



**Mercy Education**  
System of the Americas

**Educación de la Misericordia**  
de las Américas

## **Covenant**

Mercy Education System of the Americas, Inc.

and

[NAME OF EDUCATION MINISTRY]

“As Sisters of Mercy we sponsor institutions to address our enduring concerns and to witness to Christ’s mission. Within these institutions we, together with our co-workers and those we serve, endeavor to model mercy and justice and to promote systemic change according to these ideals.”

(Constitutions, paragraph #5)

The Sisters of Mercy are committed to supporting those entrusted with governance and administration of our sponsored schools now and into the future. As we establish a new model of governance, through the Mercy Education System of the Americas, Inc., the importance of maintaining the Mercy charism and the integrity of this identity are at the foundation of this relational covenant. To articulate the responsibilities of each partner in this relational covenant, this document outlines what each partner promises. The Sisters of Mercy continue the sponsorship of [NAME OF EDUCATION MINISTRY] and [NAME OF EDUCATION MINISTRY] agrees to specific responsibilities that will foster and maintain Catholic and Mercy identity. This document is to be treated as a companion document to the bylaws for the Mercy Education System of the Americas and to the reserved powers listed in the school bylaws.

## **Relationships**

The relationship between the Sisters of Mercy and a sponsored school is embodied in persons who embrace the call to serve in various capacities within the Mercy school community:

### **Sisters of Mercy**

The Sisters of Mercy will maintain a living relationship with their sponsored schools through the Mercy Education System of the Americas, Inc. The Sisters of Mercy have delegated to the Mercy Education System the authority and the responsibility to oversee their sponsored schools. In addition, the Mercy Education System will develop services, programs, and other resources to maintain the school’s Catholic and Mercy identity. Board members, administrators, faculty and staff members, students and to the extent possible, parents and benefactors, will have the opportunity to participate in retreats, workshops, and other kinds of religious support in carrying out the mission.

## **Governing Boards**

The local school boards hold the mission of the school in trust for the Sisters of Mercy. Therefore they hold responsibility for the school's Catholic and Mercy identity. The local school boards set direction, establish policies and ensure programs that demonstrate the school's Catholic and Mercy identity, and require accountability for mission from the administrator. New board members will receive an orientation that includes the nature of the school as a Catholic institution and the relationship to the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas as the Public Juridic Person. All board members are expected to participate in ongoing board development.

## **Administrator**

The chief administrator understands the nature of a Catholic school and the Mercy tradition and is publically missioned by the Sisters of Mercy, through the Mercy Education System, to lead the school. The administrator is expected to participate in an orientation prescribed by the Mercy Education System upon assuming this role. The administrator is also expected to participate in ongoing professional development and to participate fully in the programs and services offered by the Mercy Education System.

The administrator will work with the Mercy Education System to insure the fidelity of the school to the mission and to render accountability for it. The administrator will offer encouragement and support for faculty, staff and student participation in programs that enhance their ability to serve the mission.

## **Faculty and Staff**

Faculty and staff will be encouraged to take advantage of such programs as orientation, retreats, and other programs offered through the Mercy Education System to develop themselves both spiritually and professionally as Mercy educators.

## **Students**

Students will have opportunities to learn, share and live out the Mercy mission through programs specially designed for students through the Mercy Education System.

## **Accountability Structures**

The Sisters of Mercy, through the Mercy Education System, determine and affirm that a school is a ministry of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy and therefore carries out the mission of the school in the name of the Roman Catholic Church. In light of this responsibility of sponsorship, the Sisters of Mercy, acting through the Mercy Education System, outline what is required of a school to receive this recognition.

1. The school participates in the Mercy Education System, with the support of the board and the administration.
2. The school board agrees that the Mercy Education System will have reserved governance powers and that the Mercy Education System's consent shall be required for the following governance actions:

- a. To adopt or change the mission, purpose, philosophy or objectives of the corporation or to change the general structure of the operation of the corporation as a voluntary non-profit corporation for education.
  - b. To amend the corporation's charter, certificate or articles of incorporation, or bylaws;
  - c. To dissolve, divide, convert, liquidate or wind up the corporation, or consolidate or merge the corporation with another corporation or entity;
  - d. To create any subsidiary corporation;
  - e. To sell all or substantially all the assets of the corporation.
  - f. To elect members of the Board of the corporation upon recommendation of the Board of Directors;
  - g. To remove, with or without cause, members of the Board of Directors;
  - h. To ratify a candidate nominated by the Board of Directors as the chief executive officer of the corporation.
  - i. To approve any encumbrance of assets of the corporation in excess of the limits determined and promulgated from time to time by MESA.
3. The school participates in a program of regular assessment and evaluation as developed by the Mercy Education System to maintain the status as a school sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy and a Member Institution of the Mercy Education System of the Americas, Inc.

Recognized schools will identify themselves publicly as a sponsored ministry of the Sisters of Mercy and as a Member Institution of the Mercy Education System of the Americas, Inc. and will use symbols associated with the Sisters of Mercy, such as the Mercy Cross, in their signage and promotional materials.