

VILLA MARIA ACADEMY HANDBOOK

(Revised 6/2011)

Cover designed by Kelsey Weibel

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School Year Office Hours:
Monday - Friday 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

*Villa Maria Academy is accredited by the
Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools
and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Education*

Attendance Reporting: Please call 814-838-2061, ext. 3500 by 8:45 a.m. to report your son/daughter's absence. Please state your child's name, homeroom, grade level, and the phone number where we can contact you. Please allow 24 hours for teachers and staff to respond to requests for homework.

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None of these policies and guidelines shall interfere with the right of school authorities to act swiftly and decisively in dealing with situations believed to be detrimental to the welfare of the student, the student population, or learning environment.

WELCOME!

You have chosen Villa Maria Academy and Villa Maria Academy has chosen you. You have chosen to be part of this Villa community because of our mission, our high standards, our caring community, and our reputation for excellence in academics, service, leadership, athletics. It is important for you, as a member of our community, to understand the expectations we have of you, your rights as a student of Villa Maria Academy, and your responsibilities toward Villa Maria Academy, its students, its staff and its alumni. In order to maintain a safe, respectful and effective learning environment for all, each member of the Villa community needs to commit to high standards of behavior. In addition, each student and parent must be aware of important policies that regulate our interactions as a coeducational, Catholic, college preparatory, secondary school. This handbook is a summary of the important information you need to know. After you and your parent(s)/guardian(s) read this handbook, you will sign a contract stating that you have read this handbook and that you agree to abide by the rules and policies of Villa Maria Academy. Together we can help you become your very best academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually, preparing you for the future.

VMA SCHOOL-WIDE BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

- Be Positive
- Be Polite
- Be Prompt
- Be Prepared
- Be Productive

These are five keys to success!

FOUNDATION DOCUMENTS

VMA MISSION STATEMENT

Villa Maria Academy is a Catholic secondary school established to further the mission of unity of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Through Villa Maria Academy's leadership, gospel-centered environment and commitment to academic excellence, we empower young people to recognize their God-given uniqueness and talents, to acquire knowledge and skills for success in a global society and to be leaders in creating a future of optimism, generosity and confidence.

VMA BELIEF STATEMENT

We believe that the fundamental strength and value of a Catholic education is the preparation of young men and women to live the gospel message, neighbor with neighbor, through Christian witness and service.

We believe that empowering students to identify and realize their personal goals – spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically – is essential for success in a changing global society.

VMA PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

Villa Maria Academy is a Catholic, private, coeducational, secondary school which upholds the value of the intrinsic dignity and worth of the individual. As Christian educators, we promote Gospel values to develop an awareness of self. We educate for the spiritual, intellectual and social growth of the total person in a nurturing learning community.

The Catholic character of the school fosters the spiritual and religious formation of the student. The Villa community seeks to teach, affirm and support a respect for life through love of God, self and others. We strive to form young people who are knowledgeable in their faith, will participate in a variety of faith experiences and will become committed to living the Gospel message.

We challenge students to value education as a lifelong endeavor, to acquire and to communicate knowledge, and to be prepared for an ever-changing world. Our extensive curriculum, designed to meet diverse academic abilities and supplemented by extracurricular enrichment, advances each student's skills and understanding. Our faculty and staff stimulate intellectual curiosity, encourage critical thinking and stress the value of self-discipline and responsibility.

Villa Maria Academy offers opportunities for intelligent, articulate leadership and discerning citizenship. We expect students to acknowledge the obligations of each individual to others, and to share the responsibility of strengthening the community in which they live. We prepare students in an environment which celebrates diversity and educates for peace, justice and service.

Because we believe that the major development of character and values is formed in the home, we encourage the active participation of our students' families to foster positive character growth. We extend our community to alumni and friends who enrich us by the variety of their contributions and inspire us by their commitment.

Villa Maria Academy will continue to sustain an atmosphere which will empower young people to recognize their God-given uniqueness and talents, to acquire knowledge and skills for success in a global society, and to engage the future with optimism, generosity and confidence.

VMA LIFE STATEMENT

Living in an age of extraordinary technological development means that students face a new range of moral problems; therefore, Villa Maria Academy seeks to teach, affirm and support the consistent ethic based on the underlying principle that human life is both sacred and social.

We believe that persons are made in the image and likeness of God; thus the individual possesses dignity and worth. Because we esteem human life as sacred from conception, we have a duty to preserve its sanctity and to protect and foster it.

We educate the total person whose physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual growth must be nurtured to help the student become aware of his/her value and dignity as a person. An attitude fostered out of concern and respect for self will generate a love for others and a responsibility for their well-being. We rely heavily upon the influence and support of families to form character and nurture the value of self and others.

We reaffirm Christian teaching by following the example of Mary and her Son, Jesus, who said “Yes” to life. The consistent ethic, then, is a moral vision inspiring all of Villa Maria Academy to undertake the intellectual, physical and spiritual education of young people into total persons able to decide confidently how to live morally in a technological society.

ACADEMICS

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (CLASS OF 2012)

<u>Credits</u>	<u>Courses</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Courses</u>
4.0	Theology	1.0	Health
4.0	English	1.25	Business and Technology
3.5	Social Studies	.25	Intro to Probability and
3.0	Mathematics		Statistics
3.0	Science	1.0	Fine Arts
1.0	Additional Math or Science	.5	Speech
2.0	Foreign Language or	3.0	Non-Core Courses
	Academic Support		Community Service – 25
1.0	Physical Education, Fitness		hours /year
	or Pool		

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (CLASS OF 2013, 2014 AND 2015)

<u>Credits</u>	<u>Courses</u>	<u>Credits</u>	<u>Courses</u>
4.0	Theology	2.0	Health and Physical
4.0	English		Education, Fitness or Pool
4.0	Social Studies	2.0	Fine Arts
4.25	Mathematics	4.0	Non-Core Courses
4.0	Science		Community Service - 25
2.0	Foreign Language		hours/year

GRADUATION CEREMONY POLICY

Participating in the graduation ceremony is an honor and privilege earned by our graduating seniors and accorded to students who have academically succeeded in fulfilling all requirements. If a senior fails more than two courses required for graduation, he/she may not participate in the graduation ceremony. Parents of seniors in this situation will be notified in advance of graduation time.

LEVELS OF ACADEMIC STUDY

VMA offers courses on four ability levels: Advanced Standing, Advanced Placement, Honors, and Academic. Criteria for placement in levels are based upon standardized testing, academic performance, and teacher recommendation. College credit for Advanced Placement course work is awarded nationally through standardized testing.

GRADES & CLASS RANK

Villa Maria Academy uses the following grading scale:

	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Grade Points</u>		
		AP/AS	Honors	Academic
A	(93 - 99)	6	5	4
B	(85 - 92)	5	4	3
C	(77 - 84)	4	3	2
D	(74 - 76)	1	1	1
F	(Below 74)	0	0	0

GRADING POLICY

Grades will be recorded as earned. If a student earns lower than 65%, a 65% will be recorded except in the final quarter of the class. In the final quarter of the class, the grade earned will be recorded. A failing grade of 0% will be given to a student for an assignment or test that is not completed or properly attempted, including make-ups. All

projects, exams, class work, etc. must be completed and turned in prior to final exams. No work will be accepted once exams have begun and a 0% will be recorded for missing assignments.

CLASS RANK

Class rank is computed by using the above grade point scale. All courses except those graded Pass/Fail are included in the student's class rank.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued quarterly: November, February, April, and June. Students will receive mid-quarter progress reports. Final grades are recorded on the student's permanent record.

HONOR ROLL

Honor Roll denotes academic achievement and is computed quarterly using the following criteria:

- First Honors: All grades of 90% or above
- Second Honors: All grades 85% or above

SERVICE REQUIREMENT

Recognizing the value of Christian service, its essential role in living the Gospel, and the connection between one's faith and Christian service, the Theology department requires service hours as an integral part of its curriculum. Each student will be required to complete 25 hours of volunteer service during each year of attendance at Villa Maria Academy. For specific information, consult the service hour policy available from the Theology Department.

GRADUATION PROJECT

The Graduation Project is a career or service-based, interdisciplinary, and product-based program of independent study. It is a prestigious elective program with incentives awarded for successful completion of the project.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY:

ATHLETIC AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCES

Academics is the most important aspect for any student-athlete at Villa Maria. Students will have their grades monitored every two weeks shortly after the start of school. Eligibility check dates will be listed in the student handbook. Any student-athlete failing two or more classes on a Wednesday when the grades are monitored has five days to raise the deficient grades. If those grade(s) are not raised by the following Monday, the student is ineligible for game competition for one week. The process would then repeat itself the following Monday. Specific questions can be answered by the athletic department. Students involved in school productions and sports day cheerleading and dance will follow the same procedure.

NCAA REGULATIONS

To be eligible to participate as a college freshman athlete at any NCAA Division I or II School, the student must successfully complete specific high school courses and achieve certain scores on the college entrance tests, SAT or ACT. All SAT or ACT test scores must be reported directly from the testing agency to the clearinghouse. The clearinghouse will not take test scores reported on a high school transcript. When registering for the test, students must select the clearinghouse (code 9999) as a score recipient. For more information visit the NCAA website:
(http://eligibilitycenter.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.html)

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Parents, students and counselors work together to ensure the success of each student. Parents are encouraged to monitor academic progress using NetClassroom. Guidance counselors will meet with students experiencing difficulty in classes and have failing grades at the end of the quarter. Students with multiple failures in a quarter will be required to sign an academic contract. Any student who fails three or more classes at the end of any school year is subject to dismissal from Villa Maria Academy.

LIBRARY

The school library offers many resources to support student research, enhance VMA's curriculum, and encourage reading for pleasure. In addition to print and AV materials,

the library provides computer technology, online database subscriptions, and other resources. The library catalog is a web-based system that allows patrons to locate library resources on both the Villa and Prep campuses from any computer with an Internet connection. Library and information management skills are integrated into courses throughout the curriculum. Patrons may use the library before, during, and after school hours-the librarian is available from 7:30AM until 4PM to assist students. Students may also request a pass to use the library during study halls and the activity period. The library is a place for reading, research, and study, so quiet respect for others is observed there at all times.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

Tutoring Services supplement the instruction provided in the classroom. Tutoring is provided by the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit #5 with state funding through the ACT 89 Program, tutoring sessions in mathematics or english are available to all VMA students before or after school or during an unscheduled study period. Parental permission is required.

PLAGIARISM/CHEATING ON TESTS POLICY

Students at VMA are expected to maintain responsible and ethical conduct in regard to all academic work. In respect to the pursuit of new knowledge, students at VMA are expected to live by moral principles of education. Therefore, students should not engage in any form of falsification of thoughts, words and ideas.

Plagiarism Includes the Following Violations:

- Copying directly from a copyrighted source without attributing/identifying the source.
- Presenting any material from another source, including Internet sources, as one's own.
- Copying major idea(s) from a copyrighted source without attributing/identifying the source.

Cheating Includes the Following Violations:

- Unauthorized possession of a test (original, copy or otherwise)
- Using a "cheat sheet" of any kind.
- Seeking assistance, in any form, from another student under test conditions to obtain an answer.

If a student is caught plagiarizing/cheating, the following procedures will be administered:

- First Offense: Teacher will sign and date contract under “first offense.” Student will receive a zero for the assignment. A conference will be held with student, assistant principal, teacher, and parent(s) /guardian(s).
- Second Offense: Teacher will sign and date contract under “second offense.” Student will receive a zero for the assignment. A conference will be held with student, assistant principal, administrator, teacher, parent(s)/guardian, and student.
- Third Offense: Teacher will sign and date contract under “third offense.” Student will receive a zero for the assignment. A conference will be held with the principal, teacher, parent(s)/guardian, and the student to determine the student’s future success at Villa Maria Academy. Expulsion for the third offense is a viable option.

The teacher should obtain the plagiarism contract from the main office file cabinet. Teacher should fill in student name, attach the offending assignment and give to the assistant principal. The assistant principal will arrange the conference. All parties involved in the incident will receive a zero for the assignment or test.

CHEATING ON HOMEWORK

Cheating on homework includes the following violations:

- Copying another student’s work and/or giving work to another student to copy on a subjective homework assignment. Homework is usually done individually. To avoid confusion, the teacher will notify the students if the work is “group work” so that students may know when they may consult other students for advice on completing assignments.
- A teacher witnesses a student copying work from another student.

For both offenses above, a zero will be given for the assignment and the teacher must notify the assistant principal within two days of grading the paper. All parties involved in the incident will receive a zero for the assignment.

TECHNOLOGY USAGE

Computer Usage

- To use the school's computers, the student must have a signed Diocesan and VMA Computer Contract on file in the Main Office.
- Students are expected to use only the preinstalled software and some additional authorized software. The use of any additional copyrighted files or software must be approved by the Technology Office.
- Email and Internet access are a privilege and are monitored to ensure they are not abused. Any attempt to circumvent or bypass these filters (adjusting settings, using proxy web sites or alternative web addresses to gain access to blocked sites) is a major offense.
- USB Drives, or thumb drives, are only to be used for the backup and storage of personal files. Students are strongly encouraged to use the USB drives and the network shares to back up their data regularly.
- Each student is assigned a user ID and a password in order to access the school network. All students have access to their files throughout the school on the VMA server.
- Students must logoff the school network completely when they are done using a computer; students are responsible for any activity that occurs under their user ID.
- Do not attempt to log in as anyone else. Students are not to share their passwords and may change their passwords at any time. Notify the Technology Coordinator if you suspect passwords are being abused.
- The school has the right to examine the contents of the file server, Tablet PCs and monitor computer activity to maintain system integrity and ensure responsible use of the system.
- Water bottles and food are not permitted in rooms 7, 14, 106 and the library.
- Each student is allotted 300 copies or printouts per semester. The copying/printing machines will not print any pages above that limit unless a student has paid to add more copies. The fee is \$.5 per page and more copies/printouts can be added at any time in the Technology Office.

Internet Usage

The following are prohibited on any personal websites or blogs:

- Pictures, photos or drawings of Villa's name or logo, including clothing.
- Pictures, photos, drawings or names of Villa employees or students.
- Threats or disparaging remarks about Villa, its employees or its students.
- Instances of cyber bullying or sexual harassment or any behavior that destroys the principles of courtesy, cooperation and respect.

The consequences for the above will be handled on an individual basis.

Tablet-PC Usage

Villa Maria Academy is not responsible for anything lost or stolen on or off school property. You assume the full replacement cost of any missing item(s).

- All rules that apply to desktop PCs apply to Tablet PCs.
- Do not leave your Tablet PC unattended.
- Do not loan your Tablet PC or any accessories (battery, charger or pen) to anyone.
- Keep your Tablet PC in the case that has been provided for you when not in use. No other cases are acceptable.

Fines

Loss of computer privileges for the day plus:

Minor Offense – Unattended/Lost Tablet, no backpack, misuse of Email, loaning out power supply or battery.

Major Offense – Illegal possession of music, movies, videos, video games, pornographic material, attempts to bypass web filter/firewall, using another student’s account, damage to the tablet.

	<u>1st Offense</u>	<u>2nd Offense</u>	<u>3rd Offense</u>	<u>4th Offense</u>
<u>Minor Offense</u>	\$5	\$10, PN, ASD	\$15, PN, 2ASD	\$25, SD, PN
<u>Major Offense</u>	\$25, PN	\$50, PN, SD	\$125, PN, SD **	

PN – Parent Notification

SD – Saturday Detention

ASD – ½ hour after school detention

**Possible Dismissal

For a complete list of policy and guidelines for Tablet PC use, refer to the Tablet PC Student Agreement distributed with the Tablet PCs.

Personal Laptop Usage

- Seniors are permitted to use a personal laptop and must use the school provided Tablet PC.
- Students must notify the appropriate Administrator in order to use a personal laptop during the school day. The Diocesan and VMA Computer Usage Contracts signed by the parent(s)/guardians(s) and the student apply to the use of the personal laptop while connected to the Villa network. The student must also sign a VMA Laptop Usage Contract.

- The student assumes all responsibility regarding events leading to and including theft of or damage to the laptop. The parent(s)/guardian(s) and student agree not to hold the school liable for loss or damage to the laptop or any loss of data.
- The student will be permitted to use the laptop at the discretion of the teacher and may not use it during test situations. Failure to follow this procedure will result in the suspension of laptop privileges.
- The Technology Coordinator and Administration reserve the right to examine personal laptops at their discretion should the need arise.

SCHEDULING

In February, students conference with teachers, guidance counselors and parent(s)/guardian(s) to select their courses for the coming academic year. Except in extraordinary circumstances, schedules may not be changed. Questions or concerns about student schedules should be directed to the appropriate guidance counselor.

STUDENT RECORDS

Student records will only be released to the parent or guardian who has full or shared custody and/or is responsible for tuition and all financial obligations have been met.

WORK SCHEDULES

VMA recognizes that attention to academics requires alertness during class time with adequate quality time for assignments, and thus, recommends that students limit their work schedules to a maximum of 15 hours per week during the school year.

GUIDANCE SERVICES

The Villa Maria Academy Guidance Department assists students in their educational, vocational and personal development and serves as a liaison between students, parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers, school Administrators and support staff to facilitate the success of each student.

COLLEGE AND CAREER PLANNING

The Guidance Resource Area contains a variety of college, career and financial aid information including college catalogs and view books, applications, DVDs, CDs, videos and pamphlets. Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students are encouraged to peruse the

resources available. Admissions representatives from various colleges visit to provide information about their schools. Seniors and juniors are notified in advance of the visits so they can sign up to attend. Students must have permission from the guidance counselor and classroom teacher in order to miss a class. The Guidance Department offers Parent Information Nights each fall, a Financial Aid Information Night in January, and co-sponsors a College Fair each spring.

TESTING PROGRAMS (SAT/ACT School Code number: 391-320)

- EXPLORE – Freshmen take this assessment to help identify strengths and weaknesses early in high school and help them explore a broad range of options for their future. EXPLORE prepares students not only for their high school coursework, but for their post-high school choices as well. EXPLORE provides a benchmark score for students to gauge their progress in becoming college ready. It marks an important beginning for a student’s future academic and career success.
- PLAN – Sophomores take the PLAN test which measures basic academic development and helps identify career interests. PLAN also provides benchmark scores indicating if a student is on track for success in college level courses.
- PSAT – Administered to all juniors in October. The skills tested on the PSAT/NMSQT are the skills needed in college. The PSAT compares academic skills with those of other college-bound students.
- SAT and ACT – Registration materials are in the Guidance Resource area. Students are advised to take both the SAT and ACT for college admissions. Students may register online at www.collegeboard.com or www.act.org. It is essential to put the school code (391-320) on the registration form. Score reports are sent to students and to the Guidance Office.
- Villa is an ACT test site for the October, February and June tests. Villa’s test site code is 232830.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM

The Advanced Placement Program provides students an opportunity to take college-level courses while still in high school and develop writing skills, problem-solving techniques, and study habits that help prepare them for success in college. Students have the option of taking AP exams in May to earn college credit. Many colleges in the U.S. grant students credit or placement based on AP exam scores. The Guidance Department coordinates the AP program.

TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts record the final grades from each class, attendance record, and standardized test scores. Students must sign a transcript release form authorizing the school to send out their transcript. Official transcripts are sent to colleges and scholarship organizations directly from the Guidance Office and cannot be released to students or parents. However, if a student needs a copy of a transcript for a college visit or interview, he/she can request an unofficial copy.

PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC COUNSELING

Guidance counselors meet with students to plan a schedule for the next year that meets the students' needs and goals. They counsel students relative to educational objectives with personal and social adjustment. Counselors monitor academic progress and meet with students. Counselors conduct conferences with parent(s)/guardian(s) and teachers when necessary. If students or parent(s)/guardian(s) have personal, social or academic concerns, they are encouraged to contact the counselor in the Guidance Office.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP)

The Student Assistance Program (SAP) helps students through identification, intervention, referral and support. The SAP team is composed of faculty, guidance counselors, school nurse, Administrators and a Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Counselor who have completed SAP training. The SAP team meets on a weekly basis.

The purpose of the Student Assistance Program is to identify issues including alcohol, drugs, family problems, eating disorders, depression and mental health issues which pose a barrier to a student's learning and academic success. SAP helps students and their families obtain a professional assessment for treatment on a confidential basis. Parent involvement is the key to successful resolution of the problem. Student Assistance Program referrals can be made by contacting one of the counselors in the Guidance Office.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE SERVICES

Counselors provide an evening meeting in the fall with parents of each grade level. Scheduling Information Night is held in January. Counselors are available during Open House and the annual parent(s)/guardian(s) conference sessions. Counselors help facilitate programs that provide students with a variety of leadership and academic opportunities such as the Pennsylvania Governor's School, Minority College

Experience/Women in Science and Engineering program and Pennsylvania Free Enterprise Program.

ADDITIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

CAFETERIA

The cafeteria service offers a variety of hot and cold breakfasts, lunches and drinks and snacks. A government subsidized program will be offered. Students may also bring their own lunches. Outside food deliveries are not permitted.

Students ID number will allow the student to access the meal account. Parents can send cash or check to be added to the student account. This account acts as a debit account that deducts monies from the account each time student purchases food. If the account has a 0 or negative balance, the student will not be permitted to charge more than one additional meal.

All school rules apply in the cafeteria area. In addition, students are expected to clean their table and the area around it before leaving the cafeteria. Students are to return trays to the tray area. Students must sign out of the cafeteria during lunch.

CAMPUS MINISTRY

The Campus Ministry program at Villa Maria Academy, under the leadership of the Student Board and with the volunteer help of interested students, upholds the faith life and community spirit of our school. The program is created to foster our shared faith in a God of love and model right relationships through liturgy experiences, a class level retreat day, service within and beyond the Villa community and a number of community-building and faith sharing experiences.

CLUB/ATHLETIC/ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION & FEES

High school can be greatly enhanced by co-curricular activities. VMA offers 13 varsity sports that are available to all students. To help defray the cost of hosting athletic programs, students must pay a participation fee for all sports. Fees are \$150 for one sport, \$200 for two sports and \$225 for three or more sports. These fees are due one week after the respective tryout dates for the fall, winter and spring seasons. Students will not be able to participate in any activity of that sport until the participation fee is paid in full or other arrangements have been made with the athletic office.

ELEVATOR USAGE

Students with a medical excuse and permission from an Administrator may use the elevator. A \$5 deposit, refundable at return, is required for the elevator key. If key is not returned, a fee will be imposed for replacement and re-keying costs. The medical excuse must be updated monthly. The student who is issued the key may take only one student to assist him/her on the elevator.

HEALTH SERVICES & SCREENINGS

Students must present a pass from a teacher for admittance to the Health Room. A student should spend no more than 20 minutes in the Health Room. If a student is too ill to return to class, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by school personnel. Students are not to call their parent(s)/guardian(s) directly.

Health screenings for vision, height and weight are mandated by law. Physical examinations and hearing tests are required by PA law for 11th grade students. Students who do not send a private physician's physical examination report to the school nurse by the end of the first week of school are scheduled for exam with the school physician.

MEDICATION REGULATIONS

Students may not carry medication during school hours. Students required to take daily medication must file a "Medication Authorization" form with the school nurse. The form must be signed by the prescribing physician and the parent(s)/guardian(s). The school nurse or staff nurse will dispense the medication from the Health Room. Note: It is the student's responsibility to report to the Health Room at the prescribed time for his/her medication.

- Prescription medication must be brought to the Health Room or Main Office in a properly labeled prescription container with the student's name, doctor's name,

medication name, dosage and time to be given. (Your pharmacy can provide a separate school container.)

- Non-prescription medication given on an “as needed” basis can be given for up to 14 doses with a parent(s)/guardian(s)-only signed authorization form. If over 14 doses may be needed, a physician’s authorization and signature are also required. Non-prescription medication must be brought to the Health Room in original container.

The school may not dispense any type of medication without a signed Medication Authorization form on file in the Health Room. Forms are available in the Main Office and Health Room.

ATHLETIC PHYSICALS

A student who wishes to participate in sports at VMA must have the two PIAA physical forms filled out and signed by a physician prior to the first day of practice and/or tryouts. The signed forms must either be turned in to the head coach or the Villa athletic office in advance of the workout. Forms are mailed prior to the beginning of each school year and can also be picked up in the Villa athletic office or accessed on the PIAA website at www.piaa.org

LOST & FOUND

The Lost & Found area is located in the Campus Ministry Room. Anyone who finds an article on school property and who is unable to locate the owner should take the article to Lost & Found. See the assistant principal for lost textbooks.

RETREATS

The retreat experience at Villa Maria Academy is a non-denominational experience of prayer, reflection and Christian community. Students are expected to participate in the retreat which is scheduled on a school day.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Consistent student attendance is crucial for a student to gain the maximum benefits from the opportunities offered each day in each class. Many of these learning opportunities cannot be duplicated at a later time. Absences and tardies will be recorded on the student's permanent record.

ABSENCES: EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED

An excused absence is one that results from illness, family emergency, or other extenuating circumstances deemed excusable by the school administration.

Reporting Absence

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are required to call the school Attendance Line (814-838-2061, ext. 3500) if the student will not be attending school that day. If the parent(s)/guardian(s) are not in contact with the school prior to 9:00 a.m., the attendance officer will call the home to report the absence.

Verifying Absence With Written Excuse

A written excuse for the absence, signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s), must be presented to the homeroom teacher on the day the student returns to school. This is in accordance with Pennsylvania state law. Students may not sign their own excuse regardless of age. All excuses are filed in the student's attendance file. Any absence for which a written excuse is not filed within one week will result in an unexcused absence.

Activity/Athletic Participation

A student who does not attend school and receive credit for a full day's attendance will not be permitted to participate in any school-sponsored events or practices on that day, unless a physician's note indicating approval is submitted.

Written Notification of Absences of 8 and 12 Days

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by letter when a student has accumulated absences of 8 and 12 days. An attendance contract will be required when a student reaches 12 days of absence not including medical excuses.

Absences Exceeding 12 or More Days

A student who is absent 12 days or more in a given school year will be placed on an attendance contract. The student will serve a Saturday detention for **each** additional day absent without a doctor's excuse. If the number of days absent reaches 18, the student and parent must have a conference with the principal. At this meeting, it will be determined if the student may stay at Villa Maria Academy.

Long-Term/Extended Illness

A long-term illness is any illness that equals or exceeds ten consecutive school days. In order to have the exception invoked, a certification form (available in the Main Office) must be completed by the attending physician and accompanied by a signed doctor's note or form indicating the diagnosis and/or type of illness.

Attendance/Disciplinary Appeal Procedures

Extenuating circumstances may necessitate the appeal of the attendance/ disciplinary policy. In such cases, the parent(s)/guardian(s) should contact the administration in writing. The written appeal should state the specific dates of absence/circumstances, reason for appeal, and the desired action to be taken. A Board of Appeal, consisting of two teachers and two Administrators, shall be convened. The parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student must be present for the appeal. A minimum of three votes must be obtained to grant the appeal. Written notice of the appeal outcome will be sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s) within ten working days of the appeal.

Illegal School Absence

Skipping school is an illegal and unexcused absence. Skipping school includes missing the whole day or part of a day illegally, including leaving the school grounds during the school day. Consequences of Illegal School Absence are:

- All of the student's work, missed as a result of skipping school, will not be permitted to be made up and will be recorded as a grade of zero.
- Six hours of Saturday Detention.
- A Disciplinary Contract will be assigned.

Consequences of Illegal Class Absence

All student work, missed as a result of skipping class, will not be allowed to be made up and will be recorded as a grade of zero. Three after school detentions will be assigned for each class skipped. Repeated occurrences could result in a Disciplinary Contract. If a student is more than ten minutes late to class or leaves class early without a pass, a class skip will be invoked.

Dismissal for Illness

If a student must leave school during the school day because of illness, he/she is to report to the nurse's office. The parent(s)/guardian(s) must be contacted by a school official prior to the student being dismissed and must arrange for transportation for the student.

Procedure for Leaving School for an Appointment

If doctor or professional appointments need to be scheduled during school hours, a permission note which includes time of dismissal, estimated time of return and the doctor's name must be submitted to the Main Office prior to the appointment. Please schedule appointments at a time that is least disruptive to the academic day, i.e. in the early morning, over the lunch hour, or during an activity period. Verification from the doctor must be presented to the Main Office upon return that day or the following day. Failure to provide a doctor's verification will result in the student being marked absent.

School Sign-In & Sign-Out

When students leave for and/or return during the day from appointments or out-of-school activities, they are required to report to the Main Office to sign-out when leaving and to sign-in when returning. Failure to follow this procedure will result in detention. Parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign all school forms and excuses. Students 18 and over are not permitted to sign for themselves.

Absence Recording For Professional Appointments

When a student arrives after the normal starting time due to a professional appointment, if the student:

- Arrives before 10:30 a.m. and presents a doctor's verification, no absence is recorded.
- Arrives before 10:30 a.m. but does not present a doctor's verification, a half-day's absence is recorded.
- Arrives after 10:30 a.m., but before Noon, a half-day's absence is recorded.
- Arrives after Noon, one full day's absence is recorded.

Absence Recording for Leaving Prior to Dismissal

If a student leaves prior to normal dismissal time for any legitimate reason, an absence will be recorded as follows:

- Leaves after 1:30 p.m. and does not return, no absence is recorded if a doctor's verification is brought in the next morning.
- Leaves after Noon, but prior to 1:30 p.m. and does not return, a half-day's absence is recorded.

- Leaves prior to 11:30 and does not return, one full day's absence is recorded.
- Leaves and returns any time during the day for up to two hours, no absence is recorded if a doctor's verification is brought in upon return.
- Leaves for more than two but less than four hours, a half-day's absence is recorded.
- Leaves for more than four hours and returns any time during the day, one full day's absence is recorded.

Early Dismissal Schedule Absence Recording/Leaving Prior to Dismissal

On a early dismissal day, if the student leaves before 10:15 a.m., a half-day's absence is recorded. If the student leaves after 10:15 a.m., no absence is recorded if a doctor's verification is brought in the next morning.

COLLEGE VISITS

Students are encouraged to schedule college visits on days when Villa Maria Academy is not in session. No absence will be recorded for up to three visits in the senior year and one in the junior year on school days if the student obtains written verification of the visit from the college admissions counselor. This verification must be accompanied by a parent note. Additional college visit days will be treated as absent days and the verification policy for excused absences applies. It is the student's obligation to make up work missed.

FIELD TRIPS

A school permission form, signed by a parent(s)/guardian(s), is required for student participation in field trips. This form states the date, place and manner of transportation to be used. For overnight field trips, the permission form must be notarized. Failure to present a permission form by the established deadline means the student may not participate in the field trip. The teacher will provide an alternative assignment to be completed at school during the time of the field trip. Approval for field trips by telephone or email is not acceptable. The only form accepted is the school permission form. Student behavior on field trips must follow all school rules.

FUNERALS

Generally class officers may attend the funeral of members of the immediate family of classmates. Official school permission forms are required. Other students wishing to attend a funeral must present a written excuse from parent(s)/guardian(s) including the time of departure and return to school.

ATHLETIC GAMES/PLAY-OFFS/CHAMPIONSHIPS

Villa Maria Academy Administration and Faculty support and encourage student attendance at all athletic events whenever possible. Attendance at special athletic games /play-offs /championship games that are scheduled during school hours requires:

- Written permission from parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Personal transportation to and from the game/play-off/championship game(s).
- Student will notify, in person or by note, all teachers whose class will be missed.
- Student and parent(s)/guardian(s) understand that the student is marked absent for this attendance in accord with regular attendance regulations.
- It is the student's obligation to make up work missed.

Students will be penalized for their absence if the above requirements are not met.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS & DELAYS

Villa Maria Academy does not follow any public school district closing announcements and operates independently from any other school or school district. In the event of severe weather, parents and students should listen to the local radio and TV stations for news of closings or delayed starts. An announcement stating, "Villa Maria Academy is closed (or delayed)," will be made either the night before closing or by 6:30 a.m. on the day of the closing/delay. VMA remains open unless the above is stated. If possible, a parent broadcast will be issued by an Administrator.

If the school calls a two-hour delay, students may report at the regular time if necessary. Supervision will be provided until the delayed class schedule begins. If a school district that provides bussing calls a two-hour delay and Villa does not, students in that district who ride the bus may wait for the bus and will not be marked tardy. Parents should use their own discretion as to students attending school in inclement weather.

VACATIONS

Vacations during the school year are disruptive to the student's learning process and VMA discourages vacations during the academic year. During any extended absences due to vacations, the following shall apply:

Written Excuse Prior to Vacation

A written request for excusal from school by the parent(s)/guardian(s) must be submitted to the appropriate Administrator. This request should be submitted at least one week before the vacation begins. Excused absences due to vacation shall be limited to two separate occasions and a maximum of five total vacation days absent during the school year. All days in excess shall be considered unexcused absences.

Vacation Make-Up Work Policy

All class assignments given during any vacation day absence are the student's responsibility to ascertain. Class teacher shall determine assignment due dates. A paper or long-term assignment due during the time of the vacation must be submitted prior to the vacation. Incomplete assignments will be handled as per the grading policy. All tests, quizzes, and labs must be made up within one week of the student's return. It is the student's responsibility to arrange for all work to be completed prior to and during a vacation and return to school prepared to continue with class work as if no absences occurred. The student must notify teachers at least two class periods before departure.

REQUESTS FOR ASSIGNMENTS DUE TO ILLNESS

When a student is absent for several days due to illness, the parent(s)/ guardian(s) must contact the school at least 24 hours in advance to arrange to pick up homework assignments or other materials from the Main Office.

MAKE-UP WORK & TESTS

As a rule, all missed tests and quizzes are to be made up before or after school hours. Students are responsible for contacting their teacher for make-up work. Work missed in class on the day of the absence must be made up within one week. If the student is absent on the due date of a major assignment, the paper or project must be delivered to the school that day or it will be considered late.

TARDINESS

Tardiness from School

A student is deemed tardy if he/she is not in homeroom prior to 8:07 a.m. Students who are tardy must report to the attendance office for an admit slip. This policy applies to general tardiness whether accompanied by a parental excuse or not.

Absences For School Tardiness Are Recorded As Follows:

- Arrives prior to 8:30 a.m. – tardy
- Arrives after 8:30 a.m. but before 11:30 – one half-day's absence
- Arrives after 11:30 – one full day's absence.

Consequences For School Tardiness Are As Follows:

- Five tardies – Parent Letter

- Eight tardies – Attendance Contract
- Nine tardies – Contract takes effect; Special/Saturday Detention.

A student shall not be deemed tardy if special circumstances, determined by the appropriate Administrator, shall pertain.

Tardiness from Classroom

Student is allowed a maximum of three times late to class, whether semester, quarter or year long class. On the fourth and subsequent tardies, student is assigned detention. If a student has more than eight tardies to a class, that student will be placed on a tardy contract that carries a consequence of a Saturday detention.

CODE OF CONDUCT

VMA places a priority on the total growth of the person in community. This growth in community happens in an atmosphere where genuine concern for others is a primary value, manifested in the qualities of courtesy, cooperation and respect. Students are responsible for their choices and for their actions. Students are expected to cooperate with a reasonable request from an adult.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Enrollment at Villa Maria Academy indicates the student’s willingness to follow school policies and regulations. Thus, the student agrees to:

- Represent VMA and its values appropriately at all times.
- Be knowledgeable of school policies/regulations and conduct him/herself in accordance with them at all times.
- Contribute to the safety, health and good welfare of the school community.
- Protect and preserve school property and facilities.
- Exercise appropriate care of school equipment and facilities.
- Dress and groom in conformity with school dress code.
- Challenge oneself to membership in the VMA community as a lifelong learner.
- Respect self and all others in a Christian spirit of inclusion, tolerance and love.
- Know what is going on in school, especially concerning student activities and meetings. An informed student is an empowered student.

RESPONSIBILITY OPTIONS AND PROCEDURES

OPTION 1

Initiated by a teacher or administrator when a student first behaves in a way that violates any school/classroom rule.

Option Process:

- One-to-one questioning of the student regarding the student's behavior. The student has the opportunity to stop the inappropriate behavior immediately and is reminded that a choice to continue the inappropriate behavior is a choice for Option 2.
- If the student chooses to continue the inappropriate behavior, the student is informed that he/she has chosen Option 2.

OPTION 2

Implemented if a student chooses to continue any inappropriate behavior after Option 1.

Option Process:

- The student is secluded at a desk in a separate area of the classroom and may not interact with classmates or participate in the class in any way. The student remains in Option 2 until he/she is able to comply with the rules and return to routine activity without incident or interruption. At the teacher's discretion, compliance can be verbal or written. Students who chose to remain in Option 2 during an entire class period must complete an Option Referral/Plan Form outlining their proposed change of behavior before the next class period.
- Students who remain in Option 2 until the end of the period and who return the next day without a written plan are choosing Option 3.
- Students who continue to behave inappropriately in the same class period where they have already chosen Option 2 are choosing Option 3.
- If a student has chosen Option 2 and another student in the same class also chooses inappropriate behavior, then the second student has chosen to go immediately to Option 3.

IMMEDIATE OPTION 2

- Eating in class.

Students who choose Option 2 in a lab or testing situation forfeit the right to complete the lab or test if they remain in Option 2 for the majority of the class. Students may hand in homework/long-range assignments for credit.

OPTION 3

Utilized when a student chooses to continue or escalate his/her inappropriate behavior after choosing Option 2.

Option Process:

- The student reports to the school's Option Room (near Campus Ministry), where he/she has the opportunity to evaluate their poor choices. They will work with the teacher in Option 3 to complete a behavior packet and to develop an acceptable plan for behavior change with a teacher or administrator. The student must stay in the Option Room for the remainder of the class period.
- If the student completes the plan before the end of the class period, he/she may only work on assignments for the class affected by the behavior choice.
- The student returns to the Option Room the next time he/she is scheduled for the missed class, either to complete his/her plan (if not completed previously) or pick up the plan for review by the classroom teacher.
- Once the classroom teacher approves the plan, the student returns to class as usual.

Students forfeit the right to make up any missed work, including tests, quizzes and labs, during the time they are in the Option Room and are responsible for getting all the information they missed in class.

Students who choose Option 3 but who either a) refuse to leave the classroom, b) do not report to the Option Room immediately, or c) fail to write an acceptable plan by the end of the second class period are choosing Option 4.

IMMEDIATE OPTION 3

Applied in those instances where a student's behavior is serious enough to warrant immediate removal from a classroom or other area of the school. Listed below are some but not all of the possible behaviors which may result in an immediate Option 3. In all such cases, it is the SEVERITY of the behavior that determines its excess and thus, the need for an immediate Option 3. Students may be given the opportunity to stop the behavior by the teacher or administrator involved, in which case the normal Option Process is followed.

- Intentional deception
- Disruptive vulgarity
- Harrassment/Bullying

- Extreme and/or destructive emotional outbursts
- Violation of any safety rules
- Food fights in the VMA cafeteria
- Vandalism
- Any behavior that destroys the principles of courtesy, cooperation, and respect

Villa Maria Academy regards a choice for Option 3 as a clear indication of the student's lack of responsibility for the Code of Conduct, which raises the question of the student's desire to be a Villa student. A student who chooses Option 3 more than once must address his/her lack of responsibility as part of the Option Plan.

If a student chooses Option 3 a SECOND TIME:

- The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) receive a phone call to inform them of the student's behavior choices.
- The student's guidance counselor is informed and speaks to the student regarding his/her choices.

If a student chooses Option 3 a THIRD TIME:

- A conference is scheduled with the student, his/her parents, and the school's guidance counselor, principal, and Option Process Coordinator, to discuss the student's behavior patterns.
- At the end of the conference, the student will sign a behavior contract indicating his/her intention to change the pattern of behavior choices. At that time, the student also makes arrangements to attend a seminar, to review the principles of the VMA Code of Conduct and strategize specific ways to improve his/her behavior (\$10 cost for the seminar).

If a student chooses an additional Option 3 after signing an Option 3 contract, he/she may be dismissed from Villa Maria Academy at the discretion of the administration.

OPTION 4

Implemented if a student chooses not to write a plan for reinstatement into the classroom after choosing Option 3 and spending two full class periods in the Option Room, or when Option 3 is ineffective in helping the student choose more appropriate behavior.

Option Process:

- The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified of the student's choice for Option 4.
- The student must return to the next school day with his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) and a written Option Referral/Plan Form.

- The completed plan must be signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) and submitted to the Administration at a conference before the student is permitted to return to classes.
- Once the plan is accepted, it serves as a contract between the school and the student for changing his/her inappropriate behavior.

If a student chooses an additional Option 4 after signing an Option 4 contract, he/she may be dismissed from Villa Maria Academy at the discretion of the administration.

Students who choose Option 4 forfeit the right to make up any assignments missed in the class where the incident occurred. This does not apply to work previously assigned and due the day of the option, such as a research paper; these assignments are due immediately. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with his/her teachers regarding assignments missed in other classes. Those assignments must be made up within one week of the day of the option. If an exam is missed because of the option, it must be made up within one week at a time determined by the teacher. Assignments or exams not made up within one week will receive a grade of zero.

IMMEDIATE OPTION 4

Enforced in those instances where a student's behavior is serious enough to warrant immediate removal from the school premises. Listed below are some but not all of the possible behaviors which may result in an immediate Option 4.

- Physical violence
- Repeated harassment, bullying
- Possession of a weapon or dangerous instrument including matches or lighters
- Extreme vandalism of school property (contract will include restitution and repair)
- Theft (contract will include restitution)
- Refusal to leave a classroom or failure to report to the Option Room after choosing Option 3
- Threats and/or verbal and/or physical abuse that could endanger/harm a person
- Any offense the Administration deems a serious violation of VMA philosophy

ADDITIONAL DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

After School Detention

After school detention is assigned to students who skip class or are excessively tardy to class. Detention is 30 minutes (3:00-3:30 p.m.). The citation for the infraction also serves as the student's notice of detention. Students are reminded of their detention assignments during daily announcements. A student may request a reschedule for detention once per quarter. Work schedules, sports practices and club meetings are not

valid reasons for requesting a rescheduling. Failure to attend after school detention will result in a Saturday detention.

Saturday Detention

Saturday detention is scheduled in three-hour blocks and will be supervised by a staff member. The student shall pay a \$20 fine for each three-hour detention to cover the cost of the staff member's salary. Parent(s)/ guardian(s) is notified by letter prior to the scheduled detention. If a student does not report for detention, the student is assigned an additional detention. Two or more skipped detentions are evidence of a student's inability to comply with basic school regulations and will result in a disciplinary contract and ultimately in suspension or dismissal.

Disciplinary Contract

A disciplinary contract may be written if a student repeatedly violates VMA rules and regulations. This contract is to be signed by the student, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Administrator in charge of discipline. Student behavior will be monitored by the Administrator. Violations may warrant dismissal from Villa Maria Academy.

Suspension & Dismissal

The school reserves the right to suspend, dismiss or request student withdrawal under the following circumstances:

- Evidence of character disorders which demand special care and attention beyond the scope of the school's established goals and purposes and beyond the professional training of the staff.
- A pattern of disruptive behavior or an isolated incident of serious disruptive behavior detrimental to the welfare of the total group and to the school atmosphere.
- Consistent evidence of a student's inability to comply with basic school regulations or an isolated incident of serious violation of basic school regulations and/or philosophy.
- Information regarding inappropriate conduct prior to his/her enrollment in the school has been withheld.

Attendance/Disciplinary Appeal Procedures may apply.

IMPORTANT POLICIES

AIDS/HIV POLICY

Aware that the Christ-centered precepts of dignity and sacredness of human life demand a compassionate approach, Villa Maria Academy has adopted the policy statements of the Diocese of Erie with regard to employees and students who have Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Policy is available for review in the Main Office.

DIOCESAN CHILD ABUSE POLICY

Policy is available for review in main office.

DRUG & ALCOHOL POLICY

Drug and alcohol procedures will be followed if a student uses, possesses, or sells any drug, medication, or look-alike drug. The Drug and Alcohol Procedures Chart is located at the end of this section.

In accordance with the philosophy expressed in our Life Statement, the following guidelines reflect an effort by Villa Maria Academy to respond to current and potential use/abuse of drugs and alcohol by our student body.

We, at Villa Maria Academy, strive to promote a drug-free environment through education and intervention. We do this through classroom education, school programs and services, community support and resources and rehabilitative procedures. The enforcement of this policy depends upon the cooperation of Administrators, faculty, families and students. In addition, students are subject to random drug testing.

HARASSMENT/BULLYING POLICY

Harassment or bullying of any kind – written, verbal, sexual, physical or electronic – is not permitted at Villa Maria Academy. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, repeated, unwelcome and offensive slurs, jokes or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct related to an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age or handicap/disability which create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Bullying is any act that substantially interferes with a student's education, creates a threatening environment in the school setting for any student or groups of students, and substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

Each VMA student has the responsibility to respect the individual differences and feelings of others and to treat people with dignity and reverence. As a student of a Catholic high school, words and actions should model healthy and positive relationships as Jesus Christ taught us. It is everyone's responsibility to create a positive school climate where students can achieve and succeed. The option policy will be followed.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Sexual harassment of, by or towards any student or any adult is a violation of both school policy and federal laws. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other inappropriate verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Sexual comments, jokes, gestures or looks
- Showing, giving, or leaving someone sexual pictures, photographs, illustrations, messages or notes
- Writing sexual messages/graffiti about a person on the bathroom walls, locker rooms
- Spreading sexual rumors about a person
- Saying someone is gay or lesbian
- Spying on someone as they dress or shower at school
- Flashing or "mooning" someone
- Touching, grabbing, or pinching someone in a sexual way
- Conveying a sexual message through technology, such as cell phones, websites, etc.
- Pulling at someone's clothes in a sexual way
- Intentionally brushing against a person in a sexual way
- Forcing someone to do something sexual, including kissing

Any student who feels he/she is being harassed or bullied should tell a trusted adult as soon as possible. Any teacher, guidance counselor, nurse, or Administrator will help the student deal with the problem and get help. Students who are unsure whether they are being subjected to sexual harassment should seek guidance from a teacher, guidance counselor, Administrator or other trusted adult.

Vulgar language or profanity is disrespectful to others and can cause embarrassment and harm. Students who use improper language within the school or at school sponsored events will be subject to Option 3, parent contact, and/or Option 4 at the discretion of an Administrator. The consequence will be determined based on context (e.g., a "slip up" versus a tirade of expletives directed at a person in anger) and recurrence.

PREGNANCY POLICY

In keeping with the Life Statement which affirms the dignity and sacredness of life, we at Villa Maria Academy, while not condoning premarital sex, attend to the well-being of any student who becomes pregnant. We are committed to assist the student in completing her high school education at Villa Maria Academy while at the same time maintaining an environment where all students may continue to learn. In the event of a pregnancy, the parent/guardian/student must apprise an Administrator or guidance counselor. A conference will be held to review school guidelines for pregnant students.

WEAPONS POLICY

It is forbidden for anyone to possess a weapon of any sort, as defined by the laws of Pennsylvania and the Department of Homeland Security, in the buildings, on the premises or within the geographic boundaries of Villa Maria Academy or at any school sponsored activity wherever it may occur, without the prior written approval of an Administrator. Matches are considered a weapon.

Only in instances where there is a supervised and approved school activity and/or course of study will permission to have a weapon be given. In such cases, the instructor and/or teacher must request and receive approval from an Administrator.

A student is forbidden to bring a weapon to school for a supervised activity without the instructor and/or teacher first requesting and receiving approval from an Administrator and permission from the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Said request and permissions must be in writing and kept on file in the Main Office. Students are forbidden to carry weapons in their car, while on school premises and/or within boundaries of the entire school and Villa campus except as noted above.

Any student, employee or non-student who violates this policy shall be subject to immediate expulsion and appropriate disciplinary action by civil authority.

SCHOOL REGULATIONS

UNIFORM DRESS CODE

A basic respect for self is reflected in the care a student takes with regard to his/her personal appearance. It is expected that students will wear their uniform with pride and that their clothing and hair are neat, clean, and appropriate at all times. Students must wear their dress uniform for all liturgies, paraliturgies and special days. School officials reserve the right to make a judgment about any ambiguity in style, color, length and/or

fit of school dress. Students will incur a \$5 fine for uniform violations. Uniforms must be in good repair. Administration makes final decisions on the interpretation of uniform rules.

Uniform Requirements for All Students

- Ear piercing is the only acceptable body piercing. Students must remove jewelry from any non-ear piercing and will receive a \$25 fine.
- Hair must be a natural color (not pink, purple, etc.).
- Tattoos must not be visible when wearing the Villa Maria Academy uniform.
- Shoes must be dark colored or tan. No sneakers, sport shoes, moccasins, boots, shoes with fur, slipper style, sandals, open-toed shoes or any shoes that are deemed unsafe. All shoes must have a hard sole.
- Socks must be white, grey or navy and must be calf or knee high style. Socks and stockings may not have logos or designs. Stockings must be hole free.
- If a t-shirt is worn underneath the uniform shirt, it must be white and free of messages and/or graphics.
- T-shirts worn underneath a pullover uniform shirt may not extend below the uniform shirt.
- Villa sweater vests or sweaters are the only outer garments permitted. Coats, jackets, hoodies or other non-Villa outer garments will be confiscated and placed in the Main Office until the end of the school day.
- Accessories appropriate to the uniform, such as NHS or Student Council pins may be worn. Other buttons and pins are not permitted.
- Hats, headscarves and bandanas are not permitted at any time.
- Skorts may not be more than four inches above the knee.

Boys' Uniform Requirements

Khaki uniform pants or grey pants. Pants must be worn properly situated at the waist with a dark belt. Navy pullover uniform shirt (short sleeve), white uniform pullover shirt (short or long sleeved), OR white or light blue button-down dress shirt with tie.

Dress shirts must always be worn tucked in and must always be worn with a tie. The tie must always be worn properly secured at the neck and may not have inappropriate graphics or messages. Boys must be clean shaven.

Boys' Dress Uniform

Khaki uniform pants or grey pants. White or light blue button-down dress shirt with tie and uniform sweater.

Girls' Uniform Requirements – Class of 2012 and 2013

Villa Maria Academy has a summer and a winter uniform for female students. Summer uniforms must be worn from the start of the school year through October 31 and from April 15 through the end of the school year. Winter uniforms must be worn from November 1 through April 14.

- Summer: Khaki uniform skort. Skorts must be worn at an appropriate length. Navy pullover uniform shirt (may only be worn by Class of 2012). White pullover uniform shirt (short or long sleeve). Uniform stockings, tights or socks (white, grey or navy; socks may be worn over stockings; the socks must be the same color as the stockings).
- Winter: Plaid uniform skort. White pullover uniform shirt (short or long sleeve) OR Navy pullover uniform shirt (Class of 2012 only). Uniform stockings, tights or socks (white, grey or navy; socks may be worn over stockings; the socks must be the same color as the stockings).
- Long sleeve shirts may not be worn under short short sleeve shirts.

Girls Dress Uniform

- Summer: Khaki uniform skort. Class of 2012 only - navy pullover uniform shirt; - white pullover uniform shirt (short or long sleeve). Uniform stockings or tights (white, navy or grey). Uniform sweater.
- Winter: Plaid uniform skort. White pullover uniform shirt (short or long sleeve). Uniform stockings or tights (white, navy or grey; cable knit leggings are also permitted). Uniform sweater.

Class of 2014 2015 Uniform Requirements

The class of 2014 and 2015 will have only one uniform skort. This skort will be worn year round. All other guidelines regarding the uniform will apply to the class of 2014 and 2015. Dress uniform will be the same all year.

- Dress Uniform: Plaid uniform skort. White pullover uniform shirt (short or long sleeve). Stockings or tights (white, navy or grey). Uniform sweater (vest or v-neck cardigan).

Non-Uniform Apparel

- Dress-up Days: Any type of gender-appropriate clothing that is becoming and appropriate in an academic setting may be worn on dress-up days. Midriff area may not show. Hats, headscarves and bandanas are not permitted. No excessively ripped or torn clothing is permitted.
- Dress-down Days: Dress-down days include the above plus jeans, sweatpants, shorts or dress running suits. Unacceptable attire includes flannel leisure/pajama style pants, overalls, short-shorts, cut-offs, non-Villa sweatpants, bike pants, extremely short skirts, halters, cut-off shirts, midriff tops, tube tops, net or mesh shirts and muscle shirts. Students wearing t-shirts and sweatshirts with messages and/or graphics deemed inappropriate will be asked to remove them. Hats, headscarves and bandanas are not permitted. No excessively ripped or torn clothing is permitted.

Order forms for uniforms are available outside the school's Main Office.

ACCIDENTS

Every accident in the school building, on school grounds, at practice sessions, or at school-sponsored events should be reported immediately to the person in charge who in turn, will notify an Administrator. Parental/guardian approval will be sought should immediate medical attention be necessary. An accident report should be completed by the person in charge. This report will be kept on file in the Main Office.

BACKPACKS & BOOK BAGS

Backpacks and book bags may not be left unattended in hallways, classrooms, stairwells or window sills.

CLASS DUES & FUNDRAISERS

To help defray the cost of class activities, students are responsible for participating in the class fundraiser or for paying class dues.

COATS/OUTER GARMENTS

Coats/outer garments must be placed in lockers and may not be taken to class. Garment(s) will be confiscated. Students may reclaim garments at the end of the school day in the Main Office.

DANCES

Student dances have become a very popular extracurricular activity. The dances provide students with an excellent opportunity to meet socially. In an effort to make these dances positive experiences for all students, these guidelines must be followed:

- All school rules are in effect, whether the dance is on school property or not.
- Students must arrive within one hour of the start of the dance. Students and/or guests may not leave the dance more than 30 minutes before the dance officially ends. Once a student and/or guest leaves the dance, he/she is not allowed to return.
- Students and guests are expected to obey the requests of all chaperones, security officers, and other school personnel.
- No dancing while on someone's shoulders is permitted. Additionally, break-dancing, lewd dancing, "moshing" and similar styles of dancing which encourage pushing, excessive jumping, throwing, etc. of others are not permissible.
- Students' and guests' behavior cannot endanger or bother other students.

Students and guests are required to sign a dance contract. Anyone violating these rules will be removed from the dance and will be subject to further disciplinary action.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Cell phones, mp3 players and beepers/pagers may only be used before 8 AM or after 3 PM. Cell phones and beepers/pagers must be turned off and put in lockers during the school day. Students who violate this policy will be subject to the following consequences:

- 1st offense – confiscation of phone for the school day and Saturday detention
- 2nd offense – confiscation of phone for the school day, Saturday detention and a parent must pick up the phone. \$25 fine due immediately.
- 3rd offense – confiscation of phone for the school day, Saturday detention and a parent must pick up the phone. \$50 fine due immediately.
- Additional offenses will be the same as the 3rd offense plus a conference with an administrator.

Electronic devices such as laser pointers and hand-held games are not permitted in school at any time. If they are used, they will be confiscated and the student will receive a Saturday Detention.

FINES

- Food or beverage violations (including gum chewing): \$2
- Uniform violations: \$5; dress uniform violation: \$5; completely out of uniform: \$10

- Grooming violations:
 - Boys not clean shaven: \$10
 - Non-ear Piercings: \$25 (jewelry must also be removed)
- Tobacco Possession: \$25
- Tobacco Use: \$150
- Tablet PC violations – see Technology section

Student whose fines reach \$20 or more will have a conference with the assistant principal and parents.

FIRE DRILLS

At the sound of the alarm, all students and school personnel must leave the school building quickly and quietly according to the directions posted in each room. Silence is required at all times in order to allow announcements to be made.

FOOD & DRINK

Food and drink are to be consumed by students in the cafeteria only. Only clear water may be consumed outside the cafeteria during school hours. Container must be clear and transparent. Food and drink will be confiscated. Food made during Consumer Science classes must be consumed in the lab. Food may not be taken out of the room. Water bottles are not permitted in computer labs (Rooms 7,14, 106 and Library).

PARKING

Limited student parking is available in the East lot behind the rows reserved for faculty and staff. Reserved for Faculty signs indicate those rows/spaces reserved in the East lot. No student parking is allowed on the West side of the building. Students are not permitted to park in VME parking lot to the West of the softball field. Students may park at the Zurn Lecture Hall behind the softball field. Parking in VMA's lot is a privilege, not a right. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in the loss of this privilege. VMA has the right to maintain safety in the parking lot.

PLANNER/HALL PASS GUIDELINES

Each student must have his/her planner at all times. The student's name must be in the planner and on all sign-out sheets. Planner sign-out sheets may not be torn out of the planner. Students must use their planner for personal errands such as restroom, locker, drinking fountain and phone. The planner must be signed by the teacher before the student leaves the classroom. At lunch, a special pass will be issued by cafeteria monitors for restroom and phone. Yellow passes should be used for nurse, library,

guidance, etc. Incidents of no planner will be treated as incidents of tardiness to class; on the fourth occurrence, the student will receive detention. Students who lose their planner must purchase a replacement (available in the Main Office for \$5).

PERSONAL PROPERTY

VMA does not assume responsibility for loss of personal property. Large sums of money should not be kept in student lockers. Students are encouraged to place large sums of money and valuables in the school safe until dismissal.

POSSESSION AND USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Tobacco products will be confiscated if in the possession of a student. Tobacco possession carries with it a \$25 fine. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified. Smoking is not permitted on school grounds and neighboring businesses. Smoking on school property carries a \$150 fine.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

Inappropriate public displays of affection are not permitted in the school setting. Option process will be followed.

RESTRICTED AREAS

Areas of the school restricted to students without permission are:

- Administrative Offices
- Faculty Dining Room and Kitchen
- Main Office Behind the Counter and the Faculty Mail Room
- Telephones in any Office
- Teachers' Desks, Bookshelves, Cupboards and Computers
- Boiler Room and Maintenance Room
- Third Floor Faculty Bathroom
- Third Floor Faculty Workroom
- Third Floor Copier
- Science Lab when a teacher is not present
- Fitness Center when a teacher is not present

SCHOOL LOCKS & LOCKERS

Students MUST have a locker and a school-provided lock. Lockers and locks are the property of Villa Maria Academy. Lockers are to be kept locked at all times and students are not to open or use another student's locker. Students assume full responsibility for personal property when they permit other students to enter their locker. School lockers are subject to periodic inspections. Students may not go to their lockers before a PM activity period.

Locks will be collected near the end of the school year from seniors ONLY. Other students will be responsible for removing their locks at the end of the school year and keeping them over the summer. In the fall, students will be expected to bring the lock back to school to use on their locker. Students not returning to Villa will be expected to return the lock.

SEARCHES

A school official may properly conduct a search of a student's person or belongings if the official has a reasonable suspicion that a crime has been or is in the process of being committed or has a reasonable cause to believe that the search is necessary to maintain school discipline, protect student safety or to enforce school policies.

STUDENT TELEPHONE USE & MESSAGES

The telephones in the Main Office are for official school business. The school will accept phone messages for students only in case of emergency.

TEXTBOOKS/SUPPLIES

The school provides textbooks for most courses. All books issued to students must be returned at the end of the course. Any book that is missing or damaged must be replaced by the student who had use of that text. Students will be charged full replacement costs for damaged or missing books.

Consumable and supplementary books and/or workbooks may be provided by the school. Funding for these materials is not always available. Students, therefore, may need to pay for some materials.

VISITORS

VMA is a secure facility. All guests must be admitted at the front-center entrance and sign in at the Main Office for a visitor's pass. A student wishing to invite a visitor to school must receive permission from an Administrator. Written requests, including the visitor's name, grade, current school, the date of visit and the name of the Villa student making the request must be submitted at least two days prior to the intended visit.

WHITE OUT

Students are not permitted to bring/use liquid White Out because of its hazardous and destructive nature. White Out will be confiscated.

FINANCES

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

Scholarships are awarded annually in the areas of Academics, Art, Foreign Language, Music and Dance. Diversity scholarships are offered for incoming freshmen. Applications for scholarships are made through the appropriate Administrator.

Financial aid is available through the Bishop Watson Tuition Assistance Program of the Diocese of Erie, the Tresa Burns Scholarship Trust, the Adopt-A-Student Program and other scholarship opportunities. Financial Aid is also available through VMA. To qualify for VMA aid, applicants must apply for both Diocesan Aid and VMA aid. Applications are due March 1. Students and parent(s)/guardian(s) are cautioned to be on the alert for application deadlines (usually late March-mid April) for scholarships for current students. These are announced over the public address system and in the parent/guardian newsletter.

TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

There are **three** official payment options for tuition:

- Payment in full, received by July 15
- Monthly FACTS payments, starting in July
(Arrangements for FACTS must be made by June 1)
- 50 percent by July 15 and 50 percent before 2nd semester.

Failure to make one of the above mentioned tuition payment options by July 15 would result in a \$50.00 penalty, as well as immediate revocation of status as an active VMA student. This means that all online accounts will be suspended, as well as exclusion from any extracurricular activity, including summer conditioning, weight lifting, fall camps, etc. Students will not be allowed to begin school without payment arrangements in place. **THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS.** If students are sent to school without arrangements in place, they will be removed from their first period classes and sent to the main office until arrangements are made. If you cannot arrange payment, the students will be removed from the school.

PROCEDURES FOR DELINQUENT TUITION ACCOUNTS

All students with delinquent tuition balances as of the last day of each quarter will not receive their report card/ will not have access to online accounts until tuition payments are arranged/received. Students will be allowed to take their semester exams, however, they will be pulled from extracurricular activities until Tuition payments are brought current. Tuition will be analyzed on a semester basis to determine delinquency status.

If tuition is delinquent at the time of awarding of financial aid for the next school year, applications will not be reviewed until such time until such time that the account is brought current. This could significantly reduce your financial aid award as financial aid is on a need basis, but is distributed first come first serve.

All students with delinquent tuition balances as of the last day of the school year will not receive their report cards/will not have access to online accounts until tuition is paid in full. Students will not be notified if it is necessary to take summer school, nor will they be allowed to attend summer school if accounts are not paid in full. This means students may not register for fall classes, if they failed one or more courses and have not successfully completed summer school. If payment is not paid in full by the last day of school, it will result in revocation of status as an active student and exclusion from any extracurricular activity, including summer conditioning, weight lifting, fall camps, etc. Seniors with delinquent tuition balances as of the last day of school for seniors will not be allowed to participate in either baccalaureate or commencement activities. The student will not receive their diploma nor will transcripts be sent to anticipating colleges until tuition has been paid in full. If after 90 days from the last day of school, the tuition has not been paid in full, we will pursue restitution in small claims court. All parents sign a contract agreeing to tuition terms. These contracts are legal and binding.

Transfer (out) students with delinquent tuition balances as of their last day of school will not have transcripts sent to anticipating schools. If after 90 days from the last day of school, the tuition has not been paid in full, we will pursue restitution in small claims court. All parents sign a contract agreeing to tuition terms. These contracts are legal and binding documents.

OBLIGATIONS OUTSTANDING AT YEAR END

All students with any financial, technology (fines, late return of Tablet PC or missing components) or academic (lost book fines, detention) obligations at year end will not receive their report cards/will not have access to online accounts until the obligation is satisfied. Report cards will be held in the Finance Office and will be available for pick up or will be mailed once accounts have been brought current. Students will be able to see their obligations on NetClassroom and a letter will be sent home.

TUITION REFUND POLICY

If you have paid your tuition in full, a refund will be issued for 50% of the semester's tuition after the first day of school. A refund of 25% of the tuition will be issued after completion of the first week of school. No refund will be issued after the second week of school. This refund policy is on a semester basis. A refund will be issued for 50% of the semester tuition after the first day of the second semester. A 25% refund will be issued after completion of the first week of the second semester. No refund will be issued after completion of the second week of the second semester.

If you are on our FACTS monthly payment plan and have not yet paid a sufficient amount of tuition to cover the above, your bank account will continue to be debited until all debt has been satisfied. No transcripts will be mailed to anticipating schools until all debts have been satisfied. If after 90 days the tuition has not been paid in full, we will pursue restitution in small claims court. All parents sign a contract agreeing to tuition terms. These contracts are legal and binding documents. All registrations and deposits are non-refundable.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROCEDURES CHART

SITUATIONAL CATEGORY	IMMEDIATE ACTION	INVESTIGATION	DISCIPLINE
A student volunteers information to a staff member about personal drug/alcohol use and seeks help.	The staff member informs the student of available services and of the rights of minors to such help.	None	None
A staff member suspects a student of possible drug/alcohol use but there is no violation or physical evidence.	A staff member contacts a Student Assistance Team member. Teacher observations are collected regarding symptoms of suspected drug/alcohol abuse as soon as possible. If warranted, student is informed of available services.	Teacher observations are reviewed by the Student Assistance Team. If warranted, the student, his/her locker and other possessions will be searched by an administrator and a member of the Student Assistance Team.	None
A student (a) possesses, uses or is under the influence of drugs/alcohol; or (b) possesses drug related paraphernalia; on school property.	Administrator and a member of the Student Assistance Team are summoned. Drugs, alcohol and/or paraphernalia are confiscated.	The student, his/her locker and other possessions will be searched by an administrator and a member of the Student Assistance Team. Both the immediate action taken and the investigation methods used will be documented and signed by the administrator, member of the Student Assistance Team and all staff members involved.	The student will receive an Option 4 or possible expulsion. An assessment by a drug/alcohol professional will be required within 48 hours in order to determine the existence/extent of the student's chemical abuse problem. The student will be required to follow the recommendation of the drug/alcohol professional resulting from the assessment.
A student (a) possesses, uses or is under the influence of drugs/alcohol; or (b) possesses drug-related paraphernalia; at any school sponsored or school-related function.	Advisor or chaperone will immediately notify an administrator. Drugs, alcohol and/or paraphernalia are confiscated.	The student and his/her possessions will be searched by the advisor or chaperone with a witness present. Both the immediate action taken and the investigation methods used will be documented and signed by the advisor, chaperone and any witnesses involved. A completed report must be given to the administrator and coordinator of the Student Assistance Team on the first school day after the incident. The administrator will review and sign the report.	The student will receive an Option 4. An assessment by a drug/alcohol professional will be required within 48 hours in order to determine the existence/extent of the student's chemical abuse problem. The student will be required to follow the recommendation of the drug/alcohol professional resulting from the assessment.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROCEDURES CHART

(continued)

NOTIFICATION OF PARENT/GUARDIAN	NOTIFICATION OF AUTHORITIES	DISPOSITION OF SUBSTANCE
<p>Only with the student's consent, parent/guardian will be informed (unless the student is in life-threatening danger, in which case parent/guardian would be notified). Parental involvement will be strongly encouraged throughout the assistance program.</p>	<p>None.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Parent guardian will be informed of behavioral problems observed.</p>	<p>None.</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>Immediate conference with parent/guardian.</p>	<p>Contact with authorities will be limited to the transfer of confiscated substances.</p>	<p>Confiscated substance will be labeled, sealed and turned over to the police.</p>
<p>An attempt will be made to notify parent/guardian immediately. When transportation is needed, it becomes the responsibility of the parent/guardian at his/her expense.</p>	<p>Contact with authorities will be limited to the transfer of confiscated substances.</p>	<p>Confiscated substance will be labeled, sealed and turned over to the police.</p>

DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROCEDURES CHART

SITUATIONAL CATEGORY	IMMEDIATE ACTION	INVESTIGATION	DISCIPLINE
<p>A student has a drug/alcohol related medical emergency.</p>	<p>Standard health and first aid procedures will be followed. The nurse/medical assistant and administrator will be summoned immediately. The student will be transported to a medical facility at the parent/guardian's expense. The Administrator and a member of the Student Assistance Team are summoned. Drugs, alcohol and/or paraphernalia are confiscated.</p>	<p>The student, his/her locker and other possessions will be searched by an administrator and a member of the Student Assistance Team. Both the immediate action and the investigation methods used will be documented and signed by the administrator, member of the Student Assistance Team and all staff members involved. A completed report is given to the coordinator of the Student Assistance Team.</p>	<p>The student will receive an Option 4. An assessment by a drug/alcohol professional will be required within 48 hours in order to determine the existence/extent of the student's chemical abuse problem. The student will be required to follow the recommendation of the drug/alcohol professional resulting from the assessment.</p>
<p>A student possesses, uses, or is under the influence of drugs/alcohol for the second time.</p>	<p>Administrator and a member of the Student Assistance Team are summoned. Drugs, alcohol and/or paraphernalia are confiscated.</p>	<p>The student, his/her locker and other possessions will be searched by an administrator and a member of the Student Assistance Team. Both the immediate action and the investigation methods used will be documented and signed by the administrator, member of the Student Assistance Team and all staff members involved. A completed report is given to the coordinator of the Student Assistance Team.</p>	<p>Formal hearing. Subject to immediate expulsion.</p>
<p>A student distributes any illegal drugs/alcohol.</p>	<p>Administrator and a member of the Student Assistance Team are summoned. Drugs, alcohol and/or paraphernalia are confiscated.</p>	<p>The student, his/her locker and other possessions will be searched by an administrator and a member of the Student Assistance Team. Both the immediate action and the investigation methods used will be documented and signed by the administrator, member of the Student Assistance Team and all staff members involved. A completed report is given to the coordinator of the Student Assistance Team.</p>	<p>Formal hearing. Subject to immediate expulsion.</p>

DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROCEDURES CHART

(continued)

NOTIFICATION OF PARENT/GUARDIAN	NOTIFICATION OF AUTHORITIES	DISPOSITION OF SUBSTANCE
Parent/guardian is notified immediately.	Contact with authorities will be limited to the transfer of confiscated substances.	Confiscated substance will be labeled, sealed and turned over to the medical personnel for analysis.
Immediate conference with parent/guardian.	Contact with authorities will be limited to the transfer of confiscated substances.	Confiscated substance will be labeled, sealed and turned over to the police for analysis.
Immediate conference with parent/guardian.	Police are notified.	Confiscated substance will be labeled, sealed and turned over to the police.

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