

Our Mother of Perpetual Help School



Ephrata, PA

Parent Handbook



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Our Mother of Perpetual Help School is to teach the whole child, emphasizing Catholic values and moral teachings, thus enabling students to take an active role in our Church and as citizens of the United States of America and the world community.

STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

WE BELIEVE

- that our Catholic identity is the cornerstone of our school community
- that OMPH School shares the mission of the Catholic Church, which is to pass on the gospel values to its students
- that the children of our school are a gift from God to be nurtured in the Catholic faith
- that the school works in partnership with the parents, who are the primary educators of their children, to create a faith community in which students learn about and experience faith in a living Jesus
- that our academic program challenges students to reach their full potential
- that service to others is integral to the school's outreach to the community

ACCREDITATION

Our Mother of Perpetual Help School is accredited through the *Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Elementary Schools*.

ADMINISTRATION

Our Mother of Perpetual Help School serves the parishes of *Our Mother of Perpetual Help* in Ephrata, *Our Lady of Lourdes* in New Holland, and *St. James* in Lititz. It is under the administration of the pastor of *OMPH Parish* and the acting principal of the school. The school is a part of the Diocese of Harrisburg and is responsible to the Secretary of Education for the religious instruction of the students, Diocesan School regulations, school maintenance, and public relations. The school is staffed by a group of dedicated lay teachers.

SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Recognized School Personnel:

- Principal
- Lead Teacher
- Homeroom Teachers
- Teacher Assistants
- Subject Specialists (*health, physical education, music education, art education, library science, computer education*)
- IU 13 Personnel (*remediation teacher, speech therapist, school psychologist, school counselor*)
- Office Staff
- Nursing Staff (*Ephrata School District*)
- Cafeteria Staff
- Playground Staff
- Development Director
- Publicity Director
- Technology Coordinator
- School Board
- Development Advisory Team
- Parent Teacher Organization
- Technology Team

All administrative duties are sanctioned in the office by the school Principal with the approval and permission of the Pastor. Any business pertaining to teachers, students, to scholastic programs or the like, also originates in this office.

ADMITTANCE

Our Mother of Perpetual Help School admits all students regardless of religion, race, and ethnic origin, to all the rights and privileges, and programs. All children, regardless of religious affiliation, are to attend Mass and religion classes.

REGISTRATION OF NEW STUDENTS

Registrations for the school are taken beginning in January preceding the school year for which attendance is requested. The following items are required for pre-admission to OMPH School (Pre-K – Grade 8).

The following are required for pre-admission.

1. Pre-Admission Form
2. Copy of Birth Certificate
3. Copy of Baptismal Certificate
4. Copy of Social Security Card
5. Parish Verification of Membership Form
6. Progress report / report card for the current year and previous grade
7. A letter of reference from a teacher or principal
8. Copies of the results of testing your child has received including:
 - _____ *Early Intervention*
 - _____ *PreK/Kindergarten Screening*
 - _____ *Psychological*
 - _____ *Speech/Occupational/Physical therapy*
 - _____ *Counseling Services*
 - _____ *Current Academic Evaluations/ Standardized Tests Scores*

When all of the above are returned the following will take place:

1. Interview is held with family and principal.
2. Grade 4 – 8 students only:
 - Student meets with principal.
 - Student gives a written response to two questions.
 1. *Why would you want to attend a Catholic School?*
 2. *How important is education to you?*
3. Teachers and principal review the applicant's pre-admission information.
4. Student may spend a day at OMPH School once all of the above is completed.
5. Notification of enrollment is sent. (*Acceptance will be conditional upon a review of the student's first four weeks.*)
6. Complete formal registration.
 - Reservation/Enrollment Agreement
 - Copy of legal custody documentation (if applicable)

(Admission Procedure Policy Update - January 2008)

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Age Requirements:

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| - 3 years old by September 1 st | Preschool K-3 |
| - 4 years old by September 1 st | Preschool K-4 |
| - 5 years old by September 1 st | Kindergarten |
| - 6 years old by September 1 st | Grade One |

Medical Requirements:

All students must have an immunization card and all shots completed as required by the PA Department of Education.

Waiting List Requirements:

At the pre-admission time, all students are placed on a waiting list until the formal registration is complete. Priority is given to students from the parishes of OMPH, St. James, and Our Lady of Lourdes. Siblings are given first preference. Openings are then offered to those wishing to offer their child(ren) a Catholic Education.

Reservation/Enrollment Agreement:

All registered families must complete a Reservation/Enrollment Agreement. This contract must be signed by the parents/guardians and submitted with the registration fee before the registration of the child(ren) is considered complete.

TRANSFER STUDENTS

Students who transfer from another school must arrange to provide copies of their academic records, health records, and other records necessary to insure their admission to the school.

RELEASE OF RECORDS

The school maintains records for all students on a permanent basis. Information included in these records may not be released without written permission of the parents/guardians. This also includes completion of a release form for the forwarding of transcripts of student records to another school. All bills must be paid in full in order to have records released to another school. When registering, parents must request a transfer and sign a release form at the previous school to have records released promptly.

ATTENDANCE

Every student of compulsory school age is required to be present daily in class unless legitimately excused.

Regular attendance is essential to a student's success in school. Persistent absenteeism creates a genuine hardship for a student and is regarded as a very serious problem. Persistent late arrival to the school is also considered a serious problem.

Latecomers must be escorted to the school office by their parents. Parents are responsible for signing the late slip.

Requests for a vacation absence during the school year are discouraged. Homework/classwork assignments will be given to the students upon return to school after the absence.

ABSENCES

When a student is unable to attend school, parents should call in to the school office between the hours from 6:00 AM to 8:00 AM to report the absence on the answering system. Parents need to give the student's name, grade, and reason for absence. If a parent forgets to call the school, the school will call home.

The following circumstances are the only recognized excuses for school absence:

- Personal illness (*absences of three or more days require a doctor's excuse note as a reason for absence*)
- Family illness that necessitates absence
- Death in the family
- Doctor's and dentist's appointments are considered excused. However, all such absences are marked for non-attendance.

Make up work for illness absences will be given to the student only upon return to school after illness. In the case of lengthy illness work assignments will be adjusted to meet the needs of the student. Students are responsible to make up any missing work due to illness or other absences.

Excuse Notes/Other Notes:

A written excuse note is required from parents each time a student is absent from school in which the parent must state the reason why the child was absent from school. The school encourages the use of a special form that is distributed, via communication folder, at the beginning of the school year. Additional forms are available in the school office or may be printed from the school website.

Other notes, which include the Change of Transportation Form and request for Early Dismissal, should be sent by the parent to the school office for the day that this change is needed. Office personnel will authorize the form and give it to the homeroom teacher. (Please note that all school districts have limitations on changes in their busing and do require a written request sent to them for permission.)

EARLY DISMISSALS OR LATE STARTS

Medical Appointments:

Appointments for doctor or dentist care during the school day are considered excused absences. Parents are requested to return the student to school as soon as possible after the appointment or to make the appointment late in the day to limit the amount of time lost from the school day.

School District Busing:

School district busing difficulties or weather hazards resulting in busing delays are considered excused absences and are not marked for lateness or non-attendance.

Tardiness:

Prompt arrival at school is expected of all students. Late arrivals disrupt classes and cause loss of instruction time. Any student who arrives late at school after 8:00 AM is considered tardy and must report to the school office with his/her parent/guardian for a

late slip in order to enter the homeroom. Parent/Guardian and office personnel are to sign the late slip.

Students who arrive late due to busing difficulties are not considered late. They do need to report to the office to have their names removed from the absentee list.

AUXILIARY SERVICES

Nurse:

Our school nursing staff is from Ephrata School District provided via the PA State Act 89 services. The nurse is available for dental and physical screening, the hearing testing, and other state required evaluations. Student injuries are taken care of by the authorized school personnel. If there are any unusual health problems or changes in health, please call the school office to inform the secretary and the school nurse.

Special School Services:

The Intermediate Unit 13 of the State Educational Services provides a school psychologist, remediation teachers, and a speech therapist, for the children. These services are provided with parent/guardian permission to students identified in need. If parents wish to have services available for their child, they need to contact the principal.

OMPH School also receives services from a school counselor through the Intermediate Unit 13 on a regular basis. The counselor meets with individual students, small groups or entire classes. No specific permission slip is required for a child to participate in the counseling program at OMPH School. Families will be notified by the counselor if a student is going to be seen individually on an ongoing basis. Families are also free to contact the counselor at any time with questions or concerns.

The remediation teachers are present daily in the IU trailer located on the side of the school. The speech therapist is available on a weekly basis. The school psychologist is present at the school only during evaluations and conferencing. Psychological evaluations are completed at the request of teachers/Student Support Team with parent/guardian permission. However, these services are not the first step to the support and evaluation of the student needs. The SST (Student Support Team) works with the teachers and families to secure the support and educational needs of the students.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is an extremely important part of the school program. Contact is accomplished in various ways including phone calls, notes, handouts, the school newsletter, and personal meetings.

Announcements/Communication/Hand-outs:

Any announcements or activities sponsored by any school related groups or by other non-school related groups must be cleared by the school principal. Notices should be sent to the school office ahead of time for permission to be distributed or to be announced at the end of the day.

Copies approved by the principal will be sent via the communication folder on Wednesday of each week.

Communication folders are to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school the next school day.

Assemblies:

Assemblies are planned periodically as special events on the school calendar. Some typical themes include cultural presentations, professional speakers (*nutritionists, substance abuse programs, fire prevention...*). Special attention to etiquette and good citizenship, as well as good behavior, is required from all students who attend the program.

Conferences:

A parent/teacher conference is an invaluable aid in bringing about a closer relationship between the home and school. It gives parents and teachers an opportunity to pool their observations and to plan to work together.

A mandatory first trimester conference is scheduled each year in conjunction with the end of the first trimester marking period and first grade report. Notices are sent home in advance to assist with organizing a schedule for all families.

Additional conferences can be scheduled at any time during the school year. Conferences with teachers should be made by appointment to set a convenient time for all parties involved.

Discussion of school matters with a teacher at home or at social events is discouraged.

Newsletter:

A school newsletter and calendar are published monthly. These include general items of interest to students and parents, announcements of up-coming events and reminders. Parent updates are sent during the course of each month as needed.

School Website:

The school website – www.omph.org – provides extensive information on the school. The school calendar, newsletter and lunch menu are posted monthly. Information from the School Board, Development Advisory Team and PTO is available on the website. The Parent Handbook, the Student Handbook for the Departmental Grades and various school forms are also found on the website.

Telephone:

The office phone is a business phone and is not available for student use except in an emergency. The phone is not to be used to request delivery of forgotten items such as: homework, gym uniforms, lunches, etc. Students may not use or carry cell phones during the school day.

The school phone has a voice mail answering system. If the secretary cannot answer your call, please leave a message and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

PARENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

The faculty and staff of OMPH School consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life --- physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of OMPH School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at OMPH School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (PreK to 8) your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good, mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits that provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child takes responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.

Parents As Partners

As partners in the educational process at OMPH School we ask parents:

- To set rules, times and limits so that your child:
 - gets to bed early on school nights
 - arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day
 - is dressed according to the school dress code
 - completes assignments on time
- To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences

- To notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy
- To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers
- To meet all financial obligations to the school
- To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health
- To promptly complete and return to school any requested information
- To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education
- To support the religious and educational goals of the school
- To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school
- To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems
- To see that the student pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student

Education of a child is a partnership between the school and parent. If in the opinion of the school the relationship is irrevocably broken, the school reserves the right to require the parents to withdraw the child from school.

CHILD CUSTODY

OMPH School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment and assumes both parents have equal rights unless a court certified copy of a custody agreement is on file in the school office.

CURRICULUM

Our Mother of Perpetual Help School follows the curriculum guide developed by the Catholic School Department of the Diocese of Harrisburg. The diocesan curriculum committees continually review and update these guides. To support our implementation of the curriculum the faculty of OMPH School is involved in researching educational advancements, evaluating and selecting textbooks and instructional materials, and participating in various workshops and classes.

Textbooks:

Most textbooks have been purchased through the PA State Act 195/90. A release form from parents to use these textbooks with their children is required and kept on file in the school office. All religion books and many other textbooks and instructional materials are a part of the school budget, therefore, their proper use and care are expected. If a book is lost or misused, or damaged beyond reasonable wear, the student is responsible for replacing the book. This policy also guards the use and misuse of all instructional material and equipment.

Homework:

Students will have homework throughout the school week. Children in grades 1 through 3 have 30 to 45 minutes of homework each day. This will usually include a reading assignment in concert with parents. Students in grades 4 and 5 have 45 to 90 minutes of

homework per day. At this time students are usually assigned research projects that may involve a longer span of time. Students in grades 6 through 8 have 90+ minutes of homework per day. At this period in the student's life, greater responsibility is placed on achievement and assignments. Long term, short term, and daily assignments are required. Therefore, the student must be prepared to balance such assignments and other activities, including sports, service commitments, scouting, etc.

Students in grades 6, 7, 8 are encouraged to complete all major assignments as a final typewritten copy.

Student Responsibilities for Homework:

1. Understand the assignment to be completed. Use the required homework agenda to list daily assignments.
2. Complete the assignments according to criteria set.
3. Arrange for make-up assignments missed due to class absence.

Parent Responsibilities for Homework:

1. Sign and return immediately all test papers sent home.
2. Provide an atmosphere conducive for homework.
3. Refrain from doing work for the child to make it easier.
4. Support the efforts of your children as they complete projects, assignments.

Teacher Responsibilities for Homework:

1. Homework should be used to prepare and supplement class work, taking into consideration the individual needs of students.
2. Homework should stimulate the mind's imagination of each student, thus enhancing interest in subject matter and schoolwork.
3. Assignments should include reading requirements on a daily basis.

Daily Schedule:

The daily schedule for students varies according to the grade level. However, the general schedule includes:

- 8:00 AM First bell (*a student is marked late upon entrance to school after 8:00 AM*)
- 11:05 AM Lunch period for grades K – 2
- 11:30 AM Lunch period for grades 3 – 5
- 11:50 AM Lunch period for grades 6 – 8
- 2:35 PM Homeroom period
- 2:45 PM End of school day

Religion:

Religion is a subject studied at all levels on a daily basis and constitutes the central spirit of the school. A Roman Catholic elementary school requires that students be instructed in the faith, sacred scriptures, and moral doctrine of the Church. The seasons of the Church year play an important part in the theme of religious activities. Students have the opportunity to participate in weekly Mass and bimonthly confessions. Preparation for the reception of the sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation are completed in conjunction with the Religious Education program of the student's home parish. All families are encouraged to participate in student religious activities and are welcome to attend all services.

Major Subjects:

In Grades K through 3, in addition to Religion, the major subjects include: integrated language arts (*reading, grammar, phonics and spelling*), mathematics, and handwriting skills. In Grades 4 through 8, in addition to Religion, the major subjects include: integrated language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science.

Specials:

Additional subjects termed specials include: physical education, music education, art education, library science, health education, and computer education.

Physical Education:

Physical Education is an important part of the students' experience. Students must attend this weekly class. Only with permission from the principal will students be excused (physical injury, limited capacity, etc.). A note from the parent will be accepted for a one day excuse. A doctor's note is required for longer dismissal from class, and a doctor's note is also required stating when the student may resume physical education.

Activities in kindergarten through third grade include loco-motor movements, movement exploration with balls, hoops, balloons, scooters, dance, jump ropes and parachutes. These activities help to develop eye-hand and eye-foot coordination and large motor skills. The gymnastic unit includes multiple opportunities for balance, strength building and coordination development.

In fourth through eighth grades team and individual sports (such as soccer, flag football, bowling and volleyball) are used to develop skills, knowledge, teamwork and good sportsmanship. A gymnastic unit continues for fourth through sixth grade; badminton is taught for seventh and eighth grade. Dance, juggling and game days are included in the curriculum.

Music Education:

Music Education is provided for all students once a week. This program provides the opportunity for students to develop music skills and have a better understanding and enjoyment of music. Various experiences are offered including: singing, playing instruments, listening, movement, and reading music.

Art Education:

Art Education strives to provide students with the opportunity to deepen their awareness of the natural beauty of God's creation. It promotes student creativity and self worth while developing the necessary concepts, skills, and appreciation of art.

Library Science:

Library Science classes offer the opportunity to use the school library and to provide training in research skills needed to enhance the student's study skill development. The internet, books, periodicals, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other reference tools are used.

Health Education:

Health Education provides students with information about four basic topics: nutrition, safety, growth and development, and substance abuse. In various grades, training sessions help students to learn more about first aid, and personal hygiene.

Computer Education:

Computer Education provides the students with the basic knowledge of keyboarding, computer literacy, and computer assisted educational experience. As students grow in their knowledge they expand word processing skills, use data files, create spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

The sacramental life of the children of the Catholic tradition is an important component of the religion program at OMPH School. Preparation for two sacraments, Reconciliation and Eucharist, form the core of our efforts in Grade Two and preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation is the focus of instruction in Grade Eight.

Parents are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for these sacraments. This may include attendance at parish sponsored parent meetings.

CAFETERIA PROGRAM

Cafeteria Program:

Lunch is served in the Father Jackson Center at 11:05 AM, 11:30 AM, and 11:50 AM each day. A basic meal is prepared by cafeteria personnel and ordered by students on a daily basis. The monthly lunch menu is sent home in the communication folder to assist families in planning lunch choices. Students choosing to use the lunch program must open a lunch account with the cafeteria. Money is placed in the account at the opening of the school year and added to as needed throughout the year. The student's ID card is swiped on a daily basis to deduct funds spent. Parents are notified when the balance in the account drops below \$10.00.

This program is a school sponsored and not a government lunch program. Therefore, it is not subsidized by the government.

Students choosing to bring a lunch from home have the opportunity to use a microwave if needed.

Cafeteria Rules:

- Follow rules of courtesy
- Retain a quiet tone in line upon entering Father Jackson Center
- Present your student ID card to purchase food
- Trays must be used for all purchased lunches and milk
- Clean your table area and return your tray
- When finished, line up at the door to wait for the supervision team

Students may not take food outside the cafeteria (*play area, hallways, or bathrooms*).

Use of the Father Jackson Center after lunch is a privilege reserved for the students in Grades 6 through 8. In order to earn this privilege, students must assist in the clean-up of the Center.

The Lunch Supervision Team includes personnel who supervise the students during the recess period after lunch. They provide for student safety and medical assistance when required.

DISCIPLINE

We believe that discipline is fundamental to life. Discipline is a necessary reflection of the philosophy of Our Mother of Perpetual Help School, which attempts to develop a fully committed Christian. A commitment to the observance of just rules and regulations will assist the individual in responding to his/her responsibilities and obligations to himself/herself and others.

Correct training in discipline means that a child learns to accept rules and regulations presented by lawful authority. Students are expected to act in such fashion that their behavior will reflect favorably on themselves and the school. They are expected to show consideration and respect for their fellow students and teachers, thus creating a harmonious atmosphere within the school. All students must recognize their individual responsibilities and obligations and discharge them in accordance with school regulations. Children who fail to comply with school policies and regulations must accept consequences.

The discipline code applies to students and parent/guardians in school and at school-sponsored events, as well as in the school/parish community where behavior contrary to Catholic teachings could bring disrepute or embarrassment to the school.

The school has an obligation to all students and their parents to provide a safe and orderly school environment that will enable the individual student to progress at a rate commensurate with his/her ability. The right of individual expression is encouraged, but when such expression interferes directly or indirectly with the rights of others, appropriate steps must be taken.

Morning Recess Guidelines

Arrival:

- Upon arrival in the morning students are to enter the school lobby then walk directly to the playground area.
- Students with musical instruments are to place them neatly in a row along the trophy case before going outside.
- Backpacks and other items are to be placed in a straight line in the areas designated for each grade.
- Uniforms are to be in place – ties on, shirttails tucked, vests on – upon arrival at school.

Playground:

- All playground rules for student safety and security apply.
- In the morning students are to limit games to those that do not involve balls and other sports equipment.
- There is to be no running or activities involving extensive physical activity.
- Students who need to enter the building must receive permission from the playground supervisor.

Beginning School:

- When the 8:00 bell rings students are to move quickly and quietly to their line and pick up all backpacks and other items.
- The line is to be silent and ready for directives from the teacher.
- Students will enter the building when the second bell rings.

Inclement Weather:

- Students in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade will report directly to their assigned tables in the gym. They may play quiet games, read, or study. It is not appropriate to do last night's homework. Students who need to leave the gym for any reason must receive permission from the playground supervisor. When the bell rings, students will form lines and move to the classrooms led by their teacher.
- Students in Grades 6 to 8 will report directly to their classrooms. They are to unpack and go to lockers upon arrival. No student is to be in the hallway or at lockers after the 8:00 bell rings. Students who need to leave the classroom for any reason must receive permission from the playground supervisor.

Lunch Recess Playground Rules

- Be safe, be courteous and be considerate toward students and staff.
- Fair play and good sportsmanship are expected.
- Use playground equipment and property with respect.

Activities for Grades K - 5

- Catch ball, kickball, tether ball, basketball, football toss (not tag or tackle)
- Ball toss, four square, jump rope
- Appropriate use of swings, jungle gym and seesaw (time is shared)

Activities for Grades 6 - 8

- Catch ball, kickball, tether ball, basketball
- Soccer, football toss (not tag or tackle)
- Baseball with whiffle ball and plastic bat
- Ball toss, four square, jump rope
- Use of swings (jungle gym and seesaw are not to be used)
- Use of Field of Dreams with parent/teacher supervision

Off Limit Areas

- Wooded area in the back playground
- Area beyond the trees in the Field of Dreams
- Side parking area or construction area

Guidelines for Playground Safety and Security

- No food or snacks may be eaten on the playground; lunch must be finished inside.
- Only Preschool and Kindergarten students may play in the Tot Lot.
- Any activity that could result in injury to self or others is not acceptable.
- All balls and playground equipment must be returned to the gym basket at the end of each recess period.
- If a ball goes into a restricted area the adult supervisor must be asked to retrieve it.

Should there be a problem:

1. Students will be placed on the bench for an appropriate time and the incident will be documented in the playground register.

2. For more serious offenses, students will be placed on the bench for the entire play period, the incident will be documented in the playground register and the discipline concern will be reported to the teacher supervising recess.
3. For consistent discipline concerns and misbehavior the student will be directed to the principal.

School Rules:

Following is the expected behavior from all students at OMPH School:

- To be respectful toward and considerate of everyone
- To respect the property of fellow students and the school
- To practice courtesy and rules of etiquette at all times and in all places
- To use language that is appropriate and respectful
- To display proper safety habits in and out of the classroom
- To manifest a sense of fair play and unselfishness
- To work together with students and teachers
- To provide a pleasant learning environment

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable. It is grounds for immediate disciplinary action.

Bullying includes but is not limited to the following:

- Physical acts (shoving, hitting, pinching, etc)
- Verbal acts (name calling, spreading rumors, sarcasm, threats, ridiculing, teasing)
- Non-verbal actions (excluding others, rude or upsetting gestures, etc.)

Any incidents of bullying via the computer, cell phones or related media (e-mail, blogs, social networking sites, instant messaging, pictures/photos, text messaging, etc.) which affect student relationships/behavior within the school building are subject to disciplinary action. This applies to messaging which takes place outside of school, as well as any which might occur illicitly within the school.

Inappropriate behaviors are considered infractions on school rules and may result in a conduct demerit points. The following guidelines address such behaviors. Actions for which conduct demerit points are assigned include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors.

<u>Behavior</u>	<u>Conduct Demerit Point</u>
Boisterous talking during change of class	1
Chewing gum in school and on school property	1
Dress code violation	1
Hair violation	1
Locker violations	1
Make-up/Jewelry violation	1
Running on the hallways	1
Throwing snowballs or sliding on the ice	1

Being disrespectful or uncooperative toward students, teachers, and staff (<i>e.g. talking back, being defiant</i>)	3
Carrying cell phones, i-pods, laser pointers, and other electronic devices	3
Cheating	3
Copying another student's work	3
Cursing	3
Disruptive behavior	3
Fake fighting	3
Forgery	3
Rough play (<i>pushing, shoving, tripping, hitting, spitting, wrestling</i>)	3
Taunting, teasing	3
Vandalism to school text books	3
Abusive or vulgar language	5
Encouraging others to hurt someone verbally or physically	5
Fighting	5
Graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body	5
Leaving the school building or property without permission	5
Sexually degrading words	5
Sexually degrading jokes, graffiti, vulgar statements or gestures	5
Slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct disparaging to an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, gender, national origin, age or handicap/disability	5
Spreading rumors	5
Stealing	5
Using cell phones, iPods, laser pointers, and other electronic devices	5
Vandalism to school property	5
Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, making sexual propositions	5

Conduct Demerit Referral:

Conduct demerit referral is a triplicate form used to identify behavioral difficulties of students. The parent copy is sent to the parent for signature. This copy is then returned the next day to the issuing teacher. The number of demerits given will be in accordance with the behavior.

At the end of each trimester of the school calendar, the student begins with a clean slate.

The student accumulating 3 conduct demerit points, per trimester, will be deprived of lunch recess.

The student accumulating 10 conduct demerit points, per trimester, will be suspended from school. The student will have a conference with his/her parents and the principal. The student will not be permitted to participate in any extracurricular activity during the time of suspension.

The following constitute a total disservice to the school and may result in immediate suspension or expulsion.

- Actions resulting in serious injury to a student or staff member.

- Sexually degrading conduct toward another student or staff member through:
 1. word of mouth
 2. paper, writing/drawing, writing implements
 3. text messaging
 4. e-mail, instant messages or any computer language
 5. gestures
- Threatening an adult(s), a child(ren) by communicating the words kill, shoot, hate, gun, bomb through:
 1. word of mouth
 2. paper, writing/drawing, writing implements
 3. text messaging
 4. e-mail, instant messages or any computer language
 5. gestures
- Placing false blame on another individual or group regarding threats
- Use or possession of:
 1. drugs/ drug paraphernalia
 2. cigarettes/ matches
 3. alcoholic beverages
- Conduct, whether inside or outside of the school, detrimental to the reputation of the school or the Roman Catholic Church.

Guidelines for Acceptable Use of Technology:

Students are responsible for good behavior when using school computers and the Internet. Student files on the school computers are considered school property and are fully available to the teachers and staff. The technology instructor for the school may review files and Internet communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that the students are using the technology systems responsibly. No student will have access to school computers and/or the Internet without staff supervision. A student may lose access to school computers and/or the Internet if found in violation of this policy. Restitution for damage to school computers and/or software applications will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians of the student.

Posting information on the Internet: The Internet is a public forum with unrestricted access. For this reason, the schools in the diocese restrict permission for the posting of information related to the school, the staff, and students on the Internet. No person is permitted to use images of the school, the school logo or seal, school staff or students in any form on the Internet or in any form of electronic communication without specific written permission from the school administration. The posting of any such information on any website, bulletin board, chat-room, e-mail, or other messaging system without permission, or posting or transmission of images or information in any format related to the school, staff or students that are defamatory, scurrilous, pornographic, or which could be construed as threatening or impugning the character of another person is prohibited and will make any person involved in the posting or transmission of such, subject to disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the administration of the school, or by the diocese. This follows diocesan policy #6230.

The following constitute a total disservice to the school and may result in immediate suspension or expulsion.

- Receiving, displaying, or sending offensive messages and/or pictures
- Using obscene language in communication

- Insulting, harassing or verbally attacking others
- Receiving, displaying or sending offensive, threatening, violent and/or destructive information or pictures on the Internet
- Damaging computer equipment, programs and network
- Violating copyright laws
- Using another student's password, folders, work, and e-mail
- Using unauthorized access to restricted information
- Playing games other than assigned by a teacher for educational purposes
- Employing school computers and the Internet for "chain letters" and messages broadcast to mailing lists or individuals
- Using school computers and the Internet for commercial purposes
- Revealing on the Internet one's personal address and/or phone number or the address and/or phone number of any other person without the permission of that person and the permission of the teacher
- Use of "chat rooms" on the Internet, which are morally inappropriate and violate Catholic doctrine and/or moral teaching
- Any use of technology which would be deemed inappropriate by the school

All e-mail messages are the property of the school who are owners of the equipment. This follows diocesan policy #6230.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES:

Parents will be notified of any difficulties that may arise during school hours. Notification may include, but is not limited to the following:

Homework Deficiency:

Homework deficiency is a triplicate form used to identify the lack of completion of homework assignments. The parent copy is sent home for parent signature. This copy is returned to the issuing teacher the next day.

Conduct Referral:

Conduct referral is a triplicate form used to identify behavioral difficulties of students. The parent copy is sent to the parent for signature. This copy is returned to the issuing teacher the next day.

Bus Conduct Referral:

Bus conduct referral is issued by the bus driver and given to the office to report misbehavior of a student. Continuous misbehavior may place a student on probation and/or suspension of bus privileges.

Bus Conduct Rules:

The following rules have been established in order to insure the safety of all students who ride buses:

- Students may only ride the bus for the school district in which they reside.
- Orderly behavior is required on the bus and at the bus stop. Playing, running around, pushing and shoving, loud screaming, or inappropriate language are not permitted.
- Remain seated on the bus facing front at all times. Walking around on the bus or changing seats is not permitted. The bus driver will assume responsibility for seating arrangement.

- Talking quietly while the bus is being boarded or in motion is acceptable. Talking to the bus driver during motion is permitted only when absolutely necessary.
- Windows should be opened only with the permission of the bus driver.
- All trash must be properly disposed of when exiting the bus.
- Any physical damage to the bus is considered a serious offense.

Suspension:

Suspension is a serious matter. A student on suspension is removed from class and is required to complete the day's work independently. A formal letter of notification of suspension is given to the parent/guardian listing the period of suspension (*time*) and the grave matter (*reason*). Work assignments and dates for completion will be given by the teachers. In cases of grave matter, parents/guardians will be notified immediately to remove their child from the school building. A letter of notification, a conference, and a time period for suspension will follow this. Consideration of continuance in the school will be discussed at such times.

After two suspensions, a student may be expelled for any further serious infractions, or an accumulation of lesser infractions of rules or regulations of the school. This follows Diocesan Policy #5114A.

*To be noted here:

- All aggressive behavior will be identified immediately to parents. Such behavior is serious and will be treated as such.
- Any threat of violence will incur a formal notification to parents and will be regarded as a serious infringement on the student's ability to remain in the school. In such cases, the student will be removed from class; parents immediately notified; police notified; resulting in an investigation of the matter.

Expulsion:

If a student is unwilling or unable to abide by the rules and regulations of a Catholic school in the diocese and either breaks the rules consistently or does something of a very serious nature, he/she may be expelled. This follows Diocesan Policy #5114.B.

Appeal Procedure for Expulsion:

In those instances where a student has been expelled, parents may appeal the transfer required by the principal. In order to make a formal appeal, the parents must present a formal letter of appeal to the pastor. Copies of the formal letter must be presented to the principal. Upon receipt of the formal appeal, a meeting of all parties including the student and teacher will be arranged. This follows Diocesan Policy #5114.C.

Weapons and Fire Arms:

Weapons and firearms are forbidden in school. Any student found carrying or having any such item in his/her possession will be reported to the police, followed by parent notification and immediate suspension from school. This policy holds true for any such item including cherry bombs, but it is not limited to such. This follows Diocesan Policy #5137.5

*Students may not carry or have in their possession items that may look like a weapon or firearm. This is considered a serious matter and will not be treated lightly.

*Students may not have in their possession any such item that has the potential to cause injury.

*It is the policy of our school to notify the school to which a student transfers if a student is expelled, or withdraws from school, and is involved with any of the following infractions:

1. An act or offense involving weapons
2. Sale or possession of controlled substances
3. Willful infliction of injury to another person, or act of violence committed on school property, or while in the custody of the school

[This policy reflects our commitment to the *Safe Schools Act of 1997*.]

Vandalism:

The school and its adjoining property is parish property. It is not public property. Therefore, the school reserves the right to limit the use of this property. Willfully damaging or destroying this property is cause for immediate suspension and/or expulsion from school. Restitution of the damages will be required. If a student accidentally causes damage, he/she should report it to the homeroom teacher immediately, so that the damage is not misconstrued as vandalism.

Stealing:

Stealing other student's possessions and/or school property requires restitution and may be cause for suspension according to the nature of the item(s) taken. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

Searches:

Student desks and lockers are school property and can be searched at any time. For safety reasons the school also reserves the right to search student book bags and other items brought into the school building.

The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at his/her discretion.

DRESS CODE

The school requires that uniforms be worn throughout the school year. Any deviation from the dress code should be temporary and be explained with a written note from the parent/guardian on the day the change occurs. Students at all levels should be dressed neatly. Uniform sweaters, sweatshirts, etc. should be identified with nametags or labels. Scout uniforms may be worn to school on the day of the Scout meeting.

The official supplier of OMPH School uniforms is *McGinn School Apparel - Fairgrounds Square Mall - Reading, PA - 610-939-1503; www.mcginnschoolapparel.com*

Parents are respectfully reminded of their responsibility to send their children to school neatly dressed, well groomed and in compliance with the school's dress code. Your good example and interest will be most beneficial to your children.

Girls' Dress Code:

Girls (Grades 1 – 5) are to wear a blue plaid uniform jumper, a powder blue blouse with a peter pan collar (long or short sleeves), and white anklets or navy blue knee-highs or tights. A regulation navy blue cardigan or pullover sweater from the uniform company may be worn. However, no other pullovers or sweaters are permitted. Captioned or lettered items may not be worn.

Slacks may be worn to school during the chilly winter months but must be removed before classes begin.

Girls in grades 6 – 8 wear a plaid skirt and powder blue blouse with an oxford collar. Blouses are to be tucked inside the skirt. Skirts should not be rolled and must reach one inch above the knee. A regulation navy blue vest is also worn. In cooler weather a regulation navy blue pullover sweater from the uniform company may be worn in place of the vest. No other sweater may be substituted for the uniform sweater. White anklets or navy blue knee-highs or tights are worn with the uniform.

Girls are not permitted to wear make-up, nail polish, or costume jewelry. If ears are pierced, only one pair of small earrings are permitted. Girls may wear navy blue or white hair ribbons or hair bands. Hair should be neatly styled and groomed in a manner that is conducive to good grooming habits. Extreme hairstyles or coloring of hair are not permitted.

Girls in grades 1 through 8 are required to wear a solid color leather dress shoe in brown, black, or navy. Shoes may be tie or slip on (*with a back*). Loose fitting shoes and slipper-type footwear may not be worn. Heels are to be no higher than one inch. Sneakers, athletic shoes, dress boots or sandals of any style may not be worn to school. Sneakers are permitted only on gym days. In the winter, students must remove boots in the classroom.

Boys' Dress Code:

Boys are to wear navy blue dress slacks, with a black or brown leather belt at the waist, and a powder blue shirt (*long or short sleeve*) with a navy blue tie. Shirts are to be worn tucked inside the slacks. Slacks of denim or jean materials are not permitted. A pullover sweater of navy blue or a navy blue cardigan may be worn but should not be captioned or lettered. Boys are to wear solid color white, navy blue or black socks. Socks with a logo or stripe are not permitted.

Extreme and shaved hair styles are not permitted, as well as, coloring of hair. Hair must be neat, well groomed and off the collar. Jewelry is not permitted.

Boys in grades 1 through 8 are required to wear a solid color leather dress shoe in brown, black, or navy. Shoes may be tie or slip on. Sneakers, athletic shoes, boots or sandals of any style may not be worn to school. Sneakers are permitted only on gym days. In the winter, students must remove boots in the classroom.

Physical Education Uniform:

All students, both boys and girls, are required to wear a powder blue regulation "golf" shirt and navy blue sweat pants or swish pants (*no stripes or logos*). A solid navy blue sweatshirt or the navy blue OMPH Spiritwear sweatshirt may be worn in cooler weather.

Sneakers, worn on gym days, are to be primarily white or a neutral solid color. High tops and bright colors are not permitted. Socks must be worn and are to be visible above the shoe.

In warm weather, students will be permitted to wear their summer uniform shorts with the powder blue “golf” shirt as the physical education uniform. No other tops may be worn for physical education class.

SUMMER UNIFORM:

The optional summer uniform may be worn by students from August until October 15th and from April 15th until the last day of school.

Boys’ Summer Dress Code: A summer uniform consisting of regulation Bermuda-length navy blue shorts worn with a black or brown leather belt and the regulation powder blue golf shirt. The shirt is worn tucked in at the waist. Dress shoes are to be worn with regulation socks as described previously. On physical education days, regulation sneakers may be worn with the summer uniform.

Girls’ Summer Dress Code: A summer uniform consisting of regulation Bermuda-length navy blue shorts or the regulation navy blue skort from the uniform company may be worn with the powder blue golf shirt. The shirt is worn tucked in at the waist. Dress shoes are to be worn with regulation socks as described previously. On physical education days, regulation sneakers may be worn with the summer uniform.

KINDERGARTEN UNIFORM:

The children in Kindergarten may wear solid navy blue sweat pants and a powder blue regulation “golf” shirt as an optional uniform throughout the school year. A solid navy blue sweatshirt or the navy OMPH Spiritwear sweatshirt may be worn in cooler weather. In warmer weather the children may wear navy blue shorts with the powder blue regulation “golf” shirt. Sneakers may be worn with the optional uniform

UNIFORM EXCEPTIONS:

Special exceptions to the school uniform may occur to accommodate a dress down day, dress up day, spirit day or a color day. The principal will identify such days. Modesty and neatness will be the code for these days.

Guidelines for Dress Down Day/Dress Up Day:

Students are permitted to wear the following on “dress down day”.

1. jeans without holes, frays, or patches
2. Capri pants
3. shorts (*provided they are no more than 2 inches above the knee*)
4. tee shirts without negative slogans or illustrations (*shirts must have sleeves and fall below the waist*)
5. sneakers (*clogs, sandals or flip flops are not permitted*)

Students are permitted to wear the following on “dress up day”.

1. dress pants (*no jeans*)
2. slacks, skirt, dress (*short skirts and dresses are not permitted, shoulders must be covered*)

3. blouse, golf shirt, sport shirt, shirt and tie

The above guidelines are to be followed for an earned dress down day or dress up day. If students are not properly dressed the parents/guardian will be called to bring the child's uniform.

EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Early Education Program at Our Mother of Perpetual Help School consists of a Preschool Program for three and four year old children and a Kindergarten Program for five-year-old children. Preschool programs are half-day sessions with the PreK-3 held two days a week; the PreK-4 held three days a week. The K-5 program is full day, five days a week. Age requirements and maximum enrollment numbers limit the openings in the program.

Students are accepted from the following school districts: Ephrata, Cocalico, Eastern Lancaster, Warwick, Conestoga Valley, Pequea Valley, Manheim Central and Manheim Township.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Early Dismissals/Late Starts:

The school district transportation departments rather than OMPH School usually determine weather or emergency related changes in schedule. If the Ephrata School District closes, OMPH School will also close. However, with late starts, please follow the directions of your local school district as to the one-hour or two hour delay. Your district of residence will announce the time of your bus pick-up for school.

Cancellation of School:

Cancellation of school takes place only during circumstances, such as extreme weather, equipment failure, or public crisis. Radio stations and TV stations are used to notify parents of cancellations. In a special dismissal alert, parents are encouraged to listen to announcements on the radio or TV for information on transportation by the school district in which they reside. Please refrain from calling the school office unless it is for a change of transportation. The school phone line must be kept open for the school district calls.

Teachers determine that all students will have satisfactory transportation and supervision at their home before releasing them from school. Please instruct your child as to what to do if this case arises.

Emergency Contact Information:

In case of emergency each student is required to have on file at the school office an Emergency Card. This card includes: parent/guardian's full name, up to date address, home and work phone numbers of parents/guardians, and a list of emergency persons and phone numbers.

A second form titled Authorization to Release Student in an Emergency is also required for each child. This form is filed in the Main Office and is also kept in the teacher's Emergency Handbook. In the event you cannot be reached, your child will be released to someone authorized on the list.

FEES

The school charges a variety of fees for different services and materials. Some of these are optional activities and some are required for all students.

Registration Fee:

Each family is charged this fee at the time of registration for the next school year. It is considered part of the Reservation/Enrollment Agreement and must be paid by the date given in the agreement. A late charge is added for fees not paid by the due date.

School Tuition:

OMPH School uses the *FACTS Tuition Management Plan* for its tuition collection. Parents/guardians have four options in paying tuition.

Option 1: Full payment made in July directly to Our Mother of Perpetual Help School.

Option 2: Half tuition payment made in July and the balance of the tuition payment made in January using the FACTS Management Company.

Option 3: Quarterly tuition payments made in July, October, January and April using the FACTS Management Company.

Option 4: A ten-month payment plan starting in July and completing payments in April using the FACTS Management Company.

Other Fees:

Additional fees may be charged to cover the costs of field trips, special projects, etc.

Parents must remain current in their financial obligations to the school. Please refer to the Our Mother of Perpetual Help School Policy Manual for further information on financial obligations regarding registration fees, tuition fees, and tuition assistance.

FUNDRAISING

The school holds various fund raising projects to support its educational programs. The PTO and the Development Advisory Team primarily sponsor these. The principal approves other fund raising projects that are set by the school. These include service projects that are generally charity related. All fundraisers are run on a voluntary basis with no minimum sales or level of participation required.

GRADUATIONS

Students experience a change in levels of educational development and this is recognized by the school at graduation. Kindergarten students celebrate a graduation from the Early Education Program to the first grade entrance. Students in eighth grade are awarded a diploma for completion of the course of study prescribed for the elementary schools by the Diocese of Harrisburg. Eighth grade graduation is usually held within a special Mass and is followed with an informal social sponsored by PTO.

HEALTH SERVICES

Illness or Injury:

In the case of illness or injury the school staff will care for a student temporarily. School personnel will only render first aid treatment. All faculty and staff when treating injuries or illness of a student use universal precautions. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. It is important that up-to-date information be kept in the emergency file.

Medications:

If a student must bring medication to school the following requirements must be met:

Prescription Medications

- The medication must carry a label with the child's name, medication identification, dosage instructions, doctor's name, and prescription date.
- The *Ephrata Area School District Permission Form for Prescribed Medication* must be completed by the physician and signed by the parents authorizing permission to give the medication.

Over-the-Counter Medications

- Non-prescriptive medication must be in the original container (*aspirin bottle, cough medicine bottle, etc.*) and properly labeled with student's name, medication, dosage, date and provider's name.
- The OMPH School Permission Form for Over-the-Counter Medication must be completed and signed by the parent providing the medication name, dosage instructions, and other necessary instructions.

Long term medication usage and information is kept on file. All medications are kept in the Main Office. A student may not keep any medicine in his/her possession or give any medicine to the homeroom teacher to dispense.

Alcohol and Drugs:

The possession, sale, or use of alcohol, drugs, or any other controlled substance on the school grounds, or on buses is strictly forbidden. Violation of this rule will be the cause of immediate suspension, with expulsion to follow, of the student or students involved. This violation will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agencies. This follows Diocesan Policy #5137.

Substance Abuse and Smoking:

Smoking is strictly forbidden in and around the school building. The school is a smoke-free building. Any student found violating this policy (*which includes carrying any tobacco products*) will be reported immediately to the local police as required by law. Illegal substances and/or alcohol found on a student or in his/her possession will be reported directly to the police. Each of the above situations will be followed by immediate parental notification and immediate suspension from classes followed by expulsion from school.

SAFETY REGULATIONS

Insurance:

School insurance will be offered at the beginning of each school year. Parents/guardians are required to sign on the form provided to indicate if they want or do not want the insurance for the year.

Off Limit Areas:

Our school is maintained and operated for the benefit of our students; therefore, common sense and safety considerations dictate the designation of off-limit areas which include:

- wooded areas adjacent to the playground and parking lots (*Students may not enter this area; if a ball is lost the adult supervisor must be notified to retrieve it.*)
- faculty room
- kitchen area
- storage areas, janitor's closet and boiler room
- any trash compound area of the school

Pets:

Pets are not permitted in the school building without permission of the school principal. Permission is limited to pets that are safe and do not provide a potentially dangerous circumstance for students.

Playground Safety:

The playground use is limited by rules of safety. Students are required to respect every individual in the play area. Rough play is not acceptable (*e.g. tackle football and other dangerous activities*). Playground rules are posted in the classrooms. Reminders are offered to the students to develop an atmosphere of fair play and fun at recess time. Uncooperative students will be given conduct referrals after repeated reminders. In most cases a time out is provided to cool tempers and remind students of fair play. However, if students become defiant and disrespectful to the supervision team, they will be removed from the play area.

Recess Policies:

Weather permitting; students are given recess outside each day. This includes time upon arrival at school and at the lunch period. Students in grades K - 2 are given a brief recess break in the afternoon. When the weather is inclement or the temperature is very cold, students will have supervised free time in the classroom. Quiet board games, talking with friends, or viewing a video (with teacher's permission) are permitted.

Valuables:

Bringing personal valuables to school is highly discouraged. If special circumstances make it necessary for a student to bring cash or other items of value to school, leaving them in the school office should safeguard these items.

Electronic Equipment:

Students may not carry or use cell phones during the school day. If a cell phone is seen or heard it will be taken from the student and returned to the parent. Conduct demerit points will be assigned.

Use of headsets, iPods, cameras, electric games, and other such equipment is not permitted on school property before, during, or after school hours while under the jurisdiction of the school faculty and staff. Any unauthorized items brought to school will be confiscated and returned to the parent. Conduct demerit points will be assigned.

Lost and Found:

All clothing found on the campus regardless of its value will be placed in the lost and found basket located near the Faculty Room. At various times during the school year, lost and found items are placed on display for student pickup. If items are not claimed, they will be given away. Students clothing and lunch boxes should be clearly marked for proper identification.

Parents/Visitors:

All parents/visitors must report to the school office upon entering the school. For safety and security reasons, all school doors will be kept locked during the school day. Parents are welcome to come to the school, however, they may not go to their child(ren)'s classroom without permission. Upon arrival parents/visitors must sign in, state reason for visit, and wear a visitor's badge or a volunteer's badge while in the school building.

Teachers are not able to confer with parents and attend to their duties at the same time. Volunteers are asked to stay in the assigned classroom or workspace where they are scheduled. They should not use their volunteer time to "visit" with their children or conference with a teacher.

In accordance with diocesan policy all volunteers working in the school must have PA State Police and the Department of Public Welfare Child Abuse Clearance. An information packet detailing the application procedures and fees to obtain these clearances is available in the school office.

SCHOOL LIBRARY

All students of the school use the library. Students have the opportunity for library science instruction on a weekly basis. However, the library is also a center for research, study time, and free reading for all students. It houses the children's school library materials, research materials and computer equipment. The library collection is expanded and updated annually. Donations to help with this project can be offered for birthday book gifts, memorials, and sharing of good used books.

Library etiquette includes the following:

- A spirit of quiet should exist in the library to encourage study and research.
- Food and drink are never permitted in the library.
- Books checked out must be returned on the assigned date. A fine is required for late books.
- Damaged books must be replaced.
- Books may not be removed from the library without permission. A bar-code system is in effect to sign out materials.

STUDENT PROGRESS AND EVALUATION

Assessment:

Various forms of assessment are used to evaluate student work including paper and pencil work, projects, informal observations, and cooperative learning situations.

Throughout the marking period formative assessments will be used evaluate progress and guide instruction. Summative assessments are used to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs and make a judgment of student competency.

Reporting System:

Throughout the school year student progress will be shared with parents through the progress report, grade report, standardized test results and parent conference(s).

Progress Report:

The Progress Report is issued for all major subjects at the midpoint of each trimester. It is to be signed by the parent and returned to the teacher. Please carefully review your child's progress. This record of your child's work is used to identify strengths, areas in need of support, and guide future instruction.

Grade Report:

The Grade Report is issued three times a year. Parent-teacher conferences are formally held in December at the time of the first grade report. Conferences may also be held at the request of the teacher or parent throughout the school year. Teacher teams meet to evaluate the educational growth of their students periodically and parent conferences are called to support this process.

Iowa Test of Basic Skills:

All schools in the Diocese of Harrisburg use the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) as a measure of student achievement. It is administered to students in Grades 3 through 8 in the fall of each year. It is very important that all students are in attendance during the testing period. Parent reports of the testing results are sent home individually and a general school report is given during the second trimester of the year.

Parent Conference:

A mandatory conference is scheduled at the end of the first trimester to review student progress. Notices are sent home in advance to assist with organizing a schedule for all families.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

After School Program:

This program is available on a daily basis following the school calendar. The only exceptions to this are any scheduled early dismissals and any weather related dismissals. The After School Program is available from 2:45 to 5:30 PM.

Athletic Association:

Student activities in sports are an extension of the school's program and are run through the Athletic Association of the parish. This association is a part of the Diocesan CYO organization that governs its members via a handbook of rules and requirements. It is expected that all students from the school who participate in the sports program demonstrate sportsmanship attitudes and maintain the proper etiquette and Christian discipline as representative of the school and parish. All students are encouraged to participate regardless of their skill level or experience.

- * Students serving in/out of school suspension may not participate in a practice session(s) or a game(s).

Seventh and eighth grade students also have the opportunity to participate in junior high level sports at Lancaster Catholic High School. This includes football, soccer, and field hockey.

Classroom Parties:

Classroom parties are held on occasion usually in conjunction with Catholic Schools Week activities and special holydays and holidays. Food and non-food treats may be brought in for student birthdays to share with homeroom classmates and teachers. All food snacks must comply with the Diocesan Wellness Policy and consider the special dietary restrictions of students in the class. Please clear all treats with the homeroom teacher to assure that it is acceptable for all students.

Field Trips:

Educational field trips are taken by each grade. Points of educational interest, cultural growth, and environmental projects are the focus of these trips. Homeroom parents are asked to help supervise the students on these trips. Notice for a class trip is sent home well in advance of the trip.

Parents/guardians are required to sign the field trip form giving permission for the trip and to complete the section agreeing to waive any claims for liability. In order for a student to participate in a field trip the forms must be filled in completely and returned to the teacher before the planned trip.

A fee may be requested from each student to cover the costs of entrance fees, food, etc. For most trips the school will use the OMPH parish bus. A transportation fee may be charged if there is a need to rent a bus.

Teachers will give specific directions as to what items the students will need and/or may bring with them on field trips.

National Junior Honor Society:

Students from grades seven and eight who maintain high academic standing, display good character and citizenship traits, and complete the required service hours may be eligible for membership in the *National Junior Honor Society*.

A team of teachers evaluates candidates before the spring installation. All students at the seventh and eighth grade level are given the requirements for admission in the fall of the school year.

School Choir:

The school choir program is comprised of students from grades 4 through 8. The choir meets each Wednesday during the special activity period and at times holds practices after school. Student participants must be willing to sing as the various opportunities are provided. (e.g. *Christmas Musical, Parent-Teacher functions, Spring Festival, various parish Sunday Masses, Graduation, and public service activities*)

School Band/Instrumental Music:

OMPH School has an instrumental instruction and band program which is sponsored by Lancaster Catholic High School. Teachers assigned by LCHS contract with families to provide the instruction. A tuition fee is charged for this service open to students from grades 4 through 8. Instruments are provided through a rental agency to families on a yearly basis. In the fall of each year those who are interested in participating may request the registration forms from the instrumental and/or band instructor.

Piano lessons are available to student in grades 2 through 8 during the school day. The instructor contracts directly with families to provide the lessons. A tuition fee is charged for this service. Information and registration forms are available through the school office.

SCHOOL SERVICE PROGRAMS

Service activities are carried on at all age levels in the school. Students are taught to reach beyond themselves and offer service to the school, parish, and community. Service projects are expected from all groups recognized by the school. Service requirements are found in many of the clubs and organizations of the school and for the families who participate in the school. Specific service hours are required for National Junior Honor Students and for Confirmation students.

Participation Policy:

Parents/guardians are expected to participate in the educational growth of their child(ren). This takes many forms: from the required parent-signature on all tests; to the assistance in supervision of students before school and at the lunch period; to the fund-raising projects and social events of the PTO; to the general volunteering of time and talent for the various projects, arts and craft work, teacher aide time, etc.

Our most special resource of the school is our parent volunteer team. Such assistance makes our school that special place to be, a place of learning and loving.

TRANSPORTATION

Cars (arrival and departure):

Safe and courteous driving is expected of every driver who enters the school grounds. Student drop off is permitted only in the second lane of the front parking lot. The first lane is fire lane/bus lane only. Parents bringing students to school after the opening bell must first park the car and then accompany the student to the Main Office to sign the late slip.

At the end of the school day students going home by car will be dismissed to the back parking lot. If you come unannounced to pick up your child, call from your car or stop in the office to tell us and we will make sure your child knows you are waiting in the back parking lot. Please do not wait for your children in the school lobby.

Directions for Dismissal:

1. Park behind the school facing the school building.
2. When staff members appear on the back parking lot **all** drivers must enter their cars.
3. Car pool children will exit from two (2) doorways and will walk to their cars.
4. When **all** children are in their cars, drivers will be dismissed in an orderly fashion when the staff member gives the go ahead and **no** sooner.

Preschool students follow the above directions. However, at the pick-up time these students will be dismissed at the back classroom door facing the back of the school parking lot.

Bicycles:

Bicycle transportation to and from school is not permitted due to safety reasons. With the increase of traffic on Church Avenue, it is no longer deemed safe to ride a bike to or from school.

Bus Route and Operating Policies:

Each school district provides the transportation requested by the school for those students attending. Policies on bus use, routes, etc. are determined by that school district. If any difficulty arises, you should first contact our school office for consultation. The next step would then be to contact the school district's transportation department manager to seek a solution.

Busing is a privilege provided to the non-public schools by the state legislative body with regulations as to what is provided and when it is provided. We are grateful for this service and hope that it will not be put in jeopardy by misuse.

The school is officially open at 7:30 each morning with supervision provided at this time.

Student Walking to School:

Students who walk to school should come directly to school. They must remain on the sidewalks at all times and cross only at designated cross walks with the posted crossing guard. Short cuts (*down alleys*) may not be taken.

A crossing guard is present at the Church and Pine intersection and at State and Pine intersection and must be used by students walking to school. Time for arrival is between 7:45 and 8:00 in the morning and 2:45 to 2:50 at the afternoon dismissal.

SUPPORT GROUPS OF THE SCHOOL

School Board:

The Our Mother of Perpetual Help School Board of Education is committed to the Mission of OMPH School and serves the Pastor and Principal on behalf of the school community as the Parish Pastoral Council serves the Pastor on behalf of the parish community. It is a consultative group of people who are committed to the school, Catholic education, and who are willing to work with the Pastor and Principal for the good of both the school and the parish.

Parent Teacher Organization:

The role of the OMPH PTO is to promote good will and cooperation between and among the parents, faculty, administration and parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Mother of Perpetual Help, and Saint James. The PTO directs and coordinates parental support to the school through assistance, social functions, and fundraisers. All parents are urged to become active members of this organization by attending meetings and supporting its efforts and activities throughout the year. Meetings are held bimonthly on the second Monday of a month at 7:00 PM in the Father Jackson Center.

Development Advisory Team:

The mission of the Development Advisory Team is to support Our Mother of Perpetual Help School by attracting the human and financial resources needed to secure a quality, Catholic education for the children of Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Mother of Perpetual Help and Saint James parishes. Maintaining quality education, establishing and enforcing sound business practices, and using effective public relations accomplish this. This organization works to create a long-range financial plan to ensure the future of the school. Public relations and marketing of the school are also included as a vital part of development. Members of the Development Advisory Team are appointed from the school families and/or interested parishioners.

Technology Team:

The purpose of this group is to provide computer access and use for all students, faculty and staff of the school. Working with the technology coordinator and technology teacher they provide technology advice, assist in the maintenance of all hardware and the implementation of the school's technology program.

Right to Amend

The Administration of Our Mother of Perpetual Help School reserves the right to amend this handbook when circumstances warrant such. Parents will be promptly notified in writing of any such amendment, which will simultaneously be promulgated in an announcement to all students.

Affirmation Statement

When parents register their child(ren) at Our Mother of Perpetual Help School, they are thereby agreeing to abide by, help, enforce and be governed by all of the school's rules and regulations. In order to confirm that the parents/guardians and students have read the revised handbook, please sign and date the attached affirmation and return it to the Main Office within one week of receiving this handbook. Thank you!