

August 2011

Dear Middle School Students and Parents,

Welcome to a new year at Old Mission School. This is a year you will discover much more about yourself and your potential. It will be a time we will invite you to consider the kind of person you would like to become. The challenges in middle school are unique, but so are the opportunities.

The Middle School Handbook is an accompaniment to your Parent/Student Handbook. It serves as a summary guide to the academic programs offered to you and the requirements related to our middle school program. Old Mission School provides students with a challenging array of core subjects as well as a variety of enrichment classes. Religious studies, prayer and worship, community building and service to others provide the cornerstone of the program. Our aim is to offer our students a deeper knowledge of what it means to be a Christian, and an understanding of our tradition, our role in the modern world, and our personal journey into a relationship with God.

In addition to a strong academic curriculum, we offer a diverse athletic program and a series of social activities appropriate for middle school and aimed at healthy emotional and social development. I am especially proud of the service program. It will make service both meaningful and on-going throughout the year.

If you have any questions about our program or policies in middle school, please contact your student's classroom teacher or advisor. An intrinsic characteristic of our middle school is the maintenance of an active home and school partnership. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to maintain communication with the OMS staff during office hours, or leave them an email or a voicemail. Please never contact staff members at home.

Please read this handbook carefully and retain it for reference purposes. Please accept my prayers and best wishes for an enjoyable and productive year at Old Mission School.

With warmest wishes,

Tina Ballantyne
Principal

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Mission Statement

The Old Mission Catholic School community is dedicated to the development of socially responsible citizens for the twenty-first century who are spiritually empowered, academically enriched, and morally accountable for their actions.

School Philosophy

The philosophy of Old Mission School focuses on working cooperatively to develop three ideals: 1) spirituality; 2) academic excellence; and 3) integrity. Recognizing parents as primary educators, we work cooperatively within the Mission Parish to achieve an innovative and disciplined school environment. While emphasizing core curriculum, we encourage discovery, challenge, high academic standards, and service to others.

We strive to model for one another Christ-centered integrity, becoming spiritually enriched for encounters with the Living Christ. Each child has a right and responsibility to develop his or her full potential as a child of God - spiritually, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically.

We embrace and support the following attributes of Catholic education:

The Catholic school affords a particularly favorable setting for catechesis with its daily opportunity for proclaiming and living the gospel message; for learning and appreciating the teachings of the Catholic Church; for acquiring a deep understanding, reverence, and love of the Liturgy; for building community; for prayer; for proper formation of conscience; for the development of virtue; and for participating in Christian service. In addition, Catholic schools strive to relate all of the sciences to salvation and sanctification. Students are shown how Jesus illuminates all of life – science, mathematics, history, business, biology, and so forth.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Washington D.C., 2005

Accreditation

Old Mission School is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and the Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA).



Honor Code

***I am on my honor...
to speak the truth,
to do what is honest,
to respect people and property.***

Old Mission School

Course Requirements Grade 6

Religious Studies	5 periods per week
General Mathematics	5 periods per week
English Grammar/Spelling	4 periods per week
Reading	5 periods per week
Social Studies	5 periods per week
Science	5 periods per week
Spanish	2 periods per week
Physical Education	2 periods per week
Music	1 period per week
Computers	1 period per week

Mathematics Placement Criteria

In order to facilitate the learning process, students are grouped within grade levels according to their math skills and learning modalities. Standardized test scores, previous math grades, samples of student work, and team recommendations are used in determining placement.

Course Requirements Grades 7 and 8

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Credits</u>
Religious Education		
Religious Studies	7	5
Religious Studies	8	5
Mathematics		
Pre-algebra	7	5
Algebra, Honors Algebra	8	5
English		
Grammar	7	3
Literature/Composition	7	3/2
Grammar	8	3
Literature/Composition	8	3/2
Science		
Earth Science	7	5
Life Science	8	5
Social Studies		
World History	7	5
United States History/ Government	8	5
Foreign Language		
Spanish 1	7	2
Spanish 1	8	2
Physical Education		
	7	3
	8	3
Enrichment Courses		
	7	2
	8	2
Community Service		
	7	5
	8	5

* Transfer students from public schools may receive credit for courses taken in lieu of Old Mission School's religious studies requirement.

Academic Policies and Information

Academic Awards

Students at Old Mission School are involved in the pursuit of academic excellence and the development of their full spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical potential. At the end of each year, the school will recognize those middle school students who have demonstrated superior work by giving them the following awards: Valedictorian, Salutatorian Circle, Bobbie Markoff, and Julia Morris Awards in grade eight; General Excellence in grades six and seven; and Christian Spirit, Principal's Honor Roll, and Subject Awards in grades six, seven, and eight. The following general criteria are used in the selection process:

Valedictorian/Josephine Maddalena Scholarship- The Valedictory Award is given at promotion to the eighth-grade student who has earned the highest overall grade point average with no unsatisfactories, no "needs improvement" at the end of the first five trimesters of the seventh and eighth-grade years at Old Mission School. To be honored as valedictorian, the student must also be willing to accept the privilege of addressing the promoting class during the commencement exercises. This comes with a monetary award.

Salutatorian Circle- The Salutatorian Circle will include the eighth-grade students earning at least a 3.8 GPA average with no unsatisfactories for seventh grade from any school and the first two trimesters for eighth grade at OMS. One member of the circle will be randomly chosen to deliver a welcoming address at promotion ceremonies.

Bobbie Markoff Memorial Award- This award, given in honor and memory of Mrs. Markoff, a secretary at Mission for many years, is given to an eighth-grade student who models kindness, school spirit, friendliness, respect for others, and hard work. This comes with a monetary award.

Julia Morris Memorial Award- This award, given in honor and memory of Mrs. Morris, a volunteer at Mission for many years, is given to the eighth-grade student who most exemplifies the "spirit of volunteerism" in and outside of school. This comes with a monetary award.

General Excellence- Students in grades six and seven who demonstrate the following attributes will be considered for the general excellence award: outstanding effort and conduct, demonstrated leadership skill, positive school attitude, superior academic performance, high level of classroom/school spirit, high level of initiative, and good self control. The Valedictorian, Salutatorian Circle, Bobbie Markoff, and Julia Morris Memorial Awards are given to eighth-grade students in lieu of the General Excellence Award.

Christian Spirit- Students in grades six through 8 who demonstrate the following attributes will be considered for the Christian Service Award: prayerfulness, kindness, respect for others, a willingness to participate in school celebrations and services, generosity, demonstrated knowledge and understanding of Christian principles, and involvement in community service. The eighth-grade award comes with a monetary award.

Catholic Daughters of the Americas - Each year the Catholic Daughters of the Americas gives an award to the eighth-grade student who has shown the most overall improvement during the middle school years. The award goes to a student who has displayed effort and dedication in his or her schoolwork and attitude. This comes with a monetary award.

Principal's Medallion- Eighth-grade students who achieve a cumulative 3.75 grade point average (no unsatisfactories, no "needs improvement") at the end of the academic year will be eligible for the Principal's Medallion Honor Roll. The following core subjects will be used to determine honor roll eligibility: religion, math, English grammar, English composition and literature, social studies, science, and Spanish.

Scholar Athlete Award- This award is given to eighth-grade students who participate in a sport and maintain a GPA average of 3.5 or more for the first two trimesters of the year. These awards will be presented with subject awards during the last week of classes.

Subject Awards- These awards will be given to students who demonstrate superior achievement and/or show exceptional effort and behavior in a particular subject area. Awards are given in each section of the core subjects. The middle school teachers will present these awards during the last week of classes.

Academic Probation

If a student's cumulative grade point average falls below 2.0 for any grading period or s/he receives an *F* or an unsatisfactory in any core subject area, s/he will be placed on academic probation. Grades from the following core subjects will be used to compute the grade point average: religion, math, grammar, spelling, literature/reading, composition, social studies, science, and Spanish (grades six through eight only). Students will remain on probation until the next report card is issued (including third trimester to first trimester of a new academic year). At that time, students who have raised their grade point average (2.0 or higher) will be removed from academic probation. Otherwise, they will remain on probation and may be asked to enroll in special remediation programs. If satisfactory progress is not achieved and maintained, students may not be promoted at the end of the school year or documentation of remediation during summer months may be required.

Academic Progress Reports

Academic progress reports will be issued/emailed during the seventh week of each trimester for any student receiving a grade of *C-* or below in any subject. Progress reports may also be issued at parent request.

Academically Talented Students

Old Mission School offers the opportunity for academically talented students in grades six through eight to participate in qualitatively different classroom projects. These projects will attempt to challenge and fulfill the needs of students identified as particularly able in different subject areas.

Activity/Athletic Eligibility

Any student who wishes to participate in sports or other school-sponsored extra-curricular activities must maintain a minimum 2.0 grade point average (with no *F* or unsatisfactory in any core subject) each trimester, and be in good academic standing in all courses throughout the entire period of the extra-curricular activity. Students who fail to meet this minimum standard will be ineligible for participation in the activities noted above. School personnel will compile grades for all students during the sixth week and at the end of each trimester to determine if students qualify to begin an activity. If a student's grades meet the minimum standard, s/he will be eligible as long as s/he remains in good standing in all core subjects. Grades at the end of a trimester (including third trimester to first trimester of a new academic year) will be used in determining eligibility. Students who wish to run for ASB president or vice president must have maintained a 3.0 grade point average (with no *F* or unsatisfactory in any subject) the previous academic year. Students who wish to run for any other ASB position may have no *F* or unsatisfactory in any subject the previous academic year. All candidates must meet acceptable attendance requirements. Students **must attend the entire day of classes** to be eligible to participate in any extra-curricular athletics or activities. Exceptions are rare and must be made by the administration.

Attendance

If students are absent from school ten or more days during any academic trimester, they may receive **incompletes (INCs)** in lieu of letter grades on their report cards for that grading period. These **INCs** must be made up within two weeks. Any student who misses forty or more days of school during any academic year may be retained in his/her current grade for an additional year. At OMS, we believe that attendance in school is essential to any student's success. Participation will comprise ten percent of your child's grade in every subject, and it includes attendance, materials, and good behavior. No assignments will be given prior to any absence. In extraordinary circumstances, arrangements will be made with the administration. Please consult the Family Handbook for attendance policies.

Diocesan Grading Scale

The following grading scale has been adopted and is used at Old Mission School:

A	97-100	B	86-89	C	74-78	D	65-67
A-	94-96	B-	83-85	C-	70-73	D-	63-64
B+	90-93	C+	79-82	D+	68-69	F	0-62

Homework

Middle school students will have an average of two hours of homework that will be assigned a minimum of four nights per week. Parental cooperation is expected in maintaining and supervising the nightly quiet time. If students do not have written work, they should still develop the habit of using their quiet time to preview and review in each subject area or work on long-

term assignments. Weekend homework will be given for the purpose of making up work missed through absence or poor effort, for mastery of work covered through the week, or for certain long-term assignments. A student who has been absent will have one day for each day missed (a one week maximum) to make up missing assignments.

Liturgical Participation

Throughout the school year, students will be introduced to and will participate in various liturgical celebrations and paraliturgical activities (for example, Mass, reconciliation services, retreats, Mary's assembly, scripture services, and prayer sessions). Students who are not Catholic are expected to attend respectfully all liturgical and other religious celebrations as a part of their education at Old Mission School; their active participation is always optional.

Trimester Honor Rolls

A student who earns a 3.25-3.49 grade point average at the end of the trimester will be eligible for Second Honors; 3.5-3.74 is eligible for First Honors; and 3.75 or higher is eligible for Principal's Honor Roll. The following core subjects will be used to determine honor roll eligibility: religion, math, English grammar and spelling, English literature and composition, social studies, science, and Spanish with no *F* or unsatisfactory in any subject.

Remediation

Mission School endeavors to meet the needs of all its students. Therefore, students having difficulty in particular subject areas will receive additional assistance from classroom teachers. Students with special needs may be referred for professional diagnostic evaluation. Classroom teachers are generally available one-half hour after school for tutoring. Students may also arrange for help before school, or during lunch.

Report Cards

Students receive report cards each academic trimester. At the end of the first and second trimesters, report cards may be distributed to middle school students prior to student-parent-teacher conferences to give parents and students an opportunity to discuss the reports before meeting with the teachers.

Campus Department Grades

Campus Department Grades are determined each trimester using the following criteria: disciplinary actions, playground white slips, dress code infractions, lost and found unclaimed items. High schools are quick to notice campus department marks since they often indicate whether a student is responsible for him/herself and exhibits respectful behavior.

Retention/Promotion of Students

If students consistently perform unsatisfactory work, they will be subject to one of the following actions:

1. They may be retained in sixth, seventh, or eighth grade for an additional year; or
2. They may be promoted conditionally. Under this circumstance, the student must enroll in and complete a program of remediation during the summer months. Students must receive a grade of *C* or better in a summer school program. Students may not be issued diplomas or final grades from Old Mission School or may not be accepted back to OMS until the school receives documentation verifying satisfactory completion of a summer school program

Roundtable Conferences

During the middle school years, student-parent-teacher conferences are conducted in a roundtable format that gives the parents the opportunity to meet with as many of their child's teachers as possible. During the year, teachers, parents, or students may request roundtable meetings at which the presence of the student may be required.

Testing

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) is mandated by the Diocese of Monterey and is administered to students in grades six, seven, and eight. This testing takes place in the fall. Every attempt will be made to give parents test results at the first student-parent-teacher conference held in the fall. The testing program is used as a diagnostic tool for the school.

Textbooks

Students in grades seven and eight will purchase their textbooks and will take responsibility for their proper care. Textbooks may be resold to members of next year's class or to www.mbsdirect.net. Students are asked not to write in/draw on any textbook.

Service Project Information

Students enrolled in the middle school program at Old Mission School are required to complete fifteen hours of service during each of their seventh and eighth-grade years. These must be student-initiated, community-oriented volunteer hours; students may not receive payment for their service. Service hours are signed off by a supervisor (not a parent) at the place of service. A schedule of completion dates and a detailed explanation of procedures will be supplied to the students during the first weeks of the school year. Please take special note of these procedures since they have been restructured to provide even more effective service to our local community.

Middle School Work Standard

As a student at Old Mission School, you are expected to take pride in your work and to strive for high standards of quality in all areas of your school work. The following guidelines are designed to assist you in attaining these goals.

1. You are responsible for a moderate amount of both written homework and at-home reading assignments that will be given on a regular basis.
2. Homework will be checked daily in each subject area. If an assignment is late or not completed according to school standards, you and your teacher will discuss this issue. If this happens a second time, we will notify parents and ask for a note home to be signed and returned. A third time will usually result in an assigned after-school study hall.
3. On a daily basis, we require the use of the Old Mission assignment book distributed at the beginning of the year. Be careful to copy assignments and recheck for accuracy. Assignments will be reviewed during afternoon closing each day. Ask questions whenever necessary. Be sure you take home the books and materials you need to complete your work.
4. After school, check your schedule and allow enough time for your work. Have a study area away from distractions, a place you know you can produce quality work.
5. Unless special directions are given for a particular assignment, please observe these standards in presenting your written work:
 - a. Put your heading in the upper right-hand corner of your paper in this format:
Full Name and number
Date
Subject
On the first line, describe the assignment.
 - b. Paper must be standard-sized, college-ruled binder paper, **not** torn from a spiral note book. Math must be completed on graph paper.
 - c. Math is to be done in pencil; all other written work is to be done entirely in blue or black ink unless special instructions are given.
 - d. All math computation is to be shown and answers neatly listed in an answer column. Use a ruler to make the column.
 - e. All erasures are to be done neatly.
 - f. Avoid crossing work out. On the rare occasion when crossing out might be appropriate, do so with one neat line.
 - g. Proofread all your work!
 - h. Papers which are torn, wrinkled, on which doodles have been drawn, or are not neat or legible cannot be accepted. As a consequence, the work will be considered late when it is redone.
6. When you finish an assignment, recheck your assignment book to be sure you have **completely** followed directions. Have the phone numbers of a few “homework buddies” in case of emergency. ***After an absence, be sure to check with each of your teachers on the day of your return. You have one day to make up the work for full credit.***

7. Share your work with a parent or guardian. Parents are usually happy to proof-read with you.
8. Put all homework in a safe place (binder, pocket folder) so it arrives safely, neatly, and on time to school.
9. If an emergency arises and you are unable to complete a written (or other) assignment, ask your parent or guardian to write a note explaining the situation so that the make-up procedure may be arranged. **Remember:** Make-up work must be done promptly to receive credit.
10. You are responsible to have all your books and materials with you at school and in class. The school will not be delivering materials brought by a family member to rescue you. This is an exercise in taking responsibility for yourself, a skill you need in higher education.

Seventh and Eighth Grade Dress Code

2011-2012

The guidelines for acceptable clothing for seventh and eighth grade students are as follows:

Students are asked to dress in a way that expresses the importance of their learning at Old Mission School. Cleanliness, neatness, modesty, and appropriateness are expected of their clothing choices. They are asked to HONOR THE INTENT of the dress code by striving to dress appropriately for the many functions in which they are involved: church services, classroom work, physical education, school meetings, and recreation. The administration reserves the right to make adjustments to the dress code as circumstances arise.

In general, students are asked to dress in conventional school clothing and to avoid clothing which is worn out, faded, stained, tattered, or has holes or unfinished seams, or which could be considered distracting in the learning environment. Students should observe the policy of avoiding the “too’s”: too tight, too baggy, too short, too long, too low.

NOTE: If, at any time, students are in doubt as to whether or not their apparel conforms to the dress code, they are expected to exercise their responsibility to check it out with the middle school team BEFORE wearing it to school. We expect students and parents to clarify dress code requirements BEFORE purchasing school clothing. We expect parents to monitor the hair, make-up and dress of their children and not make this the responsibility of the school.

Shirts/Tops: Sleeves are required. Shirts may be wore out or tucked in. T-shirts or flannel shirts are not allowed on normal days. Boys’ shirts must have collars.

Pants: Slacks, capris, and walking shorts (which fall above but clearly no shorter than 4 inches above the knee) are allowed but must be wore at the waist. If belt loops are visible, belts must be worn. No jeans of any color are allowed on normal days. No overalls, cargo pants, jogging suits, fleece, sweats or exercise clothing are permitted.

Skirts: Straight skirts must be knee length; full skirts must be no shorter than 4 inches above the knee. Skirts must be worn at the waist.

Shoes: Shoes may include low-heeled shoes or sandals with a back or back strap. No high-heeled shoes, Ugg-type shoes, or boots are allowed.

Socks: While socks are recommended, they will not be required for middle school students.

UNACCEPTABLE CLOTHING: Clothing with emblems, pictures, writing, or symbols; jeans of any color; inappropriately fitting attire (too tight or too baggy); cargo pants; flannel shirts; any outerwear other than Mission jackets and Mission sweatshirts; and hats (other than Mission hats) or headgear are not allowed on campus.

MAKE-UP: Middle school students have the option to wear CLEAR nail polish or have French manicures and CLEAR lip gloss only. Any other type of make-up will not be permitted. Artificial nails are not acceptable. No tattoos, permanent or temporary, will be permitted.

JEWELRY: Girls' earrings are limited to one small pair worn on the lobe and must not hang below the earlobe. This is a safety issue. Other types of costume jewelry are not permitted.

HAIR: Hairstyles must be neat and uniformly cut. Boys' haircuts are to be clearly above eyebrows, the middle of the ears, and the collar **at all times**. Sides and back must be tapered/cut if hair tends to flip. If hair is curly, it should be close-cropped and neat in appearance. Unconventional cuts (including defined lines, shaved parts, or spikes), coloring, highlighting, or embellishments/feathers will not be permitted. Girls' bangs must be above the eyebrows. Students will not be permitted to return to school until violations in this area are corrected.

CONSEQUENCES: The dress code will be consistently and fairly enforced. The consequences for students who do not follow the guidelines are:

First violation of the year: recorded in office, conference with teacher.

Second violation of the year: recorded in office, parents notified, campus department grade affected.

Third violation of the year: recorded in office, parents notified, campus department grade affected.

At the third violation, students will be required to wear the school uniform for the duration of the school year.

The success of the seventh/eighth grade dress code depends on the exercise of good judgment on the part of the students, as well as support from parents and/or guardians.

Gum

Students may not chew gum at school. Middle school students who ignore this rule will be required to stay after school 30 minutes to assist with campus or classroom clean-up. A second infraction will result in 60 minutes after school, and a disciplinary referral to the principal. School is not an appropriate place for gum, gum disposal, or gum wrappers in classrooms.

**Old Mission School
Student Compliance Statement**

Please sign the Handbook compliance form sent home that states you have read and agree to the conditions set in this supplement.

Thank you for your cooperation.