



Saint Joseph Regional School Our Lady of Mercy Academy



SUMMER EDITION

August 9, 2024

Empowering students to grow as informed, inspired, compassionate souls.

Dear Parents, Students, and Staff,

In just a few weeks, the 2024-2025 school year will begin at St. Joseph and Our Lady of Mercy, and all of our staff and teachers have been busy preparing to make this a fun and exciting year for our students.

From setting up classrooms and schedules to campus repairs and faculty meetings, it is an active month here at SJRS and OLMA, and we are all looking forward to the first day of school on August 26. A special thank-you goes to Michelle Smith, our Pre-K Teacher, and Andy Cardine, our OLMA Math Teacher, for all their incredible work this summer on our campus doing painting, carpentry, cleaning, and everything else to make our buildings shine.

We have a renewed excitement for our school's mission to empower students to grow as informed, inspired, compassionate souls.

With the guidance and experience of our returning staff and the enthusiasm and talents of our new staff, this is sure to be a wonderful year for our students and our families.

Welcome to our new staff members at SJRS...Mrs. Caitlin Dubois, Kindergarten Teacher and Miss Ana Maria Swingle, Kindergarten Teacher Assistant; Mrs. Emily Walsh and Miss Marisol Zilske, Grades 1-4 Teacher Assistants; Mr. Jim Konopka, Grades 5-8 Math; and at OLMA...Mrs. Mackenzie Fromwiller, Social Studies; Miss Morgan Howerton, the Mercy Project and SJRS Religion Adjunct; Miss Sarah Kaczinski, School Counselor; and Miss Maria McGovern, Math.

One final welcome to our new President, Fr. Alan Tremblay, Pastor of the Parish of the Holy Spirit.

I want to thank the many staff, parents and parishioners from Holy Spirit who have so graciously welcomed me into this wonderful faith community. I feel incredibly blessed to be here, and I am grateful to Fr. Alan and the Diocese of Manchester for giving me the opportunity to serve as the principal of SJRS and OLMA.

Some updates of interest for parents include the addition of a weekly technology class for Grades 5-8, the purchase of a new math textbook series for Grades 4-8, the purchase of a new religion textbook series for Grades K-8, and the reforming of a parent-school association for our schools. We will be looking for parents who can help organize this group which will allow for greater volunteer opportunities and parent input about our schools. More information to come on our 'Back to School' nights in September. At the high school, students will begin work on the Mercy Project with a new focus on learning social emotional skills which will assist them in developing important qualities such as empathy, respect, and conflict resolution.

I ask for your prayers for our children, their families, our staff, and our parish as we start our new year. Together, let us commit ourselves to providing the superior spiritual and academic program that has been the hallmark of St. Joseph Regional School since its founding in 1886 and now Our Lady of Mercy since 2020 as we work together to support our schools and their singular roles as the only Catholic schools in Cheshire County and the Monadnock Region.

In His service,

Miss Victoria Farrington
Principal

ROMANS 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the holy Spirit.

IMPORTANT DATES

Mon-Fri 8/19-8/23 -- Faculty In-Service Days

Thursday 8/22 -- Cubby selections (see details below)

Friday 8/23 -- New Student Orientation -- 8:45am-11:30am (see details below)

Monday 8/26 -- **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL!**

Wednesday 8/28 -- All-school Mass -- 9:30am

Monday 9/2 -- Labor Day -- **NO SCHOOL**

Friday 9/13 -- Back-to-School Picnic -- 5:30-7:30pm

Thursday 9/19 -- Back-to-School Night

Saturday 9/28 -- Golf Tournament at Bretwood (see details below)

Monday 10/14 -- Columbus Day -- **NO SCHOOL**

Thursday 10/15 -- Picture Day

[CLICK HERE](#) for the **UPDATED 2024-2025 SCHOOL CALENDAR**

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

Friday, August 23 -- 8:45-11:30am

A mandatory event for all of our NEW STUDENTS starting for the 2024-2025 school year!

*****All students must bring their laptop or Chromebook with them!*****

Students should arrive promptly by 8:45am and enter through the main front door (facing Main Street). We will be touring the building, reviewing policies, setting up school email/Renweb accounts, rotating through schedules, and having some fun getting to know one another. Students will be finished at 11:30am.

We are looking forward to a great morning!



SUMMER READING

The following list of books is the summer reading for all students in preparation for fall 2024. This is required reading and must be completed by the first day of school. Students should bring their books to class on the first day and be ready for a quiz, discussion, and/or possible essay.



Grade 9 – *Jacob Have I Loved* by Katherine Paterson

Grade 10 – *I Am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai

Grade 11 – *All the Pretty Horses* by Cormac McCarthy

Grade 12 – *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens

CUBBY SELECTIONS

At OLMA, each student has a designated cubby that serves as the primary location to store all backpacks and personal/academic belongings throughout the school day. Students have an opportunity, if they wish, to choose the location of their cubby in the following order. Students may choose cubbies for their classmates, if asked by a classmate. Students should come to OLMA on the below date/time, entering at the main front door. Cubby selection will only take a few minutes.

Thursday, August 22

1:00-1:30pm -- Members of the House of Josephine (House Cup winners!)

1:30-2:00pm -- Seniors

2:00-2:30pm -- Juniors

2:30-3:00pm -- Sophomores

Then on Friday, August 23, at New Student Orientation, the freshmen will choose their cubbies.

2024-2025 OLMA FAMILY HANDBOOK

Please make certain to review the updated OLMA Family Handbook prior to the start of the school year.

[CLICK HERE to view the 2024-2025 OLMA Family Handbook on our website.](#)

2024-2025 PARKING PERMITS

Students who hold a valid New Hampshire driver's license may apply for a parking permit. Students who are granted parking privileges will be charged a \$25 annual fee to help defer the cost of parking lot maintenance. Passes are not prorated. They must be purchased at the Main Office at full price at any point during the school year. **[The Parking Permit Application can be found on our website HERE.](#)**

CELL PHONE POLICY

OLMA's cell phone policy is guided by the principle of being present. Students are expected to actively engage with their teachers and other students. The school recognizes the convenience, educational, logistical and safety advantages of cell phones, iPods, smart watches, etc. **A student may have these electronic devices at school, but use will be limited to before school, after school, passing periods, and during lunch. Use of such devices during class time is prohibited, unless directed by a teacher for legitimate educational purposes.** Students will be directed to turn off/silence cell phones/smart watches at the beginning of class and store them in the provided storage compartments located in each classroom. Students may retrieve their phones/smart watches at the end of the class period.

Continued violation of this rule may result in confiscation of the device and/or other corrective action. The school reserves the right to examine any such confiscated device, and when appropriate, a student may be held accountable for violations of this behavior policy. If a student's cell phone/smart watch is confiscated, a parent must pick up the device from the office. Students are responsible for notifying their parents if their device has been taken.

In general, we encourage parents/guardians to try to limit contact with their student directly on his/her cell phone or other communication device during the school day.

DRESS CODE

Since the educational process is a formal endeavor, OLMA has a student dress code. This dress code supports the attitude of respect we have for one another. Cleanliness, neatness, sensibility, and safety (in the case of shoes), while maintaining comfort, guide the choices

of the dress code.

On Wednesdays, Our Lady of Mercy Academy attends Mass; these days will be “dress up” days. The expectation on Wednesdays is that students should be dressed significantly nicer and be more “put together” than on other school days. Students may choose from a buttoned down, collared shirt (tucked in) with tie, dress pants, and a belt; dress pants (with a belt as needed) and a blouse, a dress, or blouse and skirt that reaches the tips of fingers when hands are held naturally at the side of the body. Shoes must be clean and in good condition. Hoodies and other casual outerwear may not be worn on dress up days. Hats may not be worn at all during the school day on dress up days. Hair must be appropriately styled, combed, etc. (i.e. no bed head, etc.).

For the remainder of the week, students may wear casual pants, jeans (with minimal distressing, but no holes), or athletic wear. Yoga pants or leggings must be covered appropriately with a long shirt or sweater or a skirt. No offensive, inflammatory or political language/messaging on clothing will be permitted, nor messaging which runs counter to the Catholic identity of our schools. No plunging necklines. No exposed midriffs or spaghetti straps. Tank tops may be worn for PE classes, but straps must be a minimum of two inches wide. Midriffs must remain covered when arms are lifted above the head. All dresses, skirts, and shorts must reach the tips of fingers when hands are held naturally at the side of the body. Hoods on hoodies must be worn down during class time. No hats or beanies are to be worn during class time. Hair must be worn out of the student’s face. No flip flops or slides. No pajamas or slippers.

Students arriving to school not appropriately attired will be given the option of borrowing clothing from our lending closet or calling home for their parents/guardians to deliver appropriate clothing.

The dress code is open to administrative interpretation.



THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL 819
ST. JOSEPH REGIONAL SCHOOL | OUR LADY OF MERCY ACADEMY PRESENT

**4th Annual
SJRS/OLMA
Golf Tournament**

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28
8:30AM SHOTGUN START
BRETWOOD GOLF COURSE

WWW.MERCYACADEMYKEENE.ORG/GOLF



Our annual GOLF TOURNAMENT is coming up!

Join us to hit the beautiful fairways of Bretwood Golf Course. Play is Scramble format with great prizes. The field will be limited to the first 100 golfers (25 foursomes) to register, so gather your family, friends, and colleagues! **CLICK HERE for details and to register!**

Highlight your business with us as one of our **sponsors!** Personal/individual sponsorships are welcome also. Lots of different sponsor levels are available.

<https://www.mercyacademykeene.org/golf-sponsorships>

ATTENDANCE/TARDY POLICY

Students are expected to arrive at Our Lady of Mercy Academy by 8:00am, which is the warning bell for the start of homeroom. A student is considered tardy when they are not in their homeroom (first block) by 8:05am. If your student is going to be late for school, please send an email to attendance@mercyacademykeene.org or place a phone call to the Main Office, with a valid reason by 8:30am. Excused absence/tardy include illness, medical/dental appointments, and death in the family. All other reasons are unexcused. Determinations of excused/unexcused absence/tardy will be made by the administration. Habitual tardiness will be dealt with on an individual basis. In general, a student who exceeds three unexcused tardies for a first block class will receive disciplinary action.

For blocks 2, 3, and 4 during the school day, students are expected to be in their classrooms when the bell rings to mark the start of the class period. If they are not present when the bell rings, tardy slips will be given and disciplinary action will be taken (such as detention, loss of cell phone privileges, etc.). OLMA requires all students enrolled at the school, including students 18 years of age or older, to attend classes each day that school is in session.

Regular ON TIME attendance is essential to the academic process, to achieving the maximum benefit from Mercy Academy's education programs, and to preparing students for success beyond high school.

HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS OPPORTUNITIES

Many Mercy Academy students are active participants on public school sports teams throughout the Monadnock Region. Tryouts for fall sports are happening now! If you are interested in participating in NHIAA public school athletics (which all private school students are permitted to do), please contact the SAU associated with the town in which you reside. **More information can be found on our website [HERE](#).**

50/50 RAFFLE COMING SOON

This fall we will once again be having our annual 50/50 raffle! Each student will receive an allotment of 12 tickets. All families will be responsible for either selling their allotted tickets OR they may purchase the tickets themselves. Keep an eye out for more details and your tickets coming to you on the Back-to-School Night! If you have questions, please contact Jen Marshall (jmarshall@stjosephkeene.org).



Our Lady of Mercy Academy | 161 Main Street | Keene, NH 03431 US

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