

OUR LADY OF MERCY  
SCHOOL FOR YOUNG WOMEN



STUDENT-ATHLETE HANDBOOK

## **Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women**

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### **Athletic Department Contact Information**

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## Foreword

Dear Student-athletes and Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Our Lady of Mercy Athletic Program. Congratulations on making an excellent choice to join the Mercy athletic family. We pride ourselves on a tradition of integrity, commitment, sportsmanship, and athletic success that is rooted in our identity as a Catholic school that was founded on the principles of the Sisters of Mercy.

This handbook serves as a valuable resource by providing the information you will need to enable your success in interscholastic athletics at Our Lady of Mercy.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a *privilege* and a supplement to the primary academic mission of Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women. The primary goal of the Mercy athletic program is to provide positive, high quality athletic experiences that promote individual growth in a safe and healthy environment. When a student-athlete chooses to participate in a sports program, she commits herself to certain responsibilities and obligations. Participation in athletics, as a privilege, can be suspended for violations of school policies, athletic department policies, New York State Public High School Athletic Association policies, or individual team policies. This handbook aims to acquaint the student-athlete with specific guidelines, protocols, and rules deemed necessary to operate a well-organized and effective program of interscholastic athletics. The policies are meant to supplement those outlined in the Mercy Student Handbook and by all means correlate to them.

All students are encouraged to participate in some phase of our program from the modified level up to the intensive varsity programs that compete against the very best in Monroe County as well as the rest of the state of New York. Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women is a member of Section V of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association and is a voting member of the Private-Parochial League. As well, Mercy is an associate member of the Finger Lakes High School Athletic Association for varsity alpine skiing, modified volleyball, and modified lacrosse.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the programs and policies of the Athletic Department of Our Lady of Mercy, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at (585) 288-7120 ext 331, or at [ayandek@mercyhs.com](mailto:ayandek@mercyhs.com). Thank you, and I wish you tremendous success this school year.

Anthony E. Yandek  
Athletic Director  
Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women

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**Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women  
Athletic Department Mission Statement**

“Via: The Way – We will proudly represent Our Lady of Mercy and the Sisters of Mercy through athletics – by showing commitment to our teammates, performing to the best of our ability, and maintaining the highest level of sportsmanship.

Veritas: The Truth – we pledge to obey the rules set forth by our school, the sports we play, the coaches who teach us, and the New York State High School Public Athletic Association.

Vita: The Life – We pledge to breed a passion for athletics and the lessons it teaches through the Mercy experience.”

## New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA)

Our Lady of Mercy is a charter member of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA). Within the NYSPHSAA we are a member of Section V, which consists primarily of schools located within Monroe County and the Finger Lakes region. NYSPHSAA is divided into 11 Sections plus New York City. The State Association has a set of rules to govern each sport it oversees. Section V holds tournaments for the varsity level and the section winner advances to the state tournament.

### Mercy Sports Teams, as governed by the NYSPHSAA, by Season & Competition Level

<u>FALL</u>	Varsity	Junior Varsity	Modified (A)
Competitive Cheer	X	X	X
Crew*	X	X	
Cross Country	X		X
Golf	X		
Sailing*	X		
Soccer	X	X	X
Swimming	X	X	
Tennis	X	X	X
Volleyball	X	X	X
<u>WINTER</u>			
Basketball	X	X	X
Bowling	X		
Competitive Cheerleading	X	X	X
Indoor Track	X		X
Alpine Skiing	X		
<u>SPRING</u>			
Crew*	X	X	
Lacrosse	X	X	X
Sailing*	X		
Softball	X	X	X
Track & Field	X		X

\*denotes a sport not governed by NYSPHSAA

## **NYS Education Department – Definition of Character**

The following definition of character is from the New York State Education Department's Educational Framework for Athletics (EFA).

*Character, one of the educational goals of a quality interscholastic athletic program, is defined as a student athlete who demonstrates:*

- 1. Responsibility*
- 2. Accountability*
- 3. Dedication*
- 4. Trustworthiness/Fair play*
- 5. Self-Control*

## **Principles of Interscholastic Athletic Programs**

Interscholastic athletics serve as a miniature model of life, providing opportunities for students to develop and display responsibility, sportsmanship, cooperation, concern for others, leadership, respect, citizenship, loyalty, tolerance, and determination. Developing and displaying these characteristics is the benchmark of success for Mercy Athletics. The desire to compete and the will to win are important qualities in athletics. However, of greater importance is the overall development of the student-athlete and the affordance of her ability to achieve her full potential both on and off the athletic field.

To fully utilize the potential of athletics for educational enrichment, the interscholastic athletic programs at Mercy are:

1. Regarded as an integral part of the total educational program and are conducted as worthy of such regard.
2. A supplement rather than a substitute for basic physical education programs.
3. Subject to the same administrative control as the total educational program.
4. Conducted by persons with sufficient training either in physical education, coaching certification programs, or commensurate coaching experience
5. Conducted with the physical welfare and safety of the participants as a top priority
6. Conducted in accordance with the letter and spirit of the league, section, state, and national athletic associations' regulations.

### **Mercy's Interscholastic Athletic Program Code of Ethics**

It is the duty of all concerned with school athletics:

- \*To emphasize the proper ideals of sportsmanship, ethical conduct, and fair play.
- \*To eliminate all possibilities tending to harm or destroy the best values of the sport.
- \*To stress the values derived from sportsmanship and fair play.
- \*To show courtesy to visiting teams, spectators, and officials.
- \*To respect the integrity and judgment of sports officials.
- \*To achieve a thorough understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game and the standards of eligibility.
- \*To encourage leadership, use of initiative, and good judgment by all members of the team.
- \*To recognize that the purpose of athletics is to promote the physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being of the individual players.



## Standards of Conduct

Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women strives to maintain an environment conducive to learning. Faculty, administration, and parents accept the responsibility for defining the boundaries of conduct, which encourage a student to think, create, and express herself to the fullest extent of her ability.

In keeping with the philosophy of Our Lady of Mercy, a Mercy student accepts responsibility for her spiritual, intellectual, personal, and social growth. She works to gain awareness of her role in society, and she understands the need for her particular attention to issues of injustice, inequality, and oppression. She respects the Christ-centered climate of the school's programs and strives to model her life on Christian values.

All student-athletes, coaches, and personnel representing Our Lady of Mercy through athletic competition are expected to act respectfully and avoid undue distractions or disruptions before, during, and after all athletic events. This includes but is not limited to displaying respect for opposing players and coaches, fans, and officials, standing during the playing of the National Anthem, and adhering to team policies as set forth by coaches and administrators. Failure to do so will result in the student-athlete forfeiting her eligibility for the immediate contest. Future violations of this protocol could result in further consequences. Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women respects each individual's right to express her or his own opinion, and the school welcomes that expression under the appropriate circumstances. We encourage student-athletes to discuss this matter with coaches and administrators when concerns arise.

A Mercy Student is respectful of herself and others.

- Her general conduct and use of language are appropriate for an atmosphere of learning.
- She is courteous.
- She is considerate of others.
- Her sense of cooperation fosters the Mercy spirit of community.
- She respects gender, racial, religious, and physical differences.
- She respects school property and equipment as well as the personal belongings of others.

A Mercy Student is honest.

- Her performance on tests, homework, projects, and assignments reflects her efforts alone.
- She shares her work with others only when it is required by an assignment.
- She expects honesty from others as well as herself.

A Mercy Student is academically responsible.

- She reports to class on time and is prepared with proper materials.
- If she must be absent from class, she takes the initiative to make up missed work.
- She practices self-discipline regarding her academic studies by meeting deadlines for homework, assignments and projects.
- She demonstrates consideration for others' rights to learn.

A Mercy Student cares for herself and others.

- She is rested, nourished, and cares for her personal health.
- She promotes healthy choices by others.
- She resolves conflict in a non-violent manner.
- She recognizes the importance of seeking help from proper school authorities when needed for herself and others.
- She obeys school dress code policies.
- She obeys all school rules while in the building and while representing Mercy in the community.
- She accepts all consequences for rules violations.

## **Philosophy of Our Lady of Mercy Athletics**

### **Modified Sports**

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students have the opportunity to participate at the modified level. At this level, coaches emphasize the fundamentals of team play, learning the sport's basic skills and rules, and creating a positive experience for all involved. In some occasions, 9<sup>th</sup> grade students are permitted to participate at the modified level.

Generally modified sports avoid making roster cuts when possible. However, if the number of students trying out for a team creates a situation that would be difficult to manage, pose a safety issue, or is problematic because of facility considerations, reducing team size may be necessary. Ultimately the number of teams and size of rosters will be determined by the availability of financial resources, scheduling considerations, availability of qualified coaches, access to suitable facilities, and the maintenance of a safe environment.

There will be at least one modified sport per season that maintains an open roster and does not make roster reductions, pending the students remain committed to the policies and principles of the team, as set forth by the coaching staff and school administration.

At the modified level, only occasionally will practices and contests be scheduled on weekends.

### **NYS Athletic Placement Process (APP) for 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students**

Exceptional 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> graders may be permitted to participate on a junior varsity or varsity team under the Athletic Placement Process (APP) designed by NYSED. Several criteria must be met in order to play at these higher levels. They include parent consent, the approval of a pediatrician or primary care physician and the approval of the Penfield School District Medical Coordinator. Furthermore, candidates who receive the necessary approval must then pass the physical fitness test as set forth by NYSED. The junior varsity and varsity coaches will determine if there is room on the team's roster and whether the student's ability warrants participation at the junior varsity or varsity level.

APP candidates must file the appropriate paperwork for each sport season during their 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade year in order to be eligible. APP paperwork can be found on the Mercy website or by contacting the Athletic Director. APP paperwork is typically due three weeks prior to the start of the sport season (as set forth by the Penfield School District Medical Coordinator). APP paperwork must be submitted directly to the Athletic Director in order for the process to commence.

## **Junior Varsity Philosophy**

The junior varsity (JV) level is intended for those who display skill potential for continued development towards the varsity level. Consequently, some athletes may be cut during the tryout process. Although all JV teams vary, freshmen and sophomores occupy most of the roster spots.

At this level, as compared to the modified level, athletes are expected to make a more visible commitment to the sport, the team, and their continued self-development outside of the traditional school season. At the JV level, increased emphasis is placed on physical conditioning, strength and endurance training, and refinement of fundamental skills and elements and strategies of team play. JV programs strive for balance among player development, team development, and achieving victory. Consequently, no amount of playing time is guaranteed to any player at this level.

Practice sessions are vital to a successful JV program. Participants should expect to practice and compete six days per week. While contests and practices are rarely scheduled for holidays, practice sessions are typically scheduled during school vacation periods. Becoming a varsity athlete should be the goal of every JV player, and therefore a high level of commitment and dedication is required to participate at the JV level.

## **Varsity Philosophy**

Varsity competition is the culmination of each sport's developmental program. Usually composed of juniors and seniors, the team size is typically limited at the varsity level. While contest participation is desirable, a specific amount of playing time at the varsity level is never guaranteed. Some athletes may see no playing at all during a given game, or even an entire season. In extraordinary circumstances, students from the 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, or 10<sup>th</sup> grades may be placed on a varsity roster. In these circumstances, it is the expectation of the coaching staff that the student-athlete will consistently earn significant playing time at this level. If the student-athlete is not earning significant playing time at the varsity level, the athlete may be moved to the JV team for a period of time in order to provide more opportunities for development and playing time.

A positive attitude, strong work ethic, and advanced level of game skills are prerequisites for a position and for playing time at the varsity level. Varsity sports require a commitment of six day/nights per week. This commitment is extended into vacation periods for all sports seasons. The dedication and commitment needed to participate in a successful varsity program should be taken very seriously. Various commitments outside of the sport season may also be necessary for the optimum development of a player's ability.

The varsity coach is the leader of the entire sport's program and determines the system of instruction and strategy for that program from top to bottom. Preparing and striving to win each contest while trying to develop the maximum potential of the team and each individual within it are the goals of a varsity coach.

## **Athlete – Parent Communication Protocol**

It is natural that during the course of the season, concerns on behalf of the student-athlete and/or the parent may arise. In order to address those concerns, athletes and parents are required to adhere to the following protocol:

- Step 1: Student-athlete meets with Coach/es
- Step 2: Student-athlete and parents meet with Coach/es
- Step 3: Student-athlete and parents meet with Coach/es and Athletic Director
- Step 4: Student-athlete and parents meet with Athletic Director and School Administration

Coaches at Our Lady of Mercy are hired to both lead and manage the team. Most decisions regarding the team are left to the coach's discretion and will be supported by the Athletic Director and the school administration.

At no point during the Athlete – Parent Communication Protocol are athletes or parents permitted to discuss any of the following issues with coaches:

- Playing time
- Other student-athletes
- Coaching strategies, philosophies, or play-calling

Issues that student-athletes and parents are encouraged to discuss with coaches are:

- Individual treatment of the student-athlete
- Ways for the student-athlete to improve
- Concerns about the student-athlete's behavior

We understand that particularly in athletics, it is difficult for a student-athlete or a parent to deal with the prospect of an athlete not playing as much as one had hoped throughout the course of a season. However, coaches at Our Lady of Mercy deserve the respect of dedicated experts in their respective fields. They are expected and trusted to make decisions based on what they believe is best for the overall development and performance of the team as a whole.

## Equipment and Uniforms

Equipment and uniform are the property of the athletic department and are issued to the student-athlete by the coach. All issued equipment and apparel is to be returned directly to the issuing coach within one week of the completion of the season, unless separate arrangements are made between the coach and student-athlete. Failure to comply may result in fines enacted on the student-athlete and her family. If the equipment or uniform is lost or irreparably damaged, the student-athlete is responsible for the replacement cost of the equipment or apparel plus 50% of the initial fee. *Students will not be permitted to tryout or participate in the next sport season until all equipment and apparel has been cleaned and returned, or all replacement fees have been paid.*

Uniforms and warm-ups are to be worn only for athletic events, unless permission has been given by the Athletic Director, Assistant Principal, or Principal. Permission may be granted for special circumstances such as fundraising events and sectional playoff contests. With permission from administration, student-athletes may be permitted to wear team apparel for the start of sectional playoffs, a regional championship contest, and/or a state championship event. In any event, students will be expected to wear school uniform pants/shorts/skirt and school uniform compliant footwear along with an approved team t-shirt, warm-up jacket, or team uniform top.

## **Family Vacations**

When parents and student-athletes choose to take a vacation during the sport season, it must be understood that the time the athlete misses can affect the performance and chemistry of the team. Likewise, it can affect personal conditioning and the overall development of the athlete. Student-athletes who miss practices or competitions for any reason may have their position or playing time adjusted. Athletes are expected to inform their coaches as soon as they are aware that they will potentially be missing any time from the team schedule.

## **Transportation**

Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women does not provide transportation to contests, practices, or team events that occur off campus. Transportation is provided solely by the families associated with each individual sports team. At the beginning of each season, coaches will distribute Transportation Forms to team members. This form must be completed by a parent/guardian and returned to the head coach of the team prior to the first off campus event of the season. Student-athletes and parents are expected to fully comply with the specifications of the Transportation Form. Failure to do so may result in consequences. Coaches are encouraged to identify a parent coordinator to assist in the process of managing off site transportation. All parents/guardians that provide transportation for school and athletic events are required to complete the Creating A Safe Environment course as prescribed by the Diocese of Rochester. Coaches will be responsible for disseminating information on CASE training and collecting certificates of completion for all volunteer drivers.



## **Health Forms & Policies**

Before the start of each sports season, each athlete must be approved by the school health official. To be eligible for tryouts at the beginning of the season, each athlete must:

- Have a physical dated within one year from the start of the season.
- Submit the physical form to the school health office.
- Have an updated immunization record on file with the school health office.
- Sign and fill out the athletic re-certification form. This is to be filled out by a parent and signed by both a parent and the student-athlete. This form must be filled out for each sport prior to the start of season and is only valid for 30 days prior to tryouts.
- Turn in all health forms to the health office. It is not the responsibility of the coach or Athletic Director to accept and/or submit any health forms.

Health and parent permission forms are available on the Athletics page of the school website. If the school health official does not give full approval for participation, a student-athlete is not eligible for participation at any level.

### Concussion Policy

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, all student-athletes will be required to take a baseline concussion test using the IMPACT program. This test must be completed prior to the start of the season in order for the athlete to be cleared for competition. The IMPACT baseline test is valid for one full school year, so each student-athlete need take it only one time per school year.

Athletes in all sports are required to follow the New York State “Return to Play” protocol in order to be reinstated to participation following the diagnosis of a concussion. This requires a coordinated effort among the Athletic Director, Athletic Trainer, and School Nurse, as well as the athlete’s primary care physician. All athletes and parents are required to read and sign the NYS Scholastic Athlete Fact Sheet on Concussion before interscholastic permission will be permitted. Further information on the NYS Concussion protocol is available at [WWW.NYSPHSAA.ORG](http://WWW.NYSPHSAA.ORG).

### In-Season Injuries

The school nurse must receive clearance from the athlete’s physician, in written form, to allow an injured athlete to return to participation. Athletes may also be supervised medically from the Certified Athletic Trainer of University Sports Medicine working for Our Lady of Mercy. The trainer also carries the right to prohibit an athlete from participation due to injury or improper medical clearance. Coaches, athletes, and parents are encouraged to coordinate with the URMCTrainer when dealing with all sports injuries.

## Academic Eligibility Policies

### School Attendance

A student-athlete will not be permitted to participate in any athletic contest or practice that day unless the student has been in attendance by 9:00am that school day. Exceptions to this require a valid excuse be approved in advance to the Athletic Director. Legal excuses accepted by New York State include:

- Doctor's appointment
- Death in the family
- Religious observance
- Unsafe weather and/or transportation conditions
- Approved college visit
- School sponsored event
- Approval from school administration

A student-athlete will not be permitted to participate in any athletic practice or contest that day if she has been dismissed from school by the school nurse's office, without a signed note from her physician. Students returning to school from a doctor's appointment are required to have a signed note from the physician in order to be able to participate in athletics that day. A student-athlete will also be excluded from athletic competition upon early dismissal from school without a valid excuse from the above list and a signed note from a parent/guardian prior to dismissal.

### Academic Eligibility

All academic policies apply specifically to varsity and junior varsity participants. Modified sports participants may be exempt from certain academic requirements at the discretion of the school administration.

A varsity or junior varsity student-athlete who receives one or more failing grade on a **progress report** will be placed on an academic improvement plan as coordinated by her counselor, teachers, and the administration. She will remain eligible for athletic and extracurricular participation during this time period.

A varsity or junior varsity student-athlete who receives one or more failing grade on a **quarter report card** is suspended from all participation for a minimum of one full academic cycle (A-H school days, weekends, and holidays). During the suspension the student is required to meet with the teacher to discuss plans for academic improvement. At the end of the academic cycle, the student must apply for reinstatement through the school counseling office.

During a suspension, the student-athlete may not suit up for, or sit with her teammates on the bench during games. The student-athlete may attend and observe practice at the discretion of the head coach. Ineligibility begins the day the student-athlete and/or head coach is notified by the Athletic Director. The Athletic Director will communicate directly with the teachers to determine when the student-athlete's eligibility has resumed.

## Chemical Use Policy

This policy is in accordance with the Mercy school philosophy which recognizes that the responsibility for our students' spiritual and personal growth is shared among students, parents, faculty, and administration. It is additionally based on the conviction that a school must be a drug-free environment, and that possession, use, or abuse of illegal substances and/or alcohol are against the law. It is the belief of the school that with early intervention, the abuse of mind-altering substances is a treatable illness. Effective identification of drug problems coincides with consistent, progressive consequences incurred for violations of the school's chemical use policy. Violations of the chemical use policy incur simultaneous disciplinary action and referral to the student's counselor, emphasizing Mercy's enforcement of the school code of conduct and the commitment to help troubled students.

The guidance department provides school-based, short-term educational counseling and referral services for students and their families. A referral to the guidance department, in coordination with disciplinary action, is made to address any incident involving the use of drugs as stated in this policy.

Following New York State Law, smoking is not permitted anywhere on a school campus. Disciplinary and referral measures as stated in this policy are in response to the use of any drug, including, but not limited to, nicotine and alcohol. This policy also refers to misused prescription or over-the-counter drugs, illegal drugs, steroids, pills or other substances which are misrepresented and sold or distributed as restricted or illegal drugs, or products, such as aerosols or solvents, which may be misused for the purpose of mind-altering effects.

The following actions involving alcohol, illegal drugs, or paraphernalia associated with their use will incur consequences:

- Attempting to secure or purchase
- Using or having used
- Possession
- Intending to or attempting to sell and/or distribute
- Selling and/or distributing
- Being knowingly present when used, possessed, or consumed by others

## Consequences for Chemical Use Violations

**First Offense:** Punishment will range from a minimum of one detention to dismissal from Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women, depending on the severity of the situation as determined by school administration. Referral will be made to the student's counselor. Parents will be notified. If necessary, local authorities may be notified as well.

Students involved in extracurricular activities may lose the privilege of some or all activities, depending on the severity of the offense. These include, but are not limited to:

- Loss of student office
- Loss of participation in student performances
- Loss of privilege to attend and/or participate in proms, class trips, athletic events, etc.
- Loss of senior privileges if applicable

**Second Offense:** A second offense warrants immediate suspension from Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women pending the completion of a drug evaluation from an authorized agency, notification of parents, and if necessary, notification of legal authorities. A meeting with the school administration, student, parents/guardians, and counselor will be held to review the drug evaluation and the student's prospect for re-entry to the school or dismissal from school depending on the severity of the situation.

While on suspension, students may not participate in any extracurricular activities. Students involved in any extracurricular activity must be in good academic disciplinary standing in order to serve as class officers, participate in proms, class trips, athletic events, etc. Depending on the severity of the situation, as determined by the school administration, the student may forfeit her right to continue such activities.

The Chemical Use Policy is in effect at all times, both on and off campus, during the school year and while on school breaks.

New York State Law prohibits the purchase and use of alcohol and other drugs by anyone under the age of twenty-one. Other laws also apply to parents and those of legal age when dealing with alcohol and drug provision to minors. Our Lady of Mercy reserves the right to inform legal authorities if/when violations occur by those associated with the school.

Chemical use/abuse directly impacts athletic performance and team performance. Disciplinary action for athletes may be taken separately from, or in addition to actions taken by the school administration, at the discretion of the school principal, athletic director, and coach.

### **In-Season, Non-School Competition & Dual Sport Athletes**

Opportunities exist for Mercy student-athletes to participate in other youth programs within Section V. As discussed in the philosophy of competition section, JV and Varsity sports at Mercy require a considerable time commitment. The student-athlete may have to decide where her true commitment lies. If there is a conflict between a Mercy athletic team and the outside organization, or non-traditional sport season event, the Mercy team receives top priority and first consideration.

It is the responsibility of the student-athlete to engage in open discussion with her coach/es regarding her non-scholastic athletic commitments. It is the responsibility of the coaches to assist the student-athlete in balancing her schedule and commitments when possible.

It is the policy of the Mercy Athletic Department that student-athletes should be able to participate in multiple sports seasons throughout the academic year. Mercy coaches will not discourage or prevent athletes from participating with other Mercy athletic teams. Student-athletes are permitted to participate in non-traditional sports season events while on an active Mercy roster insomuch as it does not interfere with their current sport season. Student-athletes and coaches are expected to be mindful of the athlete's academic responsibilities, nutrition, rest, and general care for her body while participating in a non-traditional sport season.

## **Physical Education Exemption**

Student-athletes may exempt out of physical education class for one quarter during both their junior and senior year of interscholastic athletic competition. The exemption may not take place during the 2<sup>nd</sup> academic quarter and must coincide with their participation in a varsity level sport. They will receive their quarter grades for their exemption from the varsity coach who has supervised their participation. Grading will be based on a scoring rubric that accounts for attendance, participation, and skill level. An exemption requires the signature of the student-athlete's parent/guardian and varsity coach. Exemption forms are available in the Physical Education office and must be submitted to the student's physical education teacher prior to the deadline as determined by the teacher.

## **Varsity Letter Program**

In the course of a student-athlete's career at Mercy, she has the opportunity to earn a varsity letter for participation with a varsity athletic team. It is up to the discretion of each individual varsity coach to determine the qualifications for earning a varsity letter. A student will receive one varsity letter and corresponding sport pin for the first sport in which a letter is earned. Thereafter, an athlete will be rewarded a sport pin for an additional letter earned in that sport or any other Mercy sports. Team captains will also receive a pin for their service to their varsity team.

## **Section V Sportsmanship Policy**

Learn and understand the rules of your sport. Play hard, play to win, but play fairly within the rules. Do not allow your temper to distract you from the fundamentals of good sportsmanship. Maintain self-control. Respect your opponent. Never taunt. Congratulate your opponent at game's end. Acknowledge good play. Respect integrity and judgment of officials. Never question the decision of an official. Be an example for your school, teammates and opponents. A player who is disqualified from a contest by an official for unsportsmanlike behavior is prohibited from playing the next regularly scheduled contest. A player who strikes or otherwise physically assaults an official will be subject to an extended suspension from athletic competition. A physical confrontation with an official is any incident in which a player either strikes, bumps, otherwise physically intimidates an official prior to, during, or after a contest.

### **Elements of Sportsmanship**

- Role Models
  - Positive modeling by coaches
  - Positive support from parents/guardians
  - Proper peer modeling
- Courtesy
  - Mutual respect
  - Common courtesy
  - Fair play
  - Positive acknowledgment of skill, talent, sportsmanship
- Perspective
  - Play with heart
  - Play with intensity
  - Remember that it is a game played by student-athletes
- Respect the Rules
  - Be coachable
  - Follow directions
  - Know and understand the rules of the game
- Respect for others
  - Coaches, teammates, opposing coaches, opponents, officials, spectators
  - Support the decisions made by coaches, teammates, and officials



## **Defining Success**

### Pat Summit's Definite Dozen – How to Define Success

- Respect yourself & others
- Take full responsibility
- Develop & demonstrate loyalty
- Learn to be a great communicator
- Discipline yourself so that no one else has to
- Make hard work your passion
- Don't just work hard – work smart
- Put the team first
- Make winning an attitude
- Be a competitor
- Change is a must – embrace it
- Handle success and failure as the same – as an opportunity to improve

**Student-Athlete/Parent Consent Form**

“I have received, read, and fully understand the Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women Student-Athlete Handbook. I agree to fully comply with policies, procedures, protocols, and instructions of the Mercy administration, coaching staff, rules of the Private Parochial League, Section V, and the New York State Public High School Athletic Association.”

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sport: \_\_\_\_\_

Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*This form must be signed and submitted to the Head Coach prior to participation in the first interscholastic competition.*