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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, co-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.

Accepted 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.

Accepted February 2004

SPIRITUAL LIFE

Mount St. Joseph Academy strives to provide opportunities that support the development of the whole student. Our identity as a Catholic high school in the Diocese of Burlington and our role as a Catholic educational community are centered in the religious education, spiritual development and faith formation of all students. During the school year, all students will participate in Catholic faith experiences, including (but not limited to): liturgies, prayer services, retreats, ministry events, daily prayer and service experiences. Students also enjoy a partnership with Christ the King Parish and the support of the surrounding Catholic parishes in our greater community which allows for the presence and the additional support of clergy throughout the area. This comprehensive program allows all students the opportunity to learn, reflect, develop, evaluate and lead faith formation experiences while living the Gospel message in practical, daily life.

Our non-Catholic students also participate in these activities as they relate to the education requirements and the core curriculum of our school. By learning Catholic concepts through classroom studies and participation in active experiences, the intent is for non-Catholic students to learn about, to develop an appreciation for and to respect Catholic principles as they relate to living an active faith life. Extending our school philosophy and mission further into our core curriculum, our service program is an integral and mandatory part of an MSJ education.

Participation in this program is a requirement for all of our students, allowing them to carry their academic classroom learning into the greater community where they foster a spirit of respect and compassion, and develop a willingness to serve God and others.

ADMISSIONS

Mount St. Joseph Academy admits students of any sex, race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its education policies, admission policies, athletic and other school-administered programs. At Mount St. Joseph Academy we minister to each of our students as a beloved child of God based on their God-given humanity including their God-given biological identity. The School grants admission priority to Catholic children and children already having brothers/sisters in Mount St. Joseph Academy. Once a class is filled, names are placed on a waiting list.

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 service hours each year of attendance at the Academy. All students are required to complete 25 service hours per year. Dates by which service hours are required are indicated in school correspondence and on the school website. Students who fail to complete all required service hours by May 15th of their senior year will not be permitted to participate in graduation activities including award ceremonies and graduation exercises. More information about Community Service is located on the MSJ school website.

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, arts, and athletic excellence. Education is a partnership. By electing to attend MSJ, you have chosen to live by the **Code of Ethics** set forth in this handbook. This **Code of Ethics** strengthens the partnership between parents/students and the MSJ. If the partnership is broken, parents may be required to take their child/children out of MSJ.

This Handbook is essential to this partnership.

GENERAL SCHOOL REGULATIONS

Everyone at MSJ is expected to act with respect and responsibility toward themselves, others and material things.

1. All students shall act in a manner that does not 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 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 any inappropriate display of affection in public.

- A public display of affection (sometimes abbreviated PDA) is the physical demonstration of affection for another person while in the view of others. For example, kissing in public. This includes kissing, cuddling, necking, petting, and any physical actions that demonstrate affection, especially between people who are romantically involved. (Sources: Statemaster.com, Oxford English Dictionary, Definition-of.com, etc.)
- As the majority of us understand and know, common courtesies and displays of kindness are not considered inappropriate displays of affection.

10. Tolerance and respect for the diversity of others is expected.

11. **Cell Phone/Tablet/Laptop Policy:** We, at MSJ, can understand the importance of having a cell phone. However, cell phones are becoming problematic as a part of the school day. Cell phone usage will not be permitted during the normal school day 08:00am-3:00pm (with the exception of Lunch). If a student needs to contact a parent or guardian for an emergency situation they may do so in the front office.

Personal and/or school-issued computers and tablets that are not being used for academic purposes will be treated as cell phones: students will be subject to this policy if using laptop/tablet for non-academic purposes.

If a student violates this policy, the following will be the consequences:

First offense: The cell phone will be taken to the office for the remainder of the day

Second offense: The cell phone will be taken to the office for the remainder of the day and the student will serve a detention.

Third offense: The cell phone must be handed in to the office everyday from 8-:3:00 for the remainder of the quarter

Fourth offense and beyond: The cell phone must be handed in to the office everyday from 8-3:00 and the student will be subject to consequences determined by the school administration.

A student who refuses to relinquish her/his cell phone or music player when it is requested by a faculty/staff member as a result of a violation of the regulation, will receive a consequence to be determined by the administration which could include in-school or out of school suspension.

Parents we are requesting, should you need to contact your student during the day, call the front office, we will get the message to your student.

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. MSJ is not responsible for loss of or harm to personal laptop computers.

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 science labs. Backpacks allowed in the classroom are determined by the individual teacher.

15. **Internet Social Networking Sites: Students are not permitted to use social networking sites (e.g., Facebook) during the school day or on school computers. MSJ does not permit its employees to use personal social networking sites (e.g., Facebook) to communicate with any students at any time while employed by MSJ.**

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 finer 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 severe cases, 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 the teacher who witnessed the incident.

Step 2 - Based on the information presented by both parties, the administration 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 of high school.
4. After the first violation of integrity, the possible result may be academic probation, suspension or expulsion. A parent conference may be requested.
5. NHS participation will be terminated.

PLAGIARISM

Students are required to document all sources of information in papers written in each discipline. MSJ follows the MLA (Modern Language Association) format. A reference for documenting sources can be found at www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/ National Honor Society members found to have plagiarized any portion of a term paper or project will be dismissed from the Josephite Chapter of the National Honor Society. Plagiarism will be dealt with by the Assistant Principal and Principal. Plagiarism is a serious offense that will result in disciplinary action. Repeat offenders of plagiarism can be suspended or expelled.

DAILY SCHEDULES

Due to the current situation there are adjustments to the typical day. School will start at the normal time (0800). To minimize movement within the school, students will go directly to their 1st period class. Daily attendance, morning prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, and announcements will be given. 1st period's total time will be slightly extended to accomplish these objectives.

The school day will follow the appropriate bell schedule from that point on. At the end of the day, it is vitally important that students do not loiter in the school. In order to clean and disinfect the school for the next day, unless you are signed up for Homework Club, ALL remaining students must be out of the school by 3:30 p.m.

SCHEDULE # 1: School Day

Homeroom 08:00 - 8:05
Chapel 08:08 - 8:15
Period 1 08:18 - 9:02
Period 2 09:05 - 9:44
Period 3 09:47 - 10:31
Period 4 10:34 - 11:18
Period 5 11:21 - 12:05
Lunch 12:08 -12:35
Period 6 12:38 - 1:22
Period 7 01:25 -2:09
Period 8 02:12 - 2:56

SCHEDULE #2 Community Meeting Schedule:

Meeting 08:00 - 08:05
Mass 09:00 - 09:45
Period 1 09:48 - 10:20
Period 2 10:23 - 10:55
Period 3 10:58 - 11:30
Period 4 11:33 - 12:05
Lunch 12:08 - 12:35
Period 5 12:38 - 01:10
Period 6 01:13 - 01:45
Period 7 01:48 - 02:20
Period 8 02:23 - 03:00

SCHEDULE #3 Mass Schedule:

Homeroom 08:00 - 08:05
Period 1 08:08 - 08:47
Mass 08:50 - 09:35
Period 2 09:38 - 10:17
Period 3 10:20 - 10:59
Period 4 11:02 - 11:41
Lunch 11:44 - 12:10
Period 5 12:13 - 12:52
Period 6 12:55 - 01:34
Period 7 01:37 - 02:16
Period 8 02:19 - 02:58

ATTENDANCE AND TARDY 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 12 days of a semester course or 24 days for a full year course, credit may not be 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. When a student is absent, it is the responsibility of the student to email the teacher for his or her assignments. Students may also check thinkwave or teacher's classroom websites for postings of daily assignments.

Family vacations during times other than scheduled school vacation periods are not encouraged. The days taken for a family vacation during times other than scheduled school vacations will be counted toward the total number of absences for all courses.

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 an 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.

EXCUSED/UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Excused absences are those absences where a student can produce proof of medical illness/condition(s) and appointments (ie: doctor's note, PT note, etc.). If a student is ill, but does not have a doctor's note, the parent is required to contact the main office before 9:00 AM on the day of the absence and produce a written note upon the return of the student to school.

Unexcused absences are any other absence from school without advanced notice.

Pre-arranged off-campus college visits that have been pre-approved by the Guidance Office are considered excused absences.

WAIVER OF ABSENCE

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 OF ABSENCE

Parents and students are reminded that the number of school absences is reported on the end of the semester Report Card. This may, however, differ from the number of absences in individual classes. Attendance reports will be mailed to parents after the 5th absence for a semester class (one notification) and after the 10th and 15th 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. Please be forthright about the absence.

The procedure for long-term absences requires a form from the front office. The form should be completed at least two weeks before the scheduled absence. The student is required to contact all teachers and to request homework assignments prior to the absence.

ABSENCES AND TARDIES

The following is an outline of the ABSENCE POLICY:

- 24 absences will be allowed in a full year course. **NO CREDIT will be given on the 25th absence.**
- 12 absences are allowed in a one semester course. **NO CREDIT will be given on the 13th 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 participate in any co-curricular, athletic, or social activities after school on the day of the absence.
- 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 for a period of time during the marking period for reasons not covered under acceptable reasons for school absence (***Please Note: Planned absences count against "Unexcused Absences"***). 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. **(The Main Office and Registrar need to have the documentation of absence.)**
2. The Main Office acknowledges and signs requests. 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. Students meet with individual teachers for assignments and comments.
4. Within a week of the student’s return, he/she will bring all assignments to their teachers and have them initial the form.
5. Return the completed form to the main office once completed (Note #5).
6. Failure to comply with any of the above will result in grades of “F” for all missed work.

Please Note: Teachers will not supply assignments for extended/planned absences until all mandatory paperwork is handed into the Main Office.

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 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 at school after the start of chapel (i.e. after the second bell) 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 chapel/ 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 Registrar’s 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 2:48 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.

Field trips that are covered under signing of the 2020-2021 Student Handbook without separate permission slips, but not limited to:

- College Fair at Castleton University, all Juniors attend
- Project Help collection and deliveries, December 17 and 18
- Attendance at any Mass throughout this school year that requires students to leave the MSJ campus locations include but are not limited to; Christ the King and St. Peter churches; St. Joseph Co-Cathedral in Burlington.
- Pep Rally days that will include Christ the King School
- Field days that include but not limited to Catholic Schools week participation at CTK

PASSES

We will limit the amount of individual movement of students due to the current situation, but if a student needs to leave a class; Students who need to use a restroom will be asked to sign out, legibly, the name and time he/she left in the provided log book in each classroom. Students will then take the provided pass with them. When the student returns he/she will sign back into the log denoting the time he/she returned. When a student is requesting to go to the library or to another classroom the student will obtain a pass from the teacher overseeing the class. Teachers are not allowed to let more than one student out of the classroom at one time for any reason.

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 will all work together to maintain those standards.

Students in study hall will have priority usage of the library. If students are coming from a non-study hall classroom, their work in the library must be pre-arranged with the teacher in study hall 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. Abide by the copyright laws, library rules and regulations.
2. Engage in conduct that respects the normal operation of the library, the library staff or other library users. Conduct that involves the use of abusive or threatening language or gestures or conduct that creates unreasonable noise, or conduct that consists of loud or boisterous behavior or talking is prohibit
3. Library patrons may not use cell phones, pagers, IPODS, or any other communication devices for phone calls, photographing or texting during the school day.
4. Students are expected to sit on chairs and not put their feet on furniture. Students should be comfortable during their time in the library.

However, in an effort to ensure all patrons are able to make their time in the library useful, disruptive behaviors such as running or throwing objects are unacceptable. In addition, students are expected to use their time in the library productively so that sleeping and gathering in groups to talk will not be allowed. Students who have completed their work on the computers will relinquish their seats to other students.

5. Students may work in small groups or with a teacher in the library. The group or teacher should make arrangements with the librarian in advance of their session and make sure that their work does not impose on any other student's need for quiet study. Talking quietly among a few students is allowed when it supports the studies of all students involved in the conversation.
6. Students should take care to treat books and other library resources respectfully. Any books or equipment that should be replaced may be reported to the librarian. Care should be taken with computers; changing or deleting programs is unacceptable. Defacing or damaging furniture is also not suitable.
7. Push in chairs, clean up papers, and put away reference materials before leaving the library. Students should log off computers after each use.
8. Students should have passes from teachers or staff to come to the library. Passes are handed in when entering the library or returning from restrooms. The library has its own, permanent passes for restroom use. Students must sign in and out and take a pass with them when leaving the library. Only one student should be absent from the library at a time unless they are called away by a faculty member, parent or school staff.
9. Students will be mindful of library policies and work to ensure the library is a place of quiet and useful study. They are willing to follow instructions from the librarian or faculty that will make sure the library is a productive environment for study and learning.

Computer Use

1. Ask for assistance if you are 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. Use of any games is not permitted. 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 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.
7. Computer use will only occur when there is supervision within the library or technology labs.
8. All policies related to computer use and internet access, including MSJ email accounts, must be followed.

Copies

A faculty member in charge will make copies for students if absolutely necessary for educational purposes.

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.

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 administration and the School Counseling Director, 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 (if necessary)
- 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 and Policy for Athletes, Students in Extracurricular Activities and Members of 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 Mount St. Joseph Academy.

Education at MSJ is a partnership in all circumstances. 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.

MEDICATIONS (Prescription and Over the Counter) For safety reasons all medications (**Rx and OTC**) must be left at the main office along with a note stating usage instructions as well as permission. 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, technical 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 administration. The referral will be placed in the student's file. A copy of the referral will be sent home. The student will serve one hour of detention for the infraction. The administration will assign the detention date and time.

DETENTION/TEACHER DETENTIONS

Detentions will be served for one hour beginning at the end of the school day. **Detention days will be Monday-Thursday (depending on the calendar). Students will be notified by a specific teacher, or through administration. Every student will be given a 24 hour notice before serving a detention.**

No excuses will be accepted for not completing a detention, concerning work, practice, 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 when a student accrues 3 detention hours. 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 on out-of-school suspension. The student will receive no credit for the day spent in out of-school detention. The student will not be allowed to attend extra curricular activities on the day of out of-school suspension..

For valid reasons, the Administration may reassign the detention date and day.

Teacher detentions given for disruption in class or for class work-related reasons will co-locate with homework club. 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 submitted to the Administration.

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 student's 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. The student will write a letter explaining how he or she plans to correct his or her disciplinary behavior. 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 one day out-of-school suspension.. The student will be responsible for work missed on that day and the student will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular 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 extracurricular 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 extracurricular activities including sports teams and may be suspended or expelled for the remainder of the year or forever. This decision will be up to the principal. The decision will be made within 2 days of the incident.

Students may be placed on disciplinary probation without having previously accrued disciplinary referrals. This decision may come from the Principal. The Principal has the right to place a student on disciplinary probation at any time based on the incident (s) that have occurred with a student and their severity. The Principal also has the right to dismiss a student from disciplinary probation at any time for positive behavior.

UNIFORM CODE

A uniform 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 UNIFORM CODE IS FINAL.

UNIFORM CODE VIOLATIONS

If a student is out of dress code, her/his parent(s) will be called to be made aware of the situation and the appropriate clothing will be brought to school that same day. The student will receive an unexcused absence for classes missed while out of uniform code. Also, anyone violating the dress code will receive an office detention.

UNIFORM CODE GUIDELINES (As of August 2020)

Mount St. Joseph Blazers

All Mount St. Joseph students are required to wear the Mount St. Joseph Blazer, white oxford shirt, Tie (boys), Khaki pants, or Skirt (girls) at weekly mass or as determined by the administration.

Uniform Code for both Males and Females

BOYS:

PANTS

Khaki-colored (tan or black) pants that are purchased from the retailer of your choice. Belt is to be worn with the pants. Pants must be worn at the waist and are not permitted to be undersized or oversized. Pants with emblems, patch pockets, back-pocket rivets, designs or loops of any kind are not permitted. Cargo and jean style pants are not permitted. Dress shorts may be worn from the first day of the school year to October 16th and from April 1st until the last day of school. They must be Khaki or black, loose-fitting, no shorter than three inches above the knee and may be worn only with the MSJ uniform polo shirt. Nylon, athletic/workout type shorts are not permitted. No skinny pants or joggers.

SHIRTS

Long or short sleeve white oxford style button down dress shirt. **It is not necessary to wear a white oxford shirt with the MSJ logo under the MSJ blazer. A plain white oxford button up shirt is sufficient.** Shirts must be tucked in and fully buttoned during the school day. Undersized and oversized dress shirts are not permitted. Plain white t-shirts may be worn under the uniform shirts. However, the sleeve length of the undershirt must match the sleeve length of the uniform shirt. If one chooses to wear an oxford white button down dress shirt, he must wear a tie with it. NO EXCEPTIONS. If one does not have a tie, he will be given one by the front office.

TIES

Ties are to be worn properly with a white oxford dress shirt.

HOODIE SWEATSHIRTS/ SWEATSHIRTS:

Hoodie sweatshirts are considered as outerwear and are not permitted to be worn during the school day. Hoodie sweatshirts and sweatshirts, including team sweatshirts, may be worn on spirit dress down days.

SWEATERS

School-approved sweaters may be worn over the dress shirts. Sweaters must be purchased through PFC sales approved by MSJ.

POLO SHIRTS AND FLEECE

Refer to selection on the Lands' End website reference school code 900185133.

SHOES

Slippers are not permitted.

JEWELRY

Earrings are permitted. They must be small/studs and no more than 3 per ear during the school day. Nose, eyebrow, lip studs/bars are prohibited.

GIRLS:

PANTS

Khaki or black colored pants must be worn at the waist and are not permitted to be undersized or oversized. Pants with emblems, patch pockets, back-pocket rivets, designs or loops of any kind are not permitted. Cargo and jean style pants are not permitted. Dress shorts may be worn from the first day of the school year to October 16th and from April 1st until the last day of school. They must be Khaki loose-fitting, no shorter than three inches above the knee and may be worn only with the MSJ uniform polo shirt. Nylon, athletic/workout type shorts are not permitted. No skinny pants or joggers.

SKIRT

Khaki-colored (tan) (loose fitting and no shorter than three inches above knee)

MSJ plaid skirt. This is a specific skirt which must be purchased from Lands' End. Color to be White Plaid; this is the only selected color for the uniform plaid skirt.

Black leggings are permitted underneath the skirt during the winter months.

SHIRTS

Long or short sleeve white oxford style button down dress shirt/blouse. Shirts/blouses must be tucked in and are not to have more than two buttons unbuttoned. Undersized and oversized shirts/blouses are prohibited. Plain white t-shirts may be worn under the uniform shirts. However, the sleeve length of the undershirt must match the sleeve length of the uniform shirt.

SWEATERS

School-approved sweaters may be worn over the dress shirts/blouses. Sweaters must be purchased through MSJ.

SWEATSHIRTS/HOODIE SWEATSHIRTS:

Hoodie sweatshirts are considered as outerwear and are not permitted to be worn during the school day. Sweatshirts and Hoodie Sweatshirts, as well as team sweatshirts may be worn on spirit dress down days.

POLO SHIRTS AND FLEECE

School approved polos and fleece must be purchased through Lands' End

SHOES & LEGWEAR

Shoes must be worn in school, please keep in mind that we may have to execute our evacuation plan at any time during the school day. Students will be outside during all weather conditions, please plan for these contingencies. Once we leave the building, there is no certainty we will return. Green, gray, black or white opaque plain tights **will** be worn with the skirt from October 19th through March 31st.

GROOMING

Jewelry and makeup must be appropriate for a school environment. Earrings are permitted. Nose, eyebrow, lip studs/bars are prohibited.

All Students' appearance will be neat, clean, and appropriate for a positive educational environment. The administration reserves the right in all individual cases to determine what constitutes an appearance which is appropriate for an educational environment.

ACADEMIC POLICY

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

All students desiring an MSJ diploma must achieve 26 credits within four years of study, and **25** hours of community service for each year of attendance. Diplomas will not be issued without the documented service hours in place by June 1st of the graduation year.

CORE CREDITS The following credits are required for graduation:

English: *4 credits*

Social Studies: *4 credits*

Religion: *4 credits*

Fine Arts: *1 credit*

Health: *.5 credit*

Math: *4 credits*

Science: *4 credits*

Foreign Language: *2 credits*

Physical Education: *1 credit*

Electives: *1.5 credits*

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

Language Requirement: All students must have the above number of credits for the same world language, unless a documented academic accommodation is on file.

Religion Requirement: All MSJ students, no matter religious affiliation, are required to take the required courses in Religion. MSJ places Religion firmly into the core credits required for graduation.

Full Schedule: Each MSJ student must have a full schedule of classes for each semester. A full schedule is no less than six classes per day or six credits per year.

EXAMS

Before students may sit for any semester exam, all tuition, fees and library obligations must be current and up-to-date. Exams will occur at the conclusion of each semester. 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 last exam finishing at 12:50 each day.

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: failure, not passing.

QUALITY POINTS

RANGE	GRADE	Not Weighted	Honors	AP
95 – 100	A	4.00	4.50	5.00
90 – 94	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
0 – 59	F	.00	.00	.00

ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES

Students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses are required to take the AP exam in order to receive AP credit(s). All payments must be made regarding AP exams to the Finance Manager before a student is permitted to take the exam. If an AP-enrolled student fails to participate in an AP course at an AP level of study, the student may be dismissed from an AP course at the request of the AP instructor in consultation with the Director of Guidance. Effective in the 2014-2015 school year, all AP classes will meet for one full period daily as well as for a lab, or second full period, every other day. Students will receive 1.5 credits for all AP courses.

TRANSITION TO AND EXECUTION OF VIRTUAL LEARNING

Preparing for Distance/Remote Learning

Teachers will establish classroom procedures that will support a smooth transition to distance/remote learning should this be needed. These include:

- Prior to the start of school, create distance/remote classrooms for their students using the platform determined by the administration.
- Communicate with parents/guardians regarding the distance/remote learning tools available, the conditions under which these will be employed, and the expectations for student participation when these are implemented.
- During the school year, intentionally plan lessons that utilize distance learning tools to help students develop a comfort level with utilizing these resources.

Execution of Virtual Learning

In the event that Mount St. Joseph Academy will transition to virtual learning, the notification will come from the Diocese of Burlington. Students, parents, faculty, and staff will be notified using FACTS SIS to ensure widest dissemination. Everyone will be informed of the start date and any special instructions, ensuring everyone has the most up to date information. We will utilize the same plan used during the 2nd semester of the 2019-2020 school year. All virtual classes will follow the same in-person schedule established. Teachers will utilize all virtual methods to communicate and instruct, to include but not limited to Google Classroom, Zoom, Google Meets, ect.

COLLEGE COURSES

Students may register for college courses and receive MSJ credit for those courses. Courses of a particular caliber may be weighted as an AP course is weighted. The college course that is weighted as an AP course must meet standards of academic rigor and receive the approval of the Director of Guidance, in consultation with the Principal, prior to enrollment in the college course. College courses may not substitute for courses that are within the current MSJ curriculum unless due to extenuating circumstances an exception is made by the Administration.. All college courses of three (3) credits or more are given one (1) MSJ credit. All college courses must be pre-approved by the Director of Guidance. The student should consult with the Director of Guidance about the student's academic transcript, courses and academic goals prior to enrolling in college courses. Note: All MSJ students must be enrolled in a full schedule of classes for each semester.

It is the responsibility of the college-enrolled student, and his/her parents/guardians, to monitor the student's performance in College courses. MSJ assumes no responsibility for grade reports, homework assignments, attendance and exams taken within a college curriculum. If a student withdraws from a college course or fails a college course, MSJ assumes no responsibility for providing make-up courses in order for a student to achieve the required credits for graduation.

Grades for college courses appear on the MSJ report card after the college course is completed. The college course is figured into the GPA only at that time.

COURSE CREDIT, FAILURES AND INCOMPLETES

To receive credit for any course, a student must have a .67 index average at the end of the year. The semester exams count for 20% of the semester grade.

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.

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.

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.

***There will be no considerations to changes in schedules 2 weeks into each semester unless recommended by the Guidance Director.**

BOOKS/BOOKSTORE

Books are the responsibility of the student. Books are to be purchased online through various booksellers (e.g., amazon.com; addall.com; bookfinder.com, etc.) A Parent and Friends Club book sale occurs in the SUMMER.

HONOR ROLL REQUIREMENTS

Honors will be awarded to students who achieve the required GPA and who score a C or above

on the midterm 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. *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 freshman 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.

GRADUATION HONOR CORDS

Honor cords at graduation are determined based on the following:

- 1) Transfer students must have sufficient college preparatory classes to receive honor cords. An evaluation will be made of all previous school transcripts to determine eligibility.
 - 2) High Honor Cord: The final GPA must be 3.67 or higher for all years in attendance.
 - 3) Honor Cord: The final GPA must be 3.33 or higher for all years in attendance.
- There may be no D's or F's on any report card.

VALEDICTORIAN/SALUTATORIAN (As of Class of 2012)

Students in any given class, beginning with the Class of 2012, may achieve the status of Valedictorian or Salutatorian based on the following requirements:

Valedictorian: The class valedictorian is chosen based on the highest GPA achieved after three (3) consecutive years of study, including the senior year, at MSJ.

Salutatorian: The class salutatorian is chosen based on the second highest GPA achieved after three(3) consecutive years of study, including the senior year, at MSJ.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is a very important part of the high school career, as it is an extension of learning. Mount Saint Joseph Academy requires that all students complete their homework. **If a student does not complete his or her homework, they will be required to attend Homework Club THAT DAY from 3-4 pm. If a student is required to attend Homework Club, they will be unable to attend extracurriculars during that time.** The administration reserves the right to intervene when necessary.

STUDY HALLS/PERIODS

Study halls/periods are limited in MSJ student schedules. Study halls/periods are for study, thus an atmosphere of quiet, serious work must prevail at all times.

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. As per the Absence Policy, only 3 days for college visits will be excused.

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 school counseling director 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.

All transfer and non-traditional program students are admitted to MSJ on a probationary basis pending receipt of complete official transcript from the sending school and testing where indicated. Incomplete transcript will be considered grounds for dismissal from MSJ.

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, MSJ requires community service for graduation. **The requirement is 25 hours per year per student.**

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: ADMISSIONS and ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

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

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 meet the academic requirements stated below.

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 Principal of a grade report with a GPA below 2.0 for the quarter. A conference will be held between the student, the School Counseling Director, the Enrollment Coordinator, and the Principal to formulate an academic plan for the subsequent quarter. The School Counseling Director 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 Principal and he or she will be sent home at their 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. In case of multiple snow days, the administration can be asked to assist with early exams.

MEDICATIONS

Medications for students must be held in the front office. A note from a parent/guardian must accompany the medication with specific instructions. All medications must be in approved containers. Contact the front office for additional information.

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.

CELL PHONES, IPODS, MP3 PLAYERS, ELECTRONIC DEVICES

In order to create a learning environment that preserves the utmost respect and dignity of all persons within the Mount St. Joseph Academy Community, the following regulation applies:

All calls, including emergency calls, must be made in the main office.

Students may use their cell phones before school, **during lunch**, and after school.

Student use of cellphones other than the designated times will result in the phone being confiscated and brought to the main office. The office keeps the item for the remainder of the day. The student may pick up their phone at the end of the school day Please refer to general rules for repeat offenses.

A student who refuses to relinquish her/his cell phone or music player when it is requested by a faculty/staff member as a result of a violation of the regulation, will receive a consequence to be determined by the administration which could include in-school or out of school suspension.

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 benefits to students from access to appropriate electronic informational

resources and opportunities for collaboration far exceeds the disadvantages. IT hardware and software are the property of the school, and the administration has the right to check all communications from its property.

Policies regarding IT at MSJ may be updated and disseminated as needed. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians, students, faculty and staff to be aware of all policies that are in effect for a given school year.

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.

User 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, violent, bigoted, obscene, or pornographic.

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 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.

STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Mount St. Joseph Academy provides students access to the Academy's electronic network. This network includes Google Apps, email addresses, instant messaging, Internet access, computer services, videoconferencing, computer equipment and related equipment for educational purposes. The purpose of this network is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work in the 21st century by providing them with electronic access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with people throughout the world. This document contains the rules and procedures for students' acceptable use of the Mount St. Joseph Academy electronic network.

- The Mount St. Joseph Academy's electronic network has been established for a limited educational purpose. The term "educational purpose" includes classroom activities, career development, and limited high-quality self-discovery activities.
- The Mount St. Joseph electronic network has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. Mount St. Joseph has the right to place reasonable restrictions on material that is accessed or posted throughout the network.
- Parent/guardian permission is required for all students. Access is a privilege — not a right.
- It is presumed that students will honor this agreement they and their parent/guardian have signed. Mount St. Joseph Academy is not responsible for the actions of students who violate them beyond the clarification of standards outlined in this policy.
- Mount St. Joseph Academy reserves the right to monitor all activity on this electronic network. Students will indemnify MSJ for any damage that is caused by students' inappropriate use of the network.
- Students are expected to follow the same rules, good manners and common sense guidelines that are used with other daily school activities as well as the law in the use of the Mount St. Joseph Academy electronic network.

General Unacceptable Behavior

While utilizing any portion of the Mount St. Joseph Academy (MSJ) electronic network, unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Students will not post information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or a danger of disruption.
- Students will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- Students will not harass another person. Harassment is persistently acting in a manner that distresses or annoys another person. If a student is told by a person to stop sending messages, they must stop.
- Students will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.
- Students will not use criminal speech or speech in the course of committing a crime such as threats to the president, instructions on breaking into computer networks, pornography, drug dealing, purchase of alcohol, gang activities, threats to an individual, etc.
- Students will not use speech that is inappropriate in an educational setting or violates MSJ rules.
- Students will not abuse network resources such as sending chain letters or "spamming".
- Students will not display, access or send offensive messages or pictures.
- Students will not use the MSJ electronic network for commercial purposes. Students will not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through this network.
- Students will not use the MSJ electronic network for political lobbying. Students may use the system to communicate with elected representatives and to express their opinions on political issues.
- Students will not attempt to access non-instructional systems, such as student information systems or business systems.
- Students will not use any wired or wireless network (including third party internet service providers) with equipment brought from home without signing a separate permission for. Example: The use of a home computer or cell phone on the network or accessing the internet from any device not owned by MSJ.
- Students will not use MSJ's equipment, network, or credentials to threaten employees, or cause a disruption to the educational program.
- Students will not use MSJ's equipment, network, or credentials to send or post electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, bigoted, damaging to another's reputation, or illegal.

Email and Social Networking Sites

- **Students will be provided with email accounts to be used for educational projects or activities.**
- Students will not establish or access Web-based email accounts on commercial services through MSJ network unless such accounts have been approved for use by the individual school.

- Students will not repost a message that was sent to them privately without the permission of the person who sent them the message.
- Students will not post private information about another person.
- Students will not use social networking sites at school in an unsupervised manner. Also, MSJ employees are not permitted to use social networking sites (e.g. Facebook) to communicate with MSJ students.

World Wide Web

- Access to information for students on the Web will be provided through filtered web access.
- Individual sites blocked or allowed by the content filter are designated by the service provider. Categories and overrides are reviewed by the MSJ IT Coordinator for educational validity.

Real-time, Interactive Communication Areas

- Students may use chat or instant messaging, but only under the direct supervision of a teacher or in a moderated environment that has been established to support educational activities and has been approved by the appropriate person or party.
- While chatting is permitted with someone outside the school network, it must be signed off by a teacher.

Google Apps for Education

- Students will only use Google Apps services for educational projects or activities.
- Collaboration and sharing will only be done with teacher direction or approval.
- Publicly publishing any type of document or information will only be done with teacher direction or approval.

Web 2.0

- Any Web-based application must be used only for educational projects or activities with teacher direction or approval.

Websites

- Students will be identified by their full name if written parental approval is given. Group or individual pictures of students with student identification are permitted with parental approval only.
- Material placed on student Web pages are expected to meet academic standards of proper spelling, grammar and accuracy of information.
- Material (graphics, text, sound, etc.) that is the ownership of someone other than the student may not be used on Web sites unless formal permission has been obtained.
- All student Web pages should have a link back to the homepage of the classroom or

school, as appropriate.

Personal Safety

- Students will not share personal contact information about themselves or other people. Personal contact information includes address, telephone, school address, or work address.
- MSJ students will not disclose personal contact information, except to education institutes for educational purposes, companies or other entities for career development purposes, or without specific building administrative approval.
- Students will not agree to meet with someone they have met online.
- Students will promptly disclose to a teacher or other school employee any message received that is inappropriate or makes the student feel uncomfortable

System Security

- Students are responsible for their individual accounts and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use them. Under no conditions should students provide their password to another person.
- Students must immediately notify a teacher or the IT Coordinator if they have identified a possible security problem. Students should not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access.
- Students will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to any portion of the MSJ electronic network. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or access another person's folders, work, or files. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purposes of "browsing".
- Students will not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means. These actions are illegal.
- Users will not attempt to access Web sites blocked by MSJ policy, including the use of proxy services, software, or Web sites.
- Users will not use sniffing or remote access technology to monitor the network or other users' activity.

Software and Files

- Software is available to students to be used as an educational resource. No student may install, upload or download software without permission from the MSJ IT Coordinator.
- A student's account may be limited or terminated if a student intentionally misuses software on any MSJ-owned equipment.
- Files stored on the network are treated in the same manner as other school storage areas, such as lockers. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the MSJ electronic network may lead to discovery that a student has violated this policy or the law. Students should not expect that files stored on MSJ servers are private.

Technology Hardware

- Hardware and peripherals are provided as tools for student use for educational purposes. Students are not permitted to relocate hardware (except for portable devices), install peripherals or modify settings to equipment without the consent of MSJ IT Coordinator.

Vandalism

- Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data, the network, other network components connected to the network backbone, hardware or software will result in cancellation of network privileges. Disciplinary measures in compliance with MSJ's discipline code and policies will be enforced.

Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

- Students will not plagiarize. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were the students'.
- MSJ policies on copyright will govern the use of material accessed and used on the MSJ electronic network.
- Copyrighted material will not be placed on any system without the author's permission. Permission may be specified in the document on the system or must be obtained directly from the author.

Videoconference

- Videoconferencing is a way that students can communicate with other students, speakers, museums, etc. from other parts of the country and the world. With videoconferencing equipment, students can see, hear, and speak with other students, speakers, museum personnel, etc. in real-time.
- Video Conference sessions may be videotaped by MSJ personnel or by a participating school involved in the exchange in order to share the experience within ours or their building.
- Students' voices, physical presence, and participation in the videoconference are transmitted to participating sites during each session. Rules and procedures relative to acceptable use and behavior by students apply during all video conference sessions.

Student Rights

- A student's right to free speech applies to communication on the Internet. The MSJ electronic network is considered a limited forum, similar to the school newspaper, and therefore MSJ may restrict a student's speech for valid educational reasons.

- An individual search will be conducted if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated this policy or the law. The investigation will be reasonable and related to the suspected violation.

Due Process

- MSJ will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the MSJ network.
- In the event there is an allegation that a student has violated MSJ acceptable use regulation and policy, the student will be provided with a written notice of the alleged violation. An opportunity will be provided to present an explanation before a neutral administrator (or student will be provided with notice and an opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in the disciplinary code).
- Disciplinary actions will be tailored to meet specific concerns related to the violation and to assist the student in gaining the self-discipline necessary to behave appropriately on an electronic network. Violations of the acceptable use regulation and policy may result in a loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action. Loss of use is at the discretion of the MSJ Principal in consultation with the MSJ IT Coordinator.
- If the violation also involves a violation of other provisions of other school rules, it will be handled in a manner described in the school rules. Additional restrictions may be placed on a student's use of his/her network account.

Limitation of Liability

- MSJ makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through MSJ network will be error-free or without defect. MSJ will not be responsible for any damage suffered, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service.
- MSJ is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the network. MSJ will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the network.
- MSJ is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the web (like Google Apps does). MSJ will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the network.

Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy

Violations of this policy may result in loss of access as well as other disciplinary or legal action. A student's violation of this policy shall be subject to the consequences as indicated within this policy as well as other appropriate discipline which includes, but is not limited to:

- Use of MSJ network only under direct supervision.
- Suspension of network privileges.
- Revocation of network privileges.
- Suspension of computer privileges.

- Detention in school.
- Suspension from school.
- Expulsion from school.
- Legal action and prosecution by the authorities.

The particular consequences for violations of this policy shall be determined by the Principal. The Principal shall determine when school expulsion and/or legal action or actions by the authorities are the appropriate course of action.

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 parents/guardians, or other responsible parties, of this situation.

CRISIS REPORT PROCEDURES

[Click here](#) for the document

STUDENT 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 Administration 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. MSJ is not responsible for items stolen from student lockers. Any student who does not return his or her lock at the end of the year will be required to pay a \$10 fee to replace the lock.

STUDENT INSURANCE

Students who participate in interscholastic athletics and extracurricular activities are required to have health or accident insurance.

STUDENT PARKING LOT AND 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 and contact the police to report the accident.** Student drivers are required to drive responsibly. The Principal has the authority to revoke a student's use of the parking lot if a student driver refuses to conduct him/herself responsibly in the parking lot.

SCHOOL DANCE/PROM RULES

Dances are generally 7:00 - 10:00 PM with a 7:15 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 Administration 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 under the age of 21, 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.

THREATENING LANGUAGE:

It is the intent of MSJ to provide a safe environment for students to learn. Any student who threatens to or speaks about bringing 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 will inform the Administration as soon as possible about this type of language. The Administration will complete an investigation. The appropriate form of punishment will be decided upon by the principal. If deemed necessary, the Administration may expel the student and inform the appropriate law enforcement agency. Threatening language, especially in regards to weapons, will not be tolerated at Mount Saint Joseph Academy.

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 affected 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.

Since they act as role models, Student Government members are 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 Student Government member 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 generations. NHS not only recognizes a student's scholarship, but the qualities of leadership, service, and character.

Criteria for NHS 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. **An NHS member in the Josephite Chapter of NHS who is found guilty of plagiarism of any portion of a term paper or project will be dismissed from NHS.**

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

Character: 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.

Leadership: Proven record of leadership within the school and/or general community.

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 NHS Faculty Council must make the actual selections. The Council's decisions are binding.
3. The NHS Faculty Council reviews information on each candidate and by consensus determines the NHS inductees.

Continued Membership

If a member of the MSJ NHS wishes to continue as a member, he/she must complete the process for review established by the NHS Advisor. Not completing the review process disqualifies a student from membership in the MSJ chapter of NHS. The review occurs at the beginning of each new academic year.

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

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

As an MSJ student who has chosen to participate in extracurricular activities including athletics, you have voluntarily elected to abide by the following guidelines. Students who choose to participate in extracurricular 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. Travel to and from events in transportation authorized by the MSJ administration.
- Achieve a minimum grade of 70% in each class.

- 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.

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

The Vermont Principals Association states a student will be ineligible if::

- 1) They have reached their nineteenth (19th) birthday before August 1.
- 2) They have been in high school for more than 8 semesters.

A student is eligible to participate in extracurricular activities when they are in good academic standing. This means the student is not on academic probation, All grades within the current **reporting period** have a cumulative average of 70% or better.

Grades are locked eight times in the academic year (**8 reporting periods**). Each time grades are locked, eligibility for extracurricular activities will be re-evaluated. Reporting period dates are published on the academic calendar. Grades will be locked at the end of the reporting period. Progress reports and report cards will be issued one week later. Eligibility will be announced when progress reports and reports cards are published (this is the date ineligibility begins).

When grades are locked, and the progress report or report card are published, a student's eligibility will be determined by the following:

If the student has **more than ONE grade below 70% or any grade below 60%**, the student is ineligible to participate until all grades are above 60% with a cumulative overall average of 70% or two weeks; whichever is longer. Eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities will be determined by grades posted in FACTS SIS.

CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Students may join the various clubs and activities by contacting the faculty moderator: All State Music Festival , National Honor Society , Campus Ministry, N.E. Music Festival , Drama Club; Project Help; Scholar's Bowl; National Art Honor Society; Student Government; Office of

Student Life; Tri-M Honor Society.

ATHLETIC TEAMS

A student may join a team by contacting the Athletic Director. We currently have the following teams at MSJ:

- Cross Country
- Mens and Womens Soccer
- Cheerleading
- Mens and Womens Basketball
- Alpine Skiing
- Baseball
- Women's Tennis
- Softball
- E-Sports

We also offer the following athletic opportunities through our member-to-member programs:

- Football (member to member)
- Field Hockey
- Hockey
- Girls and Boys Lacrosse

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

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES AND FUNDRAISING

The Principal must approve all school fundraisers. If approved an application for fund raising must be filled out and submitted to the Activities Coordinator. All campus fundraising must take place on weekends or after school.

FINANCE POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

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. Payments may be made in one (1) installment, two (2) installments, four (4) installments or ten (10) installments. A written document that states the payment plan must be on-file in the Finance Office.

TUITION ASSISTANCE

MSJ families may apply for financial assistance prior to the beginning of the school year. Applications are accepted for financial assistance until April 30. Applications received after that date, but before the start of the school year, are reviewed on an individual basis. Part of the financial assistance process includes the filing of a FACTS form. See the Finance Office for details. All financial assistance is given, in part, based on demonstrated financial need.

COMPLETED PAYMENTS

Those students in families who have not completed payment of their tuition obligations for the year will not be allowed to register for the following year. **Students who are not registered for school will not:**

- Receive financial aid consideration
- Be scheduled for classes
- Be considered for the reduced the early registration fee

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Unconditional Obligation:

I/we understand that the operating expenses of the school do not diminish with student departures during the course of the year. I/we understand that my/our obligation to pay tuition for the full academic year is unconditional after acceptance. In the event of a voluntary withdrawal or withdrawal in cases of illness, I/we acknowledge that the amount owed to the school is governed by the table below. No refunds will be made in the case of dismissal of the above student, or in cases of voluntary withdrawals made to preempt a dismissal.

<i>Withdrawal date: January 1</i>	<i>Amount of tuition owed to school</i>
Before January 1: 50 percent of net tuition	50% of net tuition
January 1 – end of year: 0 percent of net tuition	100% of net tuition

If sharing financial responsibility for tuition and fees with another party (e.g., non-custodial parent or grandparent), the other party must also complete an enrollment contract specifying their share of the costs.

PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT, HAZING, AND BULLYING POLICY

Replacement Policy 5152

I. Statement of Policy

As Catholic institutions, is committed to providing its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect.

In keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church, it is the policy of the School to prohibit the unlawful hazing, harassment, and/or bullying of students based on race, color, religion, creed, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Hazing, harassment, and/or bullying may also constitute a violation of Vermont's Public Accommodations Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and/or Title IX of the federal Education Amendments Act of 1972.

Note: Conduct which constitutes unlawful hazing, harassment and/or bullying may be subject to civil penalties.

The school shall address all complaints of harassment, hazing and bullying according to the procedures accompanying this policy, and shall take appropriate action against any person who violates this policy. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit punishment of a student for conduct which, although it does not rise to the level of harassment, bullying, and/or hazing as defined herein, otherwise violates one or more provisions of the school's code of conduct.

II. Implementation

The principal or his/her designee shall:

1. Adopt a procedure directing staff, parents and guardians how to report violations of this policy and file complaints under this policy.
2. Annually, select two or more designated employees who are well versed in the teachings of the Catholic Church and the policies of the School to receive complaints of hazing, bullying and/or harassment at each school campus and publicize their availability in any publication of the school that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards of conduct for the school.
3. Designate an Equity Coordinator who is well versed in the teachings of the Catholic Church and the policies of the School to oversee all aspects of the implementation of this policy as it relates to obligations imposed by federal law regarding discrimination. This role may also be assigned to one or both of the Designated Employees.

4. Respond to notifications of possible violations of this policy in order to promptly and effectively address all complaints of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying.
5. Take action on substantiated complaints. In cases where hazing, harassment and/or bullying is substantiated, the school shall take prompt and appropriate remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the hazing, harassment and/or bullying; prevent its recurrence; and to remedy the impact of the offending conduct on the victim(s), where appropriate. Such action may include a wide range of responses from education to serious discipline.

Serious discipline may include termination for employees and, for students, expulsion or removal from school property. It may also involve penalties or sanctions for both organizations and individuals who engage in hazing. Revocation or suspension of an organization's permission to operate or exist within the School's purview may also be considered if that organization knowingly permits, authorizes or condones hazing.

III. Purpose

It is the intent of the school to apply and enforce this policy in a manner consistent with the mission of the school as a Catholic institution. The purpose of this policy is to (1) prohibit conduct or communication that is directed at a person's protected characteristics as defined below and that has the purpose or effect of substantially disrupting the educational learning process and/or access to educational resources or creates a hostile learning environment; (2) prohibit conduct intended to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate students in a manner as defined under this policy.

IV. Definitions. For the purposes of this policy and the accompanying procedures, the following definitions apply:

- A. **"Bullying"** means any overt act or combination of acts, including an act conducted by electronic means, directed against a student by another student or group of students and which:
 1. Is repeated over time;
 2. Is intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the student; and
 3. (i) occurs during the school day on school property, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored activity, or before or after the school day on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity; or
(ii) does not occur during the school day on school property, on a school bus or at a school sponsored activity and can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's right to access educational programs.

- B. **“Complaint”** means an oral or written report of information provided 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 hazing, harassment, and/or bullying.
- C. **“Complainant”** means a student who has provided oral or written information about conduct that may rise to the level of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying, or a student who is the target of alleged hazing, harassment, and/or bullying.
- D. **“Designated employee”** means an employee who has been designated by the school to receive complaints of hazing, harassment and/or bullying pursuant to subdivision 16 V.S.A. 570a(a)(7). The designated employees for each school, are identified in Appendix 5152 of each school’s regulations for this policy.
- E. **“Employee”** includes any person employed directly by or retained through a contract with , an agent of the school, a school board member, a student teacher, an intern or a school volunteer. For purposes of this policy, “agent of the school” includes Diocesan personnel associated with .
- F. **“Equity Coordinator”** is the person responsible for implementation of Title IX (regarding sex-based discrimination) and Title VI (regarding race-based discrimination) for and for coordinating the School’s compliance with Title IX and Title VI in all areas covered by the implementing regulations. The Equity Coordinator is also responsible for overseeing implementation of the School’s harassment policy. This role may also be assigned to Designated Employees.
- G. **“Harassment”** means an incident or incidents of verbal, written, visual, or physical conduct, including any incident conducted by electronic means, 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, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity, 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.

Harassment includes conduct as defined above and may also constitute one or more of the following:

1. Sexual harassment, which means unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, that includes sexual violence/sexual assault, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, written, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, and includes situations 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, academic status, or progress; or
- (ii) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as a component of the basis for decisions affecting that student.

Sexual harassment may also include student-on-student conduct or conduct of a non-employee third party that creates a hostile environment on the basis of sex. A hostile environment exists where the harassing conduct is contrary to the mission of the school as a Catholic institution, severe, persistent and/or so pervasive as to deny or limit the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program.

- 2. 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 cultural customs.
- 3. Harassment of members of other protected categories, means conduct contrary to the mission of the school as a Catholic institution and is directed at the characteristics of a student's or a student's family member's actual or perceived creed, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity 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.

- H. **“Hazing”** means any intentional, knowing or reckless act committed by a student, whether individually or in concert with others, against another student: In connection with pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization which is affiliated with the educational institution; and
- 1. Which is intended to have the effect of, or should reasonably be expected to have the effect of endangering the mental or physical health of the student.

Hazing shall not include any activity or conduct that furthers legitimate curricular, extra-curricular, or military training program goals, provided that:

- (i) the goals are in keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church;
 - (ii) are approved by the educational institution; and
 - (iii) the activity or conduct furthers the goals in a manner that is appropriate, contemplated by the educational institution, and normal and customary for similar programs at other educational institutions.
- 2. With respect to Hazing, **“Student”** means any person who:

- (i) is registered in or in attendance at an educational institution;
 - (ii) has been accepted for admission at the educational institution where the hazing incident occurs; or
 - (iii) intends to attend an educational institution during any of its regular sessions after an official academic break.
- I. **“Notice”** means a written complaint or oral information that hazing, harassment, and/or bullying may have occurred which has been provided to a designated employee from another employee, the student allegedly subjected to hazing, harassment, and/or bullying another student, a parent or guardian, or any other individual who has reasonable cause to believe the alleged conduct may have occurred. If the school learns of possible hazing, harassment, and/or bullying through other means, for example, if information about hazing, harassment, and/or bullying is received from a third party (such as from a witness to an incident or an anonymous letter or telephone call), different factors will affect the school’s response. These factors include the source and nature of the information; the seriousness of the alleged incident; the specificity of the information; the objectivity and credibility of the source of the report; whether any individuals can be identified who were subjected to the alleged harassment; and whether those individuals want to pursue the matter. In addition, for purposes of violations of federal anti-discrimination laws, notice may occur when an employee of the school, including any individual who a student could reasonably believe has this authority or responsibility, knows or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known about potential unlawful hazing, harassment and/or bullying.
- J. **“Organization”** means a fraternity, sorority, athletic team, association, corporation, order, society, corps, cooperative, club, or other similar group, whose members primarily are students at an educational institution, and which is affiliated with the educational institution.
- K. **“Pledging”** means any action or activity related to becoming a member of an organization.
- L. **“Retaliation”** is any adverse action by any person against any person involved in an alleged or substantiated case of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying. This includes but is not limited to the complainant, the alleged or substantiated perpetrator, any witnesses, and any person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing related to hazing, harassment, and/or bullying complaint. Such adverse action may include conduct by a school employee directed at a student in the form of intimidation or reprisal such as diminishment of grades, suspension, expulsion, change in educational

conditions, loss of privileges or benefits, or other unwarranted disciplinary action. Retaliation may also include conduct by a student directed at another student or school employee in the form of further and/or newly initiated hazing, harassment, bullying, intimidation, and reprisal.

M. **“School administrator”** means a superintendent, principal or his/her designee, assistant principal and/or the School’s Equity Coordinator.

N. **“Complaint Reporting Form”** is a form used by students, staff, or parents, to provide, in written form, information about inappropriate student behaviors that may constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying.

Approved: September 12, 2019
Bishop of Burlington

Regulation 5152

PROCEDURES ON THE PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT, HAZING, AND BULLYING OF STUDENTS

I. Reporting Complaints of Hazing, Harassment and/or Bullying

A. Student Reporting: Any student who believes that s/he has been hazed, harassed and/or bullied under this policy, or who witnesses or has knowledge of conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute hazing, harassment and or/bullying, should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee or any other school employee.

B. School employee reporting: Any school employee who **witnesses conduct** that s/he reasonably believes might constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying shall take reasonable action to stop the conduct and to prevent its recurrence and immediately report it to a designated employee and immediately complete a Student Conduct Form.

Any school employee **who overhears or directly receives information** about conduct that might constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying shall immediately report the information to a designated employee and immediately complete a Student Conduct Form. If one of the designated employees is a person alleged to be engaged in the conduct complained of, the incident shall be immediately reported to the other designated employee or the school administrator.

C. Other reporting: Any other person who witnesses conduct that s/he reasonably believes might constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying under this policy should promptly report the conduct to a designated employee.

- D. Documentation of the report: If the complaint is oral, the designated employee shall promptly reduce the complaint to writing, including the time, place, and nature of the alleged conduct, the identity of the complainant, alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses. Both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator will have the right to present witnesses and other evidence in support of their position.
- E. False complaint: Any person who knowingly makes a false accusation regarding hazing, harassment and/or bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion with regard to students, or up to and including discharge with regard to employees. There shall be no adverse action taken against a person for reporting a complaint of hazing, harassment and/or bullying when the person has a good faith belief that hazing, harassment and/or bullying occurred or is occurring.
- F. Rights to Alternative Complaint Process: 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 addresses noted below:

Vermont Human Rights Commission
14-16 Baldwin Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301
(800) 416-2010 or (802) 828-2480 (voice)
(877) 294-9200 (tty)
(802) 828-2481 (fax)
Email: human.rights@state.vt.us

Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office
U.S. Department of Education
8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-3921 617-289-0111 (voice)
877-521-2172 (tdd)
617-289-0150 (fax)
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

II. **Responding to Notice of Possible Policy Violation(s)**

- A. Upon **notice of information** that hazing, harassment and/or bullying may have occurred the designated employee shall:
 - i. Promptly reduce any oral information to writing, including the time, place, and nature of the alleged conduct, the identity of the complainant, alleged perpetrator, and any witnesses;
 - ii. Promptly inform the school administrator(s) of the information;

- iii. If in the judgment of the school administrator, the information alleges conduct which may constitute harassment, hazing or bullying, the school administrator shall, as soon as reasonably possible, provide a copy of the policy on hazing, harassment and bullying and these procedures to the complainant and accused individual, or if either is a minor, cause a copy to be provided or delivered to their respective parent or guardian.
 - B. Upon **initiation of an investigation**, the designated employee shall:
 - i. Notify in writing both the complainant and accused individual (or if either is a minor inform their respective parent or guardian) that:
 - 1. an investigation has been initiated;
 - 2. retaliation is prohibited;
 - 3. all parties have certain confidentiality rights; and
 - 4. they will be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation.
 - C. All notifications shall be subject to state and/or federal laws protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable student information. Pursuant to 34 CFR Part 99.30, a school administrator may seek the consent of the parent/guardian of the accused student, or the accused eligible student (if 18 or older, the accused student has the ability to consent), in order to inform the complainant of any disciplinary action taken in cases where the school determined that an act(s) of harassment, hazing, and/or bullying, or other misconduct occurred. The parent/guardian or eligible student shall provide a signed and dated written consent before an educational agency or institution discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records.

III. **Investigating Hazing, Harassment and/or Bullying Complaints**

- A. Initiation of Investigation-Timing. Unless special circumstances are present and documented, such as reports to the Department for Children and Families (“DCF”) or the police, the school administrator shall, no later than one school day after Notice to a designated employee, initiate or cause to be initiated, an investigation of the allegations, which the school administrator reasonably believes may constitute harassment, hazing or bullying.
- B. Investigator Assignment. The school administrator shall assign a person to conduct the investigation; nothing herein shall be construed to preclude the school administrator from assigning him/herself or a designated employee as the investigator. No person who is the subject of a complaint shall conduct such an investigation.
- C. Interim Measures. It may be appropriate for the school to take interim measures during the investigation of a complaint. For instance, if a student alleges that he or she has been sexually assaulted by another student, the school may decide to place the

- students immediately in separate classes and/or transportation pending the results of the school's investigation. Similarly, if the alleged harasser is a teacher, allowing the student to transfer to a different class may be appropriate. In all cases, the school will make every effort to prevent disclosure of the names of all parties involved – the complainant, the witnesses, and the accused -- except to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation. In all cases where physical harm has resulted and/or where the targeted student is known to be expressing suicidal ideation, or experiencing serious emotional harm, a safety plan will be put in place. Safety plans must also be considered in cases where the targeted student is known to have difficulty accessing the educational programs at the school as a result of the inappropriate behavior. No contact orders, or their enforcement, may also be appropriate interim measures.
- D. Due Process. The United States Constitution guarantees due process to students and School employees who are accused of certain types of infractions, including but not limited to sexual harassment under Federal Title IX. The rights established under Title IX must be interpreted consistent with any federally guaranteed due process rights involved in a complaint proceeding, including but not limited to the ability of the complainant and the accused to present witnesses and other evidence during an investigation. The School will ensure that steps to accord due process rights do not restrict or unnecessarily delay the protections provided by Title IX to the complainant.
- E. Standard Used to Assess Conduct. In determining whether the conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the investigator shall be mindful of the mission of the school as a Catholic institution as s/he considers the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. The complainant and accused will be provided the opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence during an investigation. The school has the discretion to consider the impact of relevant off-campus conduct on the school environment where direct harm to the welfare of the school can be demonstrated or the conduct can be shown to pose a clear and substantial interference with another student's equal access to educational programs. Whether a particular action constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.
- F. Completion of Investigation – Timing. No later than five school days from the filing of the complaint with the designated employee, unless special circumstances are present and documented, the investigator shall submit a written initial determination to the school administrator.
- G. Investigation Report. The investigator shall prepare a written report to include a statement of the findings of the investigator as to whether the allegations have been

substantiated, and as to whether the alleged conduct constitutes hazing, harassment and/or bullying. The report, when referencing student conduct, is a student record and therefore confidential. It will be made available to investigators in the context of a review conducted by the Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington, or his designee, or investigations of harassment conducted by the Vermont Human Rights Commission or U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights.

H. Notice to Students/Parents/Guardians. Within five school days of the conclusion of the investigation, the designated employee shall:

- i. Notify in writing both the complainant and accused individual (or if either is a minor inform their respective parent or guardian) that:
 1. the investigation has been completed;
 2. whether or not the investigation concluded that a policy violation occurred;
 3. that federal privacy law prevents disclosure of any discipline imposed as a result of the investigation unless the parent/guardian of the accused student and/or the accused eligible student consents to such disclosure, pursuant to 34 CFR Part 99.30, as set forth in Section II, Part C, above.
- ii. Notify the Complainant Student - or if a minor, their parent(s) or guardian - in writing of their rights to:
 1. Request (within 30 days) an internal review by the school of the investigator's determination as to whether hazing, harassment, and/or bullying occurred;
 2. Request (within 30 days of the school's determination after internal review) an additional review by the Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington as to (1) whether hazing, harassment, and/or bullying occurred or (2) if hazing, harassment, and/or bullying was determined to have occurred, whether the school took adequate steps to protect the complainant against further hazing, harassment, and/or bullying; Request an Independent Review of the school's determination (within 30 days of the school's determination after internal review or, if requested, within 30 days of the review by the Bishop) as to (1) whether harassment occurred or (2) if harassment was determined to have occurred, whether the school took adequate steps to protect the complainant against further hazing, harassment, and/or bullying and correct the problem; and that the review will be conducted by an investigator to be selected by the superintendent from a list developed by the Agency of Education;
 3. File complaints of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying with either the Vermont Human Rights Commission and/or the federal Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights.

- iii. Notify the Accused Student – or if a minor, their parent(s) or guardian - in writing of their right to appeal as set forth in Section V of these procedures.
- I. Violations of Other Policies. In cases where the investigation has identified other conduct that may constitute a violation of other school disciplinary policies or codes of conduct, the designated employee shall report such conduct to the school administrator for action in accordance with relevant school policies or codes of conduct.

IV. **Responding to Substantiated Claims**

- A. Scope of Response. After a final determination that an act(s) of hazing, harassment and/or bullying has been committed, the school shall take prompt and appropriate disciplinary and/or remedial action reasonably calculated to stop the hazing, harassment and/or bullying and prevent any recurrence of harassment, hazing and/or bullying, and remedy its effects on the victim(s).

In so doing, the following should be considered:

- i. Potential Remedial Actions. Remedial action may include but not be limited to an age appropriate warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension, and/or expulsion of a student, and warning, reprimand, education, training and counseling, transfer, suspension and/or termination of an employee. A series of escalating consequences may be necessary if the initial steps are ineffective in stopping the hazing, harassment and/or bullying. To prevent recurrences counseling for the offender may be appropriate to ensure that he or she understands what constitutes hazing/harassment and/or bullying and the effects it can have. Depending on how widespread the hazing/harassment/bullying was and whether there have been any prior incidents, the school may need to provide training for the larger school community to ensure that students, parents and teachers can recognize hazing/harassment/bullying if it recurs and know how to respond.
- ii. School Access/Environment Considerations. The School will also take efforts to support victims' access to the School's programs, services and activities and consider and implement school-wide remedies, where appropriate. Accordingly, steps will be taken to eliminate any hostile and/or threatening environment that has been created. For example, if a female student has been subjected to harassment/bullying by a group of other students in a class, the school may need to deliver special training or other interventions for that class to repair the educational environment. If the school offers the student the option of withdrawing from a class in which a hostile environment/bullying occurred, the School will assist the student in making program or schedule changes and ensure that none of the changes adversely affect the student's academic record. Other

measures may include, if appropriate, directing a bully/harasser to apologize to the affected student. If a hostile environment has affected the entire school or campus, an effective response may need to include dissemination of information, the issuance of new policy statements or other steps that are designed to clearly communicate the message that the school does not tolerate behaviors contrary to the mission of the school as a Catholic institution; harassment, hazing, and/or bullying and will be responsive to any student who reports that conduct.

- iii. Hazing Case Considerations. Appropriate penalties or sanctions or both for organizations or individuals who engage in hazing and revocation or suspension of an organization's permission to operate or exist within the institution's purview if that organization knowingly permits, authorizes, or condones hazing.
- iv. Other Remedies: Other remedies may include providing counseling to the victim(s) and/or the perpetrator(s), and additional safety planning measures for the victim(s).

- B. Retaliation Prevention. It is unlawful for any person to retaliate against a person who has filed a complaint of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying or against a person who assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing related to hazing, harassment, and/or bullying complaint, or against a person accused of and/or found responsible for hazing, harassment, and/or bullying, of another.

A person may not violate this anti-retaliation provision regardless of whether the underlying complaint of hazing, harassment and/or bullying is substantiated.

The school will take reasonable steps to prevent any retaliation against the student who made the complaint (or was the subject of hazing, harassment and/or bullying), against the person who filed a complaint on behalf of a student, the person who is accused of and/or found responsible for the behavior, or against those who provided information as witnesses. At a minimum, this includes making sure that the students and their parents, and those witnesses involved in the school's investigation, know how to report any subsequent problems and making follow-up inquiries to see if there have been any new incidents or any retaliation.

- C. Alternative Dispute Resolution. At all stages of the investigation and determination process, school officials are encouraged to make available to complainants alternative dispute resolution methods, such as mediation, for resolving complaints. Certain considerations should be made before pursuing alternative dispute resolution methods, including, but not limited to:
 - i. the nature of the accusations (for example, face-to-face mediation is not appropriate for sexual violence cases),

- ii. the age of the complainant and the accused individual,
- iii. the agreement of the complainant, and
- iv. other relevant factors such as any disability of the target or accused individual, safety issues, the relationship and relative power differential between the target and accused individual, or any history of repeated misconduct/harassment by the accused individual.

V. Post Investigative Reviews

Rights of Complainants

A. Request Internal Review of Initial Harassment Determinations.

A complainant or parent of a complainant if complainant is a minor, may request an internal review by the school of a designee's initial determination (following investigation) that hazing, harassment and/or bullying has not occurred via written request within 30 days submitted to the superintendent of schools. All levels of internal review of the investigator's initial determination, and the issuance of a decision, shall, unless special circumstances are present and documented by the school, be completed within 30 calendar days after review is requested.

B. Request Additional Review by the Office of the Bishop.

A complainant, or parent of complainant if complainant is a minor, may request in writing and within 30 days of the internal review, an additional review by the Office of the Bishop. All levels of this additional review of the investigator's initial determination and the results of the internal review along with the issuance of a final decision, shall, unless special circumstances are present and documented by the Office of the Bishop, be completed within 30 calendar days after review is requested.

C. Independent Reviews of Final Hazing, Harassment, and/or Bullying Determinations By Complainant.

A complainant may request an independent review within thirty (30) days of a final determination if s/he:

- i. is dissatisfied with the final determination as to whether harassment occurred, or
- ii. if a final determination was made that harassment had occurred, believes the steps taken by the school were inadequate to protect the complainant and prevent further hazing, harassment or bullying.

The complainant shall make such a request in writing to the superintendent of schools within thirty (30) days of a final determination. Upon such request, the superintendent shall promptly initiate an independent review by a neutral person as described under 16 V.S.A. § 570a (b)(1) and shall cooperate with the independent reviewer so that s/he

may proceed expeditiously. The review shall consist of an interview of the complainant, the accused, any witnesses, and relevant school officials and a review of the written materials from the school's investigation.

Upon completion of the independent review, the reviewer shall advise the complainant and school officials in writing:

- i. as to the sufficiency of the school's investigation, its determination, and/or the steps taken by the school to correct any harassment found to have occurred, and
- ii. of recommendations of any steps the school might take to prevent further harassment from occurring. A copy of the independent review report shall be sent to the Superintendent of Schools for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Burlington.

The reviewer shall advise the complainant, or if a minor the parents of the complainant, of other remedies that may be available if the student remains dissatisfied and, if appropriate, may recommend mediation or other alternative dispute resolution. The independent reviewer shall be considered an agent of the school for the purpose of being able to review confidential student records. The costs of the independent review shall be borne by the School. The School may request an independent review at any stage of the process.

D. Rights to Alternative Process.

In addition to, or as an alternative to filing a hazing, harassment and/or bullying complaint pursuant to this policy, a person may file a hazing, harassment and/or bullying complaint with the Vermont Human Rights Commission or the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education at the addresses noted below:

Vermont Human Rights Commission
14-16 Baldwin Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-6301
(800) 416-2010 or (802) 828-2480 (voice)
(877) 294-9200 (tty)
(802) 828-2481 (fax)
Email: human.rights@state.vt.us

Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office
U.S. Department of Education
8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-3921
617-289-0111 (voice)
877-521-2172 (tdd) 617-289-0150 (fax)
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov

Rights of Accused Students

A. Appeal. Any person determined to have engaged in an act(s) of hazing, harassment and/or bullying may appeal, in writing, the determination and/or any related disciplinary action(s) taken, directly to the superintendent. The superintendent, or his/her designee, shall conduct a review of the record. The standard of review by the superintendent, or his/her designee, shall be whether the finding that an act(s) of hazing, harassment, and/or bullying has been committed constitutes an abuse of discretion by the school level fact finder.

Appeals should be made to the superintendent in writing within ten (10) calendar days of receiving the determination that an act(s) of hazing, harassment and/or bullying has occurred and/or any announced discipline.

B. Accused Student/Appellant Access to Investigative Reports/Findings. The school shall make available upon request of the Accused Student/Appellant, any relevant information, documents, materials, etc. related to the investigation and related finding on appeal that can be redacted and de-identified in compliance with the requirements set forth at 34 CFR Part 99. For those documents that cannot be provided due to the requirements set forth at 34 CFR Part 99, when an Accused Student/Appellant seeks a review on the record by the Superintendent, a school administrator may seek the consent of the parent/guardian of the targeted student, or the accused eligible targeted student (if 18 or older, the targeted student has the ability to consent), in order to inform the accused student of the findings which gave rise to the school's determination that an act(s) of harassment, hazing, and/or bullying occurred. The parent/guardian or eligible student shall provide a signed and dated written consent before an educational agency or institution discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records.

VI. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

A. Privacy Concerns. The privacy of the complainant, the accused individual, and the witnesses shall be maintained consistent with the School'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.

i. Concerns Related to Hazing, Harassment, and/or Bullying Complaints. The scope of appropriate response to a hazing, harassment and/or bullying complaint may depend upon whether a student or parent of a minor student reporting the hazing, harassment and/or bullying asks that the student's name not be disclosed to the accused person or that nothing be done about the alleged hazing, harassment and/or bullying. In all cases, school officials will discuss

confidentiality standards and concerns with the complainant initially. The school will inform the student that a confidentiality request may limit the school's ability to respond. The school will remind the student that both federal Title IX and Vermont Title 9 prevent retaliation and that if he or she is afraid of reprisals from the alleged harasser, the school will take steps to prevent retaliation and will take strong action if retaliation occurs. If the student, or if a minor the student's parents, continues to ask that his or her name not be revealed, the school will secure this request in writing and should take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to the complaint consistent with the student's request as long as doing so does not prevent the school from responding effectively to the hazing, harassment and/or bullying and preventing harassment of other students.

The school will evaluate the confidentiality request in the context of its responsibility to act in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church and to provide a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students. The factors the school might consider in this regard include the seriousness of the alleged harassment, the age of the student harassed, whether there have been other complaints or reports of harassment against the alleged harasser, and the rights of the accused individual to receive information about the accuser and the allegations if a formal proceeding with sanctions may result. If information about the incident is contained in an "education record" of the student alleging the harassment, as defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, the school will consider whether FERPA prohibits it from disclosing information without the student's consent.

- B. Document Maintenance. The school administrator shall assure that a record of any complaints, its investigation and disposition, as well as any disciplinary or remedial action taken following the completion of the investigation, is maintained by the School in a confidential file accessible only to authorized persons. All investigation records created in conformance with this model policy and model procedures, including but not limited to, the complaint form, interview notes, additional evidence, and the investigative report, shall be kept by the Equity Coordinator, Designated Employees and the school administrator for at least six years after the investigation is completed.

VII. **Reporting to Other Agencies**

- A. Reports to Department of Children and Families. When a complaint made pursuant to this policy includes allegations of child abuse, any person responsible for reporting

suspected child abuse under 33 V.S.A. § 4911, et seq. must report the allegation to the Commissioner of DCF. If the victim is over the age of 18 and a report of abuse is warranted, the report shall be made to Adult Protective Services in accordance with 33 V.S.A. § 6901 et seq.

- B. Reports to Vermont Agency of Education. If a hazing, harassment, and/or bullying complaint is made in an independent school about conduct by a licensed educator that might be grounds under Vermont law for licensing action, the principal will report the alleged conduct to the Superintendent who in turn will report it to the Secretary of Education.

C. Reporting Incidents to Police

i. FERPA Rights. Information obtained and documented by school administration regarding the school's response to notice of student conduct that may constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying may constitute an "educational record" regarding the student or student(s) involved as defined by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Accordingly, such information may not be disclosed without prior parent approval to local law enforcement except in response to a lawfully issued subpoena, or in connection with an emergency if disclosure is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

ii. First-Hand Reports. Nothing in this policy shall preclude persons from reporting incidents and/or conduct witnessed first-hand that may be considered to be a criminal act to law enforcement officials.

iii. Hazing Incidents. It is unlawful to (1) engage in hazing; (2) solicit direct, aid, or attempt to aid, or abet another person engaged in hazing; or (3) knowingly fail to take reasonable measures within the scope of the person's authority to prevent hazing. It is not a defense in an action under this section that the person against whom the hazing was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing activity. Hazing incidents will be reported to the police in a manner consistent with the confidentiality rights set forth above in this section.

D. Continuing Obligation to Investigate. Reports made to either DCF or law enforcement shall not be considered to absolve the school administrators of their obligations under this policy to pursue and complete an investigation upon receipt of notice of conduct which may constitute hazing, harassment and/or bullying.

VIII. **Disseminating Information, Training, and Data Reporting**

A. Disseminating Information. Annually, prior to the commencement of curricular and co-curricular activities, the School shall provide notice of this policy and procedures to students, custodial parents or guardians of students, and staff members, including

- references to the consequences of misbehavior contained in the plan required by 16 V.S.A. 1161a. Notice to students shall be in age-appropriate language and include examples of hazing, harassment and bullying. At a minimum, this notice shall appear in any publication of the school that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct for the school.
- B. Student Training. The school administrator shall use his/her discretion in developing age-appropriate methods of discussing the meaning and substance of this policy with students to help ensure their actions are in keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church and in an effort to prevent hazing, harassment and/or bullying.
- C. Staff Training. The principal or his/her designee shall ensure that teachers and other staff receive training in preventing, recognizing and responding to hazing, harassment and bullying. This training will occur in a manner consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Legal References:

Title V, Section B, 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §794 et seq.;
 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000d;
 Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 et seq.;
 Family Education Rights Privacy Act; 20 U.S.C. §1232g;
 Public Accommodations Act, 9 V.S.A. §§4500 et seq.;
 Education, Classifications and Definitions, 16 V.S.A. §11(26);(30)(A);(32);
 Education, 16 V.S.A. §140(a)(1);
 Education, 16 V.S.A. §166(e);
 Education, Bullying, 16 V.S.A. §570c;
 Education, Harassment, Hazing and Bullying, 16 V.S.A. § 570;
 Education, Harassment, 16 V.S.A. §570a;
 Education, Harassment, 16 V.S.A. §570c;
 Education, Harassment, 16 V.S.A. §570f;
 Education, Hazing, 16 V.S.A. §570b;
 Education, Hazing, 16 V.S.A. §570f;
 Education, Discipline, 16 V.S.A. §1161a;
 Education, Suspension or Expulsion of Pupils, 16 V.S.A. §1162;
 Child Abuse, 33 V.S.A. §§4911 et seq.;
 Adult Protective Services, 33 V.S.A. §6901 et seq., all as they may be amended from time to time.
 Washington v. Pierce, 179 VT 318 (2005).
 Promulgated: September 12, 2019
 Bishop of Burlington

Designated Employees

The following employee has been designated by the School to receive complaints of hazing, bullying and/or harassment pursuant to this policy and 16 V.S.A. §570a(7) and 16 V.S.A. §570c(7) and under Federal anti-discrimination laws:

Employee Name: Dan Elliott
School Address: 127 Convent Ave.
City, State Zip: Rutland Vermont 05701
School Phone: 802-775-0151 Employee's Extension: 2018
Employee's School Email: delliott@msjvermont.org

APPROVED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL STATEMENT

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.

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

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 at 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, WEQX 102.7, WVNR, WPTZ Ch.5. WCAX Ch.3, and the Rutland City Channels 15 and 20. Also, you will receive a recorded phone message through FACTS SIS stating that MSJ is closed for the day.

Guidelines for MSJ Students: Social Media

Mount Saint Joseph Academy Student-, as you begin participation in another school year, the Administration of Mount Saint Joseph Academy wants to make sure you are aware of the revised social networking guidelines.

Mount Saint Joseph Academy recognizes and supports the student's rights to freedom of speech, expression, and association, including the use of social media. Students are reminded that attending Mount Saint Joseph Academy is a privilege. As a student, you represent Mount Saint Joseph Academy, the alumni of Mt. St. Joseph Academy, The Diocese of Burlington, and your communities, and you are expected to portray yourself, your team, and Mount Saint Joseph Academy in a positive manner at all times.

Attached you will find the new social networking guidelines which provide the following guidelines for social networking site usage:

- Everything you post is public information – any text or photo placed online is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online – even if you limit access to your site. Information (including pictures, videos, and comments) may be accessible even after you remove it. Once you post a photo or comment on a social networking site, that photo or comment becomes the property of the site and may be searchable even after you remove it.
- What you post may affect your future. Many employers and college admissions officers review social networking sites as part of their overall evaluation of an applicant. Carefully consider how you want people to perceive you before you give them a chance to misinterpret your information (including pictures, videos, comments, and posters).
- Similar to comments made in person, Mount Saint Joseph Academy will not tolerate disrespectful comments and behavior online, such as:
 - Derogatory language or remarks that may harm my classmates, teachers, administrators, staff members, teammates or coaches; other MSJ student athletes, teachers, or coaches; and student-athletes, coaches, or representatives of other schools, including comments that may disrespect my opponents.
 - Incriminating photos or statements depicting violence; hazing; sexual harassment; full or partial nudity; inappropriate gestures or language; vandalism, stalking; underage drinking, selling, possessing, or using controlled substances; or any other inappropriate behaviors.

- Creating a serious danger to the safety of another person or making a credible threat of serious physical or emotional injury to another person.

- Indicating knowledge of an unreported school or team violation—regardless if the violation was unintentional or intentional. In short, do not have a false sense of security about your rights to freedom of speech. Understand that freedom of speech is not unlimited. The online social network sites are NOT a place where you can say and do whatever you want without repercussions. The information you post on a social networking site is considered public information. Protect yourself by maintaining a self-image of which you can be proud for years to come.

The following is our policy: Participation in activities, groups and teams is a privilege at Mount Saint Joseph Academy. The use of social media by a student which is considered to be “unbecoming of a Mountie” may result in discipline including suspension or removal from the activity, group, leadership position or team.

Mount Saint Joseph Academy Social Media Policy

If a student has posted something that is considered improper according to school policy and it is discovered or someone reports the problem to the school, the following will occur:

Pictures and/or videos of inappropriate behavior are considered valid infractions. The Administration will consider if the violations fall within the areas of the drug, alcohol and tobacco policy as well as violations of school rules such as bullying and harassment. If the posting does not fall into one of these types of violations, but brings discredit to the school or their program, further consideration will be given. Consequences may be given reflecting the statement, video, picture, etc. Consequences up to and including suspension or expulsion from school are an option under our policy and will be determined by the principal in conjunction with the administrative team.

NECESSARY CHANGES TO MSJ PARENT/GUARDIAN-STUDENT HANDBOOK

The Mount St. Joseph Academy Administration reserves the right to make changes in this handbook at any time. Changes are retroactive.

HANDBOOK AND FINANCIAL AGREEMENT STATEMENT AND SIGNATURE FORM

I, the undersigned, **have read and fully understand** the Rules and Regulations contained in the Parent/Guardian-Student Handbook, and **agree** to abide by them. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. I understand that the online version of the student handbook takes precedence over any printed version. I understand that my parent/guardian is responsible for the payment of all tuition and fees and that no diploma, transcripts, progress reports and report cards will be provided without the payment of all financial obligations.

Tuition is due in full on or before July 1, of the upcoming academic year. If not paid in full at that time, an established payment plan through FACTS must be in place and current throughout the school year with the business office. If at any time during the academic year the plan is not current, the student will be withdrawn and transcripts withheld until the account is current. While returning students may be registered for the upcoming academic year, during the current school year, placement is not guaranteed until all financial obligations have been met for the previous school year. Tuition for Seniors must be paid in full by May 15, of their senior year. Failure to do so will result in the student being prohibited from sitting for final exams and participation in graduation activities including Prom and graduation ceremonies. Diploma and Official Transcripts will be withheld until the account is current.

By registering at Mount St. Joseph Academy, I understand that I have agreed to abide by all policies and procedures set forth in this Handbook.

Please sign and return this agreement to the office when school commences.

NAME OF STUDENT:

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE:

I, parent/guardian, **have read** and **understand** the Rules and Regulations contained in this Parent/Guardian-Student Handbook and **promise to adhere** to them.

I understand that I must pay-in-full all tuition and fees and that the failure to pay in-full any financial obligations forfeits any acquisition of a diploma and any transcripts, progress reports and report cards. I understand that non-compliance will result in child's dismissal from Mount St. Joseph Academy.

NAME OF PARENT/GUARDIAN: _____

PARENT'S/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number (s): Home: _____

Business: _____

Cell: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Date of Signatures: _____

NOTE: The completed Parent/Guardian-Student Handbook Form must be turned in to the front office before the first day of school. Students who do not have this form completed and turned in will not be permitted to attend classes.

BEFORE YOU SIGN: BE SURE YOU HAVE READ THE 2020-2021 HANDBOOK IN FULL. YOUR SIGNATURE CONSTITUTES ACCEPTANCE.

Technology Use Form

***Note:** Before signing this form please read the policy posted in the Parent/Guardian Student Handbook, as well as the the Extranet section of [msjvermont.org](http://www.msjvermont.org).*

<http://www.msjvermont.org/admissions/technology-forms>

Please return the portion of this contract below signed by you and a parent or guardian. Students will not be able to use Mount St. Joseph's Academy's electronic network until students have a signed agreement on file.

Mount St. Joseph Academy's Technology Acceptable Use Agreement

I, the undersigned, understand and will abide by Mount St. Joseph Academy's Technology Acceptable Use Policy (posted online). By signing, I agree to use this technology specifically for educational purposes related to my academic progress at Mount St. Joseph Academy.

Student **Last** and **First** Name (please print neatly)

20__/20__ Grade Level

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date