time.
- Adhere to coaches'/advisors' rules.
- Report all injuries to coaches/advisors.
- Return or pay for all equipment issued by the school. (Failure to do so will prohibit further participation in activities.)
- Be present and on time the day after an event.
- Not participate in practices or events while suspended from classes.

The MSJ athlete must additionally abide by the directives found in the MSJ Athletic Handbook. MSJ spectators will adhere to the rules of conduct.

The Administration believes that by following the above rules, together with the specific rules of each coach/advisor, our activities may create a positive self-image, foster peer acceptance, self-control and self-discipline.

It is our desire to establish and instill a positive set of values in our students, which will enhance their ability to deal with future involvement in society.

#### **STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR ALL EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:**

**Students are ineligible if they:**

1. Have a grade average below "C-" (1.67) or a failure.
2. Are absent from school for 10 days or more in any quarter. Waiver may be considered by administrators.
3. Have reached their nineteenth (19th) birthday before August 1. (VPA regulation)
4. Have been in high school more than eight (8) semesters. (VPA regulation)

**To regain eligibility a student must achieve a (C-) average and have no failures by progress report time in the following quarter. NOTE: Summer school cannot help a student regain his/her eligibility. Upon receipt of official confirmation indicating successful completion of the summer school course, credit will be granted as appropriate and a final grade will be entered as a P (pass). Summer school courses will not be factored into the GPA. The grade for the failed MSJ course remains on the student's transcripts; passing a summer school class will only affect credit totals.**

#### **CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES**

All State Music Festival	National Honor Society
Campus Ministry	N.E. Music Festival
Drama Club	Project Help
Girls/Boy State	Scholar's Bowl
National Art Honor Society	Student Government
Office of Student Life	Tri-M Honor Society
Drama Club	Scholars Bowl

#### **ATHLETIC TEAMS**

Alpine Skiing	Field Hockey	Lacrosse	Track and Field
Baseball	Football	Soccer	
Basketball	Golf	Softball	
Cheerleading	Boys Hockey	Snowboarding	
Cross Country Running	Girls Hockey	Tennis	

**The administration reserves the right to remove a student from any school activity for any infraction of the general school rules and regulations.**

**FUND RAISING** – The Director of Development must approve all school fundraisers. If approved an application for fund raising must be filled out and submitted to the Director of Development. All campus fundraising must take place on weekends or after school.

## **ADDITIONAL POLICIES**

### **PAYMENT PLAN**

All MSJ families are expected to pay tuition from a specifically chosen (F.A.C.T.S) plan mutually agreed upon by the family and the MSJ Administration.

### **COMPLETED PAYMENTS**

Those students in families who have not completed payment of their tuition obligations for the year by the third (3rd) week of May of the current year, will not be allowed to take final exams.

### **FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Whereas, tuition charges at Mount St. Joseph Academy are placed at a minimum (actual per pupil cost is \$10,600), and whereas, no tuition assessed at Mount. St. Joseph meets the actual per pupil cost, and whereas, teachers are under a contract for the year to Mount St. Joseph Academy regardless of the withdrawal of a student at any time in the school year, the Mount. St. Joseph Academy School Board resolves that once a student begins a semester, the families of those students are financially responsible for that semester per our tuition charges and no grades or transcripts will be issued until all financial charges are paid. Refunds may be made in accordance with the above statement.

## **HARASSMENT POLICY**

### **Purpose**

- A. Mount Saint Joseph Academy is committed to providing a safe and supportive school environment in which all students are treated with respect. This policy involves incident(s) and/or conduct that occur on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity, or misconduct not on school property, on a school bus or at a school-sponsored activity where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated.
- B. The purpose of this policy is to prevent harassment as defined in 16 V.S.A. § 11 (a)(26) and amended by Act 91 of 2004, and to ensure that the Academy's responses to allegations of harassment comply with 16 V.S.A. §565 as amended by Act 91 of 2004, Title VI and IX of the Civil Rights Act. It is the further purpose of this policy, when it is found that harassment has occurred, to ensure that prompt and appropriate remedial action, reasonably calculated to stop harassment, is taken by school district employees.
- C. It is the intent of the Academy to apply and enforce this policy in a manner that is consistent with and protects students' rights to free expression under the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The Academy respects and promotes the rights of students and others to speak freely and to express their ideas, including ideas that may offend the sensibilities of others. However, the Academy does not condone and shall take action in response to behavior that interferes with the learning of students and is not otherwise protected expression.

### **Definitions**

#### **A. Harassment**

- (1) **“Harassment”** means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual or physical conduct based on or motivated by a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability that has the purpose or effect of objectively and substantially undermining and detracting from or interfering with a student's educational performance or access to school resources or creating an objectively intimidating hostile, or offensive environment.
- (2) Harassment includes conduct which violates subsection (1) of this definition and constitutes one or more of the following:
  - (a) Sexual harassment, which means conduct that includes unwelcome sexual conduct of a sexual nature when one or both of the following occur: (I) Submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education.
  - (ii) Submission or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis

- for decisions affecting that student.
  - (b) Racial harassment, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived race or color, and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, racial slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display or circulation of written or visual material, and taunts on manner of speech and negative references to racial customs.
  - (c) Harassment of members of other protected categories, which means conduct directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, or disability and includes the use of epithets, stereotypes, slurs, comments, insults, derogatory remarks, gestures, threats, graffiti, display, or circulation of written or visual material, taunts on manner of speech, and negative references to customs related to any of these protected categories.
- B. **"Complaint"** means an oral or written report by a student or any person to an employee alleging that a student has been subjected to conduct that may rise to the level of harassment.
  - C. **"Complainant"** means a student who has filed an oral or written complaint to an employee or is the alleged victim in a report made by another alleging conduct and/or incident(s) that may rise to the level of harassment.
  - D. **"Employee"** includes any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with the Academy, an agent of the school, a school board member, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer.
  - E. **"Designated Employee"** means an employee who has been designated by the school to receive complaints of harassment pursuant to 16 V.S.A. §565© (1).
  - F. **"Principal"** means the building level administrator or his/her designee.

#### **Reporting of Student Harassment Complaints**

- A. A student, who believes that she/he has been harassed, or who witnesses conduct that she/he believes might constitute harassment, should report the conduct to a designated employee, or to any other school employee.
- B. When a student reports such conduct to a school employee, other than a designated employee, that school employee shall refer the report to a designated employee.
- C. An employee who witnesses conduct that she/he believes might constitute student harassment under this policy shall take prompt and appropriate action to stop the conduct and immediately report the conduct to a designated employee.
- D. Any other person who witnesses conduct that she/he believes might constitute student harassment under this policy should report the conduct to a designated employee.
- E. Consistent with this policy and 16 V.S.A. §565, the Principal shall develop procedures regarding the reporting of student harassment complaints and the District's handling of such reports.
- F. The Academy shall select two or more designated employees to receive complaints and shall publicize their availability.

#### **Procedure Following a Report**

- A. Consistent with this policy and 16 V.S.A. §565, the Principal shall develop procedures for complaint response following a report, initiation of an investigation, investigation, independent review, and alternative dispute resolution provisions.
- B. Independent Review: A complainant who desires independent review under 16 V.S.A. §565(f) because she/he is either dissatisfied with the final determination of the school officials as to whether harassment occurred, or believes that, although a final determination was made that harassment occurred, the school's response was inadequate to correct the problem, shall make such request in writing to the Superintendent. Upon such request, the Superintendent shall initiate an independent review.

#### **Discipline and/or Corrective Action**

If after investigation, harassment has been found, the Academy shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary or remedial action reasonable calculated to stop the harassment. Consistent with this policy, the Academy's Student Conduct and Discipline policy and 16 V.S. A. §565, the Principal shall develop procedures regarding discipline and corrective action including final action on a complaint, retaliation, false complaints, and appeal provisions.

There will be no adverse action taken against a person for reporting a complaint of harassment when the complainant has a good faith belief that harassment occurred or is occurring or for participating in or cooperating with an investigation. Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding harassment will be subject to disciplinary action.

#### **Confidentiality; Notification of Results; and Record Keeping**

- A. The privacy of (1) the complainant, (2) the accused individual, and (3) the witnesses shall be maintained consistent with the Academy's obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with laws governing the disclosure of student records or other applicable discovery or disclosure obligations.
- B. Subject to state and/or federal laws protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable student information, the complainant and the accused individual shall be informed in writing of the results of the investigation. If either the complainant or the alleged individual is under the age of 18, subject to the above limitation, his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be provided with a copy of this policy and related procedures, notified when an informal resolution to harassment complaint is attempted, notified when a complaint is filed, and notified in writing of the investigation results. An authorized school official may seek waiver of confidentiality rights in order to inform the complainant of remedial measures undertaken.
- C. The Principal shall assure that a record of any complaint, its investigation and disposition, as well as any disciplinary or remedial action taken following the completion of the investigation, is maintained by the Academy in a confidential file accessible only to authorized persons. The report of the investigation shall be kept for at least six years after the report is completed.

#### **Mandatory Reporting to State Agencies**

- A. If a harassment complaint is made that conduct by a licensed educator might be grounds under the State Board of Education Rules for suspension or revocation of a license or endorsement, the Principal shall report to the Commissioner of Education.
- B. When a person responsible for reporting suspected child abuse under 33 V.S.A. §4911, et seq., determines that a complaint made pursuant to this policy must be reported to the Commissioner of the Department for Children and Families, he or she shall make the report as required by law and related Academy's policy.
- C. Nothing in this policy shall preclude anyone from reporting any incidents and/or conduct that may be considered a criminal act to law enforcement officials.

#### **Dissemination of Information, Training, Comprehensive Plan for Responding to Student Misbehavior and Data Gathering**

- A. Dissemination of Information. Annually, prior to the commencement of curricular and con-curricular activities, the Academy shall provide notice of this policy and its procedures to students, custodial parents or guardians of students, and employees. Notice to students shall be in age-appropriate language and include examples of harassment. At a minimum, this notice shall appear in any publication of the Academy that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for the District.
- B. Training. The Principal shall develop age-appropriate methods of discussing the meaning and substance of this policy with students and staff to help prevent harassment. Training may be implemented within the context of professional development and the school curriculum to develop broad awareness and understanding among all members of the school community. Staff training shall enable staff to recognize, prevent and respond to harassment.
- C. Comprehensive Plan for Responding to Student Misbehavior. The Academy's comprehensive plan pursuant to 16 V.S.A. §1161a(a)(6) shall include provisions that promote the positive development of youth and actions to prevent misconduct from escalating to the level of harassment.

#### **Complaints to the Vermont Human Rights Commission and the U.S. Office of Civil Rights**

In addition to, or as an alternative to filing a harassment complaint pursuant to this policy, a person may file a harassment complaint with the Vermont Human Rights Commission or the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education at the following address: Vermont Human Rights Commission, 133 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05633-6301; (800) 416-2010 or (802) 828-2480 (voice or TTY); Director, Compliance Division Area II, Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Region I, Vermont Department of Education, Policy on Prevention of Harassment of Students II, 33 Arch Street, Ninth Floor, Boston, MA 02110; Phone (617) 289-0111 FAX: (617) 289-0150

### **HAZING POLICY**

It is the policy of Mount St. Joseph Academy (hereinafter "MSJ") that it shall provide a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment. Hazing has no place in MSJ and will not be tolerated. Accordingly, MSJ has adopted a policy and procedure to prohibit hazing and will ensure the enforcement thereof.

#### **Definition of Hazing**

"Hazing" means any act committed by a person, whether individually or in concert with others, against a student in

connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with MSJ; and which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of humiliating, intimidating or demeaning the student or endangering the mental or physical health of the student. "Hazing" also includes soliciting, directing, aiding, or otherwise participating actively or passively in the above acts. Hazing may occur on or off school grounds. Consequences for hazing by an individual will be the removal of that individual from a team or activity for the season. If a whole team is responsible for hazing, the team's season will be cancelled.

Hazing shall not include any activity or conduct that furthers the legitimate curricular or extra-curricular program goals provided that the school approves these goals. An example of this exception might be a reasonable athletic training exercise.

### **Examples of Hazing**

1. Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, electrical shocks, placing a harmful substance on or in the body, or other similar activity; or
2. Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small place, or
3. other activity that creates or results in an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student; or
4. Any activity involving consumption of food, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or others substance that subjects a student to an unreasonable risk of harm; or
5. Any activity that induces, causes, or requires a student to perform a duty or task, which involves the commission of a crime or an act of hazing.

The Principal and Assistant Principal of MSJ are designated by the School Board to receive reports of hazing.

### **BULLYING**

MSJ is committed to providing a safe and supportive school environment in which all students are treated with respect. "Bullying" is a dangerous and disrespectful behavior that treats others with disrespect. Such an overt act or combination of acts directed against a student by another student or group of students are not permitted or tolerated.

#### **Definition of Bullying:**

Bullying is a pattern or abuse that involves a student being "picked on over a period of time". Bullying includes but is not limited to physical intimidation or assault: extortion oral or written threats, teasing putdowns; name-calling; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations and social isolation.

#### **The four key elements that define bullying are:**

- Power imbalance between the bully and the victim
- Intent to harm
- Repeated acts over a period of time
- Impact upon the victim (distress)

Note: Bullying is essentially a form of harassment and procedures outlined in the harassment regulation are sufficient to address bullying.

#### **Consequences of Violation:**

A person or a group of people who are found guilty of hazing or bullying will be subject to disciplinary action from a verbal warning up to and including suspension or dismissal/expulsion.

### **SCHOOL VISITATION POLICY**

Visits to School by Parents, Community Members or Media:

It is the intent of the Board to balance the need of the public and media to be informed about school programs and activities with the privacy interests of students and the responsibility of the school to operate with a minimum of disruption. Accordingly, the Principal or his/her designee may regulate visits to the school by parents, community members or news media subject to prescribed guidelines. Details of this policy are posted in the school and a copy is available in the MSJ office.

### **NONDISCRIMINATION**

It is the policy of Mount St. Joseph Academy not to discriminate in educational programs, activities, or employment practices on the basis of race, language, sex, age, or handicapping condition under the provisions of Title VI of the 1972 Education Amendments; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975.

#### **APPROVED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL**

Mount St. Joseph Academy of Rutland, Vermont is an approved and recognized independent school in compliance with Title 16, Chapter 3, Section 166 of Vermont State law. A copy of this law is available in the MSJ main office and has been previously sent to all parents.

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Public Law 93-380 includes an amendment popularly referred to as the "Buckley Amendment" which requires school systems to refrain from publicizing information about children when the parents do not wish such publicity to occur. Examples of the school's publications of a list of names would include athletic events, honor roll lists, music or dramatic performances, and other student activities. Unless written notification is received from the parents, it will be assumed that publication is agreeable. The school reserves the right to take videos of school productions and to use student pictures in publications and on the school's website. Any parent who does not wish his/her child's picture used, must notify the Principal in writing in the beginning of the school year.

Administrators/Teachers will keep confidential information entrusted to them by students so long as no one's life, health or safety is at stake. Parents will be promptly notified of the school's concern.

#### **FAMILY EDUCATION RECORDS AND PRIVACY ACT**

All academic and personal records pertaining to individual students are confidential. The record is available for review by parents and students. (The full policy is available at the Academy office).

#### **WEATHER CLOSURE**

In the event of inclement weather and school is closed, opening is delayed, or is dismissed early, it will be posted on the MSJ website and announced on the radio/TV stations WSYB, WJJR, WXRT, WXNT, Cat Country, EQX 102.7, WVNR, WPTZ Ch.5, WCAX Ch.3, and the Rutland City Channels 15 and 20.

#### **NECESSARY CHANGES**

The Mount St. Joseph Academy Administration reserves the right to make changes in this handbook as needed.

**Revised: June 2008**

**AGREEMENT**

I, the undersigned, **have read** and **understand** fully the Rules and Regulations contained in the Parent/Student Handbook, and **agree** to abide by them. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. I understand that the on-line version of the student handbook takes precedence over any printed version.

*Please sign and return this agreement to the office of the Registrar before the first day of school.*

**NAME OF STUDENT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT'S SIGNATURE:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

I, parent/guardian, **have read** and **understand** fully the Rules and Regulations contained herein and **promise to adhere** to them.

**NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (s): Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Signatures: \_\_\_\_\_