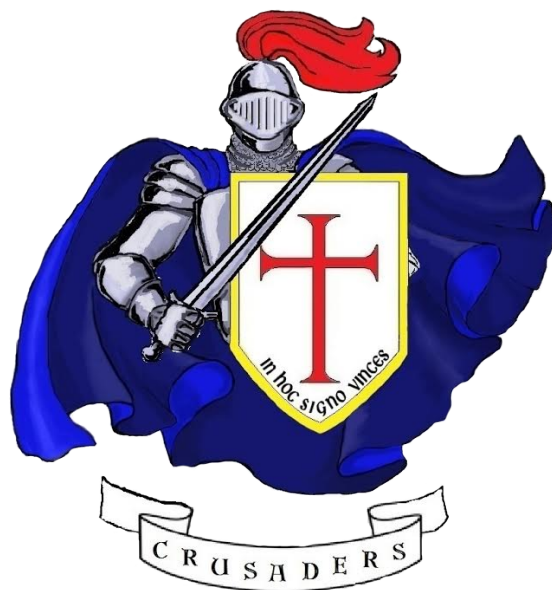


Our Lady of Hope Middle School
Messengers of Hope for the World!
Middle School Handbook 2023-2024



Our Lady of Hope Catholic School Mission Statement:

By the grace of God and with Mary as our model, Our Lady of Hope Catholic School inspires our community to develop a meaningful relationship with Christ. We lay a solid foundation for academic excellence, encourage respect for all, and form “messengers of hope for the world.”

Our MISSION

Thank you for making the choice to send your children to Our Lady of Hope. We teachers are dedicated to give your children the best education possible, while centering our philosophy on Christ's message of faith, hope and love. We love our subjects and our faith and want to share that love with your children. We truly want to be partners in your child's future.

Our two-fold mission:

1. Religious education and moral formation in order to produce young Catholic men and women who have a deep love for our Lord, their families, and the world.
2. Creating an academic environment that uses the best practices and technology of today's modern classroom. Our goal is to prepare our students for upper-level high school courses and beyond.

WHAT'S NEW IN MIDDLE SCHOOL?

What changes from elementary school can you and your child expect?

1. **Uniform changes.** The uniform for middle school has some significant changes. Children are expected to adhere to the uniform policy each day. Especially check your children for the following:
 - a. **Friday Mass:** Boys must wear their blazers to school, and girls must bring their sweaters, year round. Students may of course take off their blazers and sweaters if it becomes uncomfortable.
 - b. PE uniform socks – must be **white only** and at least one inch above the highest part of the sneaker.
 - c. During winter uniform school sweatshirts must be worn, no other brand will be allowed on during class time. Also, if the sweatshirt is hooded it is not allowed to be over your head while in the building, recess is permitted.
 - d. Boys' **ties** must be tied and worn neatly.
 - e. Shirts must be tucked in neatly at **all times**. This rule is relaxed only during recess. Before re-entering the school after recess, students should check their uniform for compliance with all rules.
 - f. Sneakers, please have appropriate footwear for physical activities.
 - g. Skirt length must be no shorter than **ONE INCH** above the knee.
 - h. All girls must wear shorts under their skirts for modesty's sake during physical activity; since we have recess every day, shorts must be worn every day.
 - i. **Hair bows:** Navy blue, white, or dark green hair bows or headbands are acceptable. The headbands should be no more than 1" width to keep hair back. Hair bows are to be no more than 4" in length.

- j. **Hair:** Clean and neatly styled; natural hair color only. Hair is not to cover the eyes. Length of boys' hair must be above the collar in the back and not cover the ears on the sides. Caps and hats are not to be worn in the school building at any time, which includes lunch periods.
 - k. **Make-up and Nail Polish:** Not permitted for any student.
 - l. **Jewelry:** Students may wear a watch (no Apple or smart watches) and one religious medal (e.g. cross, Miraculous medal, medal of a saint, Holy Spirit, etc.) Girls may wear one pair of small, post earrings with one earring per ear located in the earlobe. Necklaces, chokers, rings (of any form and on any body part), tattoos, bracelets, or ankle bracelets are not permitted.
 - m. **Spirit Days:** School appropriate dress please. Tops: no spaghetti straps or tank tops. Bottoms: Please only wear OLOH gym shorts for dress out days if you decide to wear shorts. No ripped jeans, short shorts, tight pants, leggings, or "jeggings." If clothes are deemed inappropriate the parent will be asked to bring in another outfit.
2. **Lockers.** Each 7th and 8th Grade student is assigned one locker and one small cubby in which to store their lunchboxes; students are assigned a designated hook for backpacks and coats. 6th Grade students are assigned two lockers, one of which will be shared with a fellow classmate: one locker for backpacks, and coats, and another locker for books and supplies. Locker combinations are **never** to be shared.
- a. Locker decorations (magnets and easily removed tape) are allowed. However, we do not allow special locker decorations for birthdays.
 - b. Lockers are to be kept clean and well-organized. The students only have two minutes in between periods, so it is imperative that they maintain a neat and orderly locker in order to avoid tardiness.
3. **Multiple Teachers for Academic Subjects.** In middle school your child will have several teachers, and organization becomes a very important skill.

From the first day of school, we teach and emphasize how to get organized. Each child's school supplies should be organized according to the following list:

Binders:

Reading/English+ tabs and notebook paper
 Math + tabs, notebook paper, and graph paper, pencil for work
 Science + tabs, notebook paper, pencil for labs
 Latin + tabs and notebook paper, composition book
 History/Religion + tabs and notebook paper

- a. **Assignment Book/Agenda:** This will come in extra handy. Students should use their assignment book consistently and correctly, they should never miss a homework assignment or assessment. At the end of the day, the homeroom teachers ensure that the homework for ALL subjects is posted on the whiteboard. This way, students can verify that they copied ALL assignments for that day.

- b. **Binders:** Encourage your child to file papers immediately. You might spot-check your child's binders on the weekends to further reinforce the organizational skills we are teaching. Inside the binder should be loose-leaf paper (plus graph paper for math classes).
 - c. **Pencil pouch:** This pouch is for pens, pencils and other supplies used daily.
 - d. **Middle School Test/Project Schedule:** Students should write in their agenda the dates of upcoming tests, quizzes, and projects. As a convenience, we post on the website a helpful schedule of test/quiz dates for the upcoming week (subject to change). We suggest you also print one for the refrigerator. NOTE: Dates on this schedule may change due to unforeseen circumstances. When possible, on Friday before dismissal, a hard copy of the schedule is posted on the ActivBoard and Middle School bulletin board so that students can bring home the right books for the weekend.
 - e. **Multiple Tests/Quizzes on a Single Day.** As a Middle School Team, we endeavor not to schedule more than two tests in one day. Nevertheless, sometimes your student may have more than two tests in one day. Encourage your child to plan ahead. This practice helps the transition to high school.
4. **MLA Style Sheet.** In high school, students are asked to use either the Modern Language Association (MLA) format for manuscripts or the American Psychology Association (APA) format. At Our Lady of Hope School students use MLA format. There is a common heading for handwritten work, as well, that we tell all middle school students to use, based on the MLA guidelines.
5. **Neatness and Penmanship.** In an effort to teach students to give their very best to God, we also encourage neatness. All graded assignments must be completed in blue or black pen. **NOTE: We no longer allow "White-Out" in our school.**
6. **Middle School Heading on Assignments.**
On the left side of the paper, starting at the top line.
First and Last Name
Date
Subject/Grade Level
7. **HOMEWORK.** The purpose of homework is to reinforce the skills and facts your children are learning, giving them an opportunity for independent practice. In middle school, homework can also introduce new areas of learning and encourage higher-level thinking when a child has more time to think, rather than during a fast-paced school day.

Grading homework. If homework is neat, completed in full, and turned in on time, students receive full credit, 100%. Homework turned in one day late will receive a score of 80%. All

homework turned in more than one day late will receive a failing grade of 60%. Plagiarized homework receives a grade of zero.

Limits. According to the OLOH Parent Handbook and the Diocesan standards, there are limits to the amount of homework we can assign. These limits are based on **the average child**. Some children work more quickly, some more slowly. The Middle School Team will work to ensure that homework is kept to a minimum.

- Make available a quiet room with no distractions.
- Set a timer to assist in managing time.
- Work quietly at the same table with your child. This practice might work for you if your child needs a bit of parental closeness after a long day at school.

8. **Absences.** When a student is absent, it is their responsibility to find out what they missed in class. Teachers will not “track down” students to provide this information.
- **If your child is absent on the day of a test or quiz, he or she must take the quiz on the day he or she returns to school.**
 - **If your child is absent the day before a test or quiz, he or she will be expected to take the test along with the class.**
 - **If a child misses several days, parents should contact the teachers to arrange timely completion of tests/quizzes.** Typically, students will be allowed one day for each day of an absence to complete classwork missed. For family vacations, students receive missed assignments upon their return. Missed quizzes/tests/projects will be expected to be completed within 5 days of the student’s return to school.
9. **Food at school.** Food allergies are very serious, and most middle school students know how to manage their own allergies. Therefore, students will not be allowed to share food with one another. There is NO SHARING OF FOOD at any time.

Birthday Treats. According to schoolwide policy, birthday snacks may not be brought to school, no exceptions will be made. This is to ensure the safety and well-being of all our students who may suffer from allergies, and to avoid any medical emergencies that may arise from consuming food from an unknown source. We thank you for your understanding.

Snacks: (Optional) Middle school students may eat a small, dry snack (no fruit cups, yogurt). Snack will be held at the teacher’s discretion and may be stopped if it becomes a distraction to the learning environment of the class. Please send in plastic refillable water bottles only, metal water bottles become a big distraction in the classroom due to the noise they may make when they fall.

9. **Responsibility and Leadership.** Our middle school children are also expected to be the leaders of the school. They play many leadership roles, including Student Government officers; lectors, ushers, and cantors at Mass; other “perks” of their status include the following:

6th Grade and 7th Grade:

- Enrichment Classes
- Weekly Study Hall
- Crusaders Connect Buddy Program
- Safety Patrols
- Lectors and Cantors at School Mass.
- Speaking and singing roles in the School-Wide Christmas Pageant
- Science Fair
- Middle School dances
- Student Government Officers
- **7th and 8th Grade only:** Participation in Shakespeare Festival

8th Grade:

All of the above, plus ...

- Ushers at School Mass
- Safety Patrol Team Leaders
- Student Government President
- Graduation Activities

ACADEMICS AND GRADING

Courses

- **Religion:** Religion is focused on the teachings of the Catholic Church. Respect for God and each other “love your neighbor as yourself” is taught on a daily basis. Additionally, students will learn about their faith through the Bible, Tradition, and the Magisterium
- **Math:** We offer 5 middle school math courses. Math 6, Math 7, Pre-Algebra, Algebra and Geometry.
- **English:** Our English instruction includes reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. Students are given individualized instruction in each of these topics. They are also assigned novels throughout their time in middle school in order to better prepare them for high school.
- **History:** Middle School History explores our world from the dawn of humanity to the contemporary world. The 6th grade course presents the ancient world beginning with the

Paleolithic era and explores the major ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece and Rome, concluding with the study of the Renaissance. 7th Grade studies the first half of U.S. history beginning with Pre-Columbian civilizations. The Colonial and Revolutionary period of our country is also covered, and ends with the outbreak of the Civil War. 8th Grade History resumes with Reconstruction and looks at the major changes our country has undergone since that time.

- **Science:** We use the Lab Learners Program, with hands-on lab experiments every week. Students in grades six and seven will participate in the annual Science Fair.
- **Latin:** The official language of the Church, we prepare students to take Latin II or Latin III in high school, depending upon their aptitude. Grades for Latin I and Latin II also may be transferred for high school credit.

Grading. The general guidelines for grading are found in the OLOH Parent Handbook. The following are some policies that apply specifically to the middle school:

1. **Online Gradebook:** All teacher gradebooks are “open” to parents online through the PowerSchool Parent Portal.
2. **Weighting:** Note the following grade weighting for each subject across the Middle School as follows:

Subject	Category	Weighting
Math	Test	45%
	Quiz	30%
	Homework	20%
	Participation	5%
English	Test	45%
	Quiz	30%
	Homework	20%
	Participation	5%
Reading	Test	45%
	Quiz	30%
	Homework	20%
	Participation	5%
History	Test	45%
	Quiz	30%
	Homework	20%
	Participation	5%
Latin	Test	45%
	Quiz	30%
	Homework	20%
	Participation	5%
Science	Test	45%
	Labs	20%
	Quiz	30%
	Participation	5%

6-7th Religion	Test	45%
	Quiz	30%
	Homework	20%
	Participation	5%
8th Religion	Homework	25%
	Tests/quizzes	35%
	Prayer journal	15%
	Projects	15%
	Service day	10%

3. **Maintaining Grade Integrity:** If a child does poorly on a test, we do not allow him or her to retake that test. Retakes on tests or quizzes where a failing grade is initially earned are at the discretion of the individual teachers. Extra credit points may be included on a particular quiz or test; however, teachers will offer extra credit assignments to raise a child's grade.
4. **Extra help:** From time to time, any child can "bomb" a test or quiz or project for whatever reason. However, if over a period of time, your child is struggling in a particular subject, especially math or English, contact that teacher to make a plan to address the problem(s). Extra help is available here at school, and outside tutoring may be suggested, as well.
5. **"Floor" of 60 for final grades (trimesters and year-end):** A grade below 60 for a student's final grade for the trimester can be catastrophic to a child's overall average for that subject. Therefore, we have a "floor" of 60, meaning the lowest possible grade on the report card is 60. However, any grade below 70 displays on the PowerSchool generated report card as "F".
6. **Zero grades.** If a child does not turn in a project, he or she will be given a zero. In the rare case that a student plagiarizes, he or she will receive a zero for that assignment. *PLEASE NOTE: Copying homework is considered plagiarism. All forms of cheating will result in a zero.*
7. **Academic Probation:** If a student earns failing grades in three or more of the seven academic subjects on any of the report cards, he or she will be placed on academic probation for the remainder of the school year. A letter will be sent home and a meeting between the homeroom teacher and the parents will be held as soon as possible. At that meeting, a plan will be developed to assist the teacher, the parent, and most importantly the student in optimizing their academic potential in order to raise those grades.

8. Honor Roll: We recognize the efforts of children who work hard to achieve academic excellence in the form of the Honor Roll. There are two levels:

Honor Roll: Grade of 90% or better *in each subject*

Principal Honor Roll: Grade of 95% or better *in each subject*

It is difficult to achieve Honor Roll status in our academically-challenging Middle School, so we are very proud of those students who achieve this honor.

NOTE: Children who receive a 1 on their report card in a Special subject **OR** in the Conduct Section will **NOT** be included on the Honor Roll for that trimester.

DISCIPLINE AND STUDENT BEHAVIOR

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord.”

Good behavior provides for a safe and orderly environment where students can grow to their full academic and spiritual potential. Students are expected to model their behavior after Jesus Christ and Our Lady of Hope, treating all with charity; showing respect for their teachers, elders, and peers.

MIDDLE SCHOOL CODE OF HONOR

I. COMMON COURTESY

- Students should greet adults upon arrival at school and in the hallways. Make eye contact, as well.
- Use “library level” voices when in the hallways.
- Offer assistance to adults when you see them in situations where you can be of help.
- Make way for adults as they pass.
- Stand when an adult enters the classroom, especially the Pastor, Parochial Vicar, and Principal.

II. STEWARDSHIP OF GOD’S PROPERTY

- Help keep the classrooms clean and neat: all storage cubes (cubbies) are to be empty at the end of the day.
- Take care of your workbooks and textbooks. Do not doodle in workbooks.
- Help keep the lockers, locker areas, stairs, and halls free of trash, even if the trash is not yours.
- Clean up after yourself when using the bathroom facility and report any problems with proper functioning of the equipment.
- Keep hands and feet off of walls and ceilings.
- Before leaving each classroom, push in your chair and discard all trash around your desk.
- Do not touch property that is not yours.

- Show respect for technology and treat the chromebooks with care, returning them to the charging cart at the end of each use.

III. RESPECT FOR THE RIGHT TO LEARN AND TEACH WITHOUT DISRUPTION

- Always show respect to your teacher as the person to whom God and your parents have entrusted you.
- Listen politely and quietly when others are speaking, and do not interrupt.
- Raise your hand before leaving your seat.
- Politely raise your hand before speaking, waiting until teachers have finished their point first.
- Bring all books and supplies to each class.
- Respect the opinions of your peers.
- Be on time to school.
- Be in the classroom before the tardy bell rings.
- Be kind.

IV. SAFETY IN THE LUNCHROOM AND AT RECESS

- Respect the Lunchroom Manager and all parent volunteers as if they were your teachers.
- Obey all parent volunteers at recess.
- Follow all playground and lunchroom rules.
- Use the playground equipment in a safe manner as instructed.
- **Never share food.**
- Never throw food.
- Help keep the lunchroom spotless.
- During indoor recess students must remain seated at a desk or table and must keep their voices at a conversational level.

V. TECHNOLOGY USE IN THE CLASSROOM

- All use of chromebooks will be limited to the sites or applications which the teacher has instructed the class to use at the time.
- No unauthorized chromebook use will be permitted.
- Cell phones are strictly prohibited in the classrooms, hallways, lockers and bathrooms.
- Students must abide by the cell phone declaration form. If a cell phone has been declared, it must be turned in at the beginning of each school day.
- There will be no smartwatches allowed in the building.
- Any cell phones or smartwatches that are observed will be confiscated and can be picked up in the school office by a parent or guardian.

VI. APPROPRIATE GROOMING AND UNIFORM

- No breaking of any rule regarding appropriate grooming and appearance as written in the Parent/Student Handbook.
- On Spirit Days, dress modestly, no ripped jeans, tight pants, leggings, or “jeggings.” Skirts must be no shorter than one inch above the knee. PE shorts only if shorts are worn.
- On field trips, the school uniform is worn unless parents have been notified to the contrary.

- For Middle School dances, if you have any hesitation about whether your attire is modest, do not wear it.
- For Graduation Mass shoulders must be covered, and skirts may be only 1 inch above the knee. Boys wear suits, or jacket and slacks, or long-sleeved shirt and slacks.

CONSEQUENCES OF CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATIONS:

When students do not follow the Code of Conduct, there are consequences which include, but are not limited to the following:

Level I. CLASSROOM CONSEQUENCES

Individual teachers issue a verbal warning and apply corrective consequences as they see appropriate.

Level II. DEMERITS

If a teacher issues a verbal warning and another violation occurs, the student will be sent home with a *Demerit* and parents will be emailed. The demerit system allows the teacher to communicate with the parents that the student's behavior during the day has not been in compliance with the Middle School's Code of Conduct. Individual demerits act as a communication tool between the parents, students and other teachers. Demerits are not reflected on the report card unless there is a repeated pattern of highlighted behavior with the accompanying communication.

Level III. DETENTION

If violations continue, teachers may issue a Lunch/Recess Detention, thus separating the child from his or her peers for a time of reflection. More serious discipline issues may result in an after school detention. During detention, students will take part in activities that will assist them in reflecting on how they can make better choices in the future. If a detention is handed out, the assigning teacher will email the parent explaining the situation, and the homeroom teacher is courtesy-copied.

Level IV. IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

After students have served three Lunch/Recess Detentions in one trimester, and violations of the Code of Conduct continue, the child will serve In-School Suspension. These students are separated from their classmates for the day. During the suspension, these students may not participate in regular school activities or after school activities, such as CYO or Choir.

Level V. OUT OF SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS

Once students have served up to two days of In-School Suspension, and the violations continue to occur, students will be assigned Out-Of-School Suspension for a length of time at the discretion of the Principal. Students assigned out of school suspension are not allowed on school property for the duration of the suspension. These students may not participate in any school or after school activity during this period of time. Students who are suspended may make up their classwork, homework, tests, and quizzes which were missed due to the suspension.

Level VI. EXPULSION

When all attempts to encourage right choices have proven ineffective, the Principal and Pastor may decide that a student should leave our school.

STUDENT / PARENT SIGNATURE PAGE

We hope this handbook will be helpful to you. Please take time to review it with your child and return this page to your child's homeroom teacher with both student and parent signatures.

For Students: I have read the handbook with my parent/guardian and agree to adhere to policies described, especially the OLOH Code of Honor.

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

For Parent/Guardian: I have read the handbook and reviewed it with my child and agree to adhere to all the policies described.

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____

Date: _____