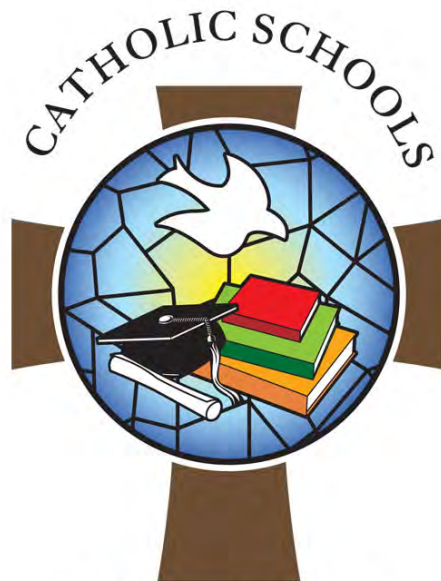


# Handbook of Policies and Regulations for Catholic Schools



Archdiocese of San Antonio

*Archdiocese of San Antonio  
Department of Catholic Schools*

*Approved by the*

*Most Reverend Gustavo García-Siller, M.Sp.S  
Archbishop of San Antonio*

June, 2011

## **PREFACE**

# **THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN ANTONIO**

In the Archdiocese of San Antonio, Catholic Schools may be a part of a parochial structure, interparochial or private. All are approved by the Archbishop and the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and Accreditation Commission.

Each school in the Archdiocese must come to an awareness of its own reason for existence and of its purpose within the context of the mission of the Church. The Church has a threefold mission: (1) imparting the message of Jesus the Christ (2) advancing the building of Christian community; and (3) showing what the Good News is by the quality and character of service to the community. Those in Catholic schools draw their purpose and meaning from this context and function as one effective element in the Church's ministry of furthering these goals.

"Christian education is intended to make one's faith become living, conscious and active through the light of instruction. The Catholic School is the unique setting within which this ideal can be realized in the lives of Catholic children and young people" (*To Teach as Jesus Did*, #102). This integration is present in the Catholic School not only through its unique curriculum but, more importantly, through the presence of teachers who express an integrated approach to learning and living in their private and professional lives. It is further reinforced through free interaction among the students themselves within their own community of youth.

### UNIVERSAL RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION

"All humankind of every race, condition and age, since they enjoy the dignity of a human being, have an inalienable right to an education that is in keeping with their ultimate goal, their ability, their sex and the culture and tradition of their country, and also in harmony with their fraternal association with other peoples in the fostering of true unity and peace on earth. For a true education aims at the formation of the human person in the pursuit of their ultimate end and of the good of the societies of which they are a member, and in whose obligations, as an adult, they will share."(#1)

Declaration on Christian Education  
SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

### ROLE OF PARENTS

Since parents have conferred life on their children, they have a most solemn obligation to educate their offspring. Hence Parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children. Their role as educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it.

It is particularly in the Christian family, enriched by the grace and sacrament of matrimony, that from their earliest years children should be taught, according to the faith received in baptism, to have knowledge of God, to worship Him, and to love their neighbor.

"While belonging primarily to the family, the task of imparting education requires the help of society as a whole. As for Catholic parents, the Council calls to mind their duty to entrust their children to Catholic Schools, when and where this is possible, to support such schools to the extent of their ability, and to work along with them for the welfare of their children."(#3)

Declaration on Christian Education  
SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

## DEDICATED TO A VISION

The fundamental purpose of Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of San Antonio is to proclaim the Good News of Jesus the Christ. His news is one of challenge, love and unity; His spirit is caught in the lives of students. Affirming that parents are the primary educators and partners of education, we prepare students to share the spirit of Jesus through community building, Christian acts of service, and word and worship. We commit to provide inspiring active learning and quality education so that all students *Share The Spirit* of Catholic Education.

This Vision statement calls forth beliefs that affirm the missionary dynamics of all Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of San Antonio. They are:

### **Foster A Catholic Identity**

We prepare students to encounter the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to bring Catholic teachings and values into their lives and the global world.

### **Invest In Community Building**

We are committed to building a communal spirit that is the heart and reality of Christian formation.

### **Provide Quality Education**

We teach knowledge and critical skills so that students function fully as citizens within a changing technological and multicultural society.

### **Encourage Moral Formation**

We lead by example in teaching moral values that encourage respect and responsibility.

### **Appreciate Families**

We recognize the family as the basic faith community in which all members share as active participants in the educational process.

### **Support Parish Life**

We believe that the school contributes to the parish through the formation of students as active participants of the parish community.

### **Share Governance**

We seek support and participation from those who share a common vision, mission and philosophy.

### **Seek Equitable Distribution**

We are challenged to establish just distribution of resources to ensure quality and affordability to families and our church.

## CODE OF CANON LAW – 1983

**Canon 217** The Christian faithful since they were called by baptism to lead a life in conformity with the teachings of the gospel, have the right to a Christian education by which they will be properly instructed so as to develop the maturity of the human person and at the same time come to know and live the mystery of salvation.

### Title III - Catholic Education

**Canon 793 - §1.** Parents as well as those who take their place are obliged and enjoy the right to educate their offspring; Catholic parents also have the duty and the right to select those means and institutions through which they can provide more suitably for the Catholic education of the children according to local circumstances.

§2. Parents also have the right to make use of those aids to be furnished by civil society which they need in order to obtain a Catholic education for their children.

**Canon 794 - §1.** The duty and right of educating belongs in a unique way to the Church which has been divinely entrusted with the mission to assist men and women so that they can arrive at the fullness of the Christian life.

§2. Pastors of souls have the duty to arrange all things so that all the faithful may enjoy a Catholic education.

**Canon 795** Since a true education must strive for the integral formation of the human person, a formation which looks toward the person's final end, and at the same time toward the common good of societies, children and young people are to be so reared that they can develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual talents, that they acquire a more perfect sense of responsibility and a correct use of freedom, and that they be educated for active participation in social life.

### Chapter I: Schools

**Canon 796 - §1.** Among educational means the Christian faithful should greatly value schools, which are of principal assistance to parents in fulfilling their educational task.

§2. It is incumbent upon parents to cooperate closely with the school teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated; in fulfilling their duty teachers are to collaborate closely with parents who are to be willingly heard and for whom associations or meetings are to be inaugurated and held in great esteem.

**Canon 797** It is necessary that parents enjoy true freedom in selecting schools; the Christian faithful must therefore be concerned that civil society acknowledge this freedom for parents and also safeguard it with its resources in accord with distributive justice.

**Canon 798** Parents are to entrust their children to those schools in which Catholic education is provided; but if they are unable to do this, they are bound to provide for their suitable Catholic education outside the schools.

**Canon 799** The Christian faithful are to strive so that in civil society the laws which regulate the formation of youth provide also for their religious and moral education in the school themselves in accord with the conscience of the parents.

**Canon 800 - §1.** The Church has the right to establish and supervise schools of any discipline, type and grade whatsoever.

§2. The Christian faithful are to foster Catholic Schools by supporting their establishment and their maintenance in proportion to their resources.

**Canon 801** Religious institutes, whose proper mission is that of education, while faithfully retaining this mission of theirs, are also to devote themselves to Catholic education through their schools established with the consent of the diocesan bishop.

**Canon 802 - §1.** If schools imparting an education imbued with the Christian spirit are not available the diocesan bishop is to see to it that they are established.

§2. The diocesan bishop is to provide for the establishment of professional schools, technical schools, and other schools required by special needs whenever such would be advantageous.

**Canon 803 - §1.** That school is considered to be Catholic which ecclesiastical authority or a public ecclesiastical juridic person supervises or which ecclesiastical authority recognizes as such by means of a written document.

§2. It is necessary that the formation and education given in a Catholic school be based upon the principles of Catholic doctrine; teachers are to be outstanding for their correct doctrine and integrity of life.

§3. Even if it really be Catholic, no school may bear the title Catholic school without the consent of the competent ecclesiastical authority.

**Canon 804 - §1.** Catholic religious formation and education which are imparted in any schools whatsoever as well as that acquired through the various media of social communications are subject to the authority of the Church; it is the responsibility of the conference of bishops to issue general norms in this area, and it is the responsibility of the diocesan bishop to regulate such education and be vigilant over it.

§2. The local ordinary is to be concerned that those who are assigned as religion teachers in schools, even in non-Catholic ones, be outstanding for their correct doctrine, their witness of Christian living and their pedagogical skills.

**Canon 805** For his own diocese the local ordinary has the right to name or approve teachers of religion and likewise to remove or to demand that they be removed if it is required for reasons of religion or morals.

**Canon 806 - §1.** The diocesan bishop has the right of vigilance over visitation of the Catholic Schools located in his territory, even those schools which have been established or are being directed by members of religious institutes; he is likewise competent to issue prescriptions dealing with general regulation of Catholic Schools; such prescriptions are also operative for those schools which are directed by religious, with due regard for their autonomy regarding the internal management of their schools.

§2. The directors of Catholic Schools, under vigilance of the local ordinary, are to see to it that the instruction given in them is at least as academically distinguished as that given in the other schools of the region.

# HANDBOOK OF POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

## Revisions for 2011 - 2012

<b>Policy #</b>	<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Content Change/Edit</b>
3602	Anti-Harassment Environment for Employees/Volunteers Appendix 3602A: Harassment	Bullying defined bullying behaviors
3605A	Internet Appendix 3605A: Employee Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement	On and off campus e-communication
4107	Admissions of Students with Special Needs	Accommodations and/or modifications
4609	Anti-Harassment Environment Appendix 4609A: Harassment	Bullying defined Bullying Prevention Program bullying behaviors bullying Prevention Program components
8103	Evaluating and Reporting Appendix 8103A: Student Support Process	Student Support Process, RtI components of the process
8105	Promotion Policy	Retention of a student
8107	Internet Appendix 8107A: Technology Appropriate Usage Policy And Parent Permission Form and User Agreement	On and off campus e-communication
8108	Field Trips	Overall policy updated

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- 1104 Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED)  
<http://www.txcatholic.org>
- 1104 Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC)  
<http://www.tepsac.org>
- 3108 Texas Hire Reporting Compliance Form  
[www.newhire.org/tx](http://www.newhire.org/tx)
- 3108 I-9 Form  
[www.i9check.com/I9download.htm](http://www.i9check.com/I9download.htm)
- 3208 Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)  
[www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla](http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla)  
[www.dol.gov/elaws/fmla.htm](http://www.dol.gov/elaws/fmla.htm)
- 4404 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)  
[www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html)
- 4807 Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)  
<http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us> ; [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org) )
- 7006 Conformity Listing of Catechetical Texts and Series  
[www.usccb.org/catechism/document/Currentlist.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/catechism/document/Currentlist.pdf)
- 8303 National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA)  
<http://www.ncea.org>

### **Right to Amend Clause:**

The Archdiocese reserves the right to modify existing policies or add new policies as circumstances make such decisions prudent and necessary.

# SERIES 1000

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## CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

“The Catholic School is a most important *locus* for human and Christian formation. The declaration of the Second Vatican Council *Gravissimum Educationis* makes a decisive change in the history of Catholic schools: the move from school as institution to school as community. Catholic schools are no less zealous than other schools in the promotion of culture and in the human formation of young people. It is, however, the special function of the Catholic school to:

- develop in the school community an atmosphere animated by a spirit of liberty and charity;
- enable young people, while developing their own personality, to grow at the same time in that new life which has been given them in baptism; and,
- orient the whole of human culture to the message of salvation.”

*Reference:*

**General Directory for Catechesis, #259**

**1000**      **CENTRAL LEADERSHIP**

**\*1001**      **ARCHBISHOP, ORDINARY OF THE ARCHDIOCESE**

The Archbishop, as chief pastor of the Archdiocese, has responsibility not only for the spiritual formation of the people, but also for every other factor which contributes to the development of the Catholic community. With respect to schools, he shares his regulatory responsibilities with the Superintendent and the Catholic Schools Council of the Archdiocese of San Antonio; and shares his supervisory responsibilities with the Superintendent.

Under Texas law, the Archbishop is equivalent to a corporation sole. The parishes, schools and Catholic agencies are part of the archdiocese and must deal through the Archbishop on all legal matters. The status of the Archbishop and the archdiocese under Texas law are consistent with Canon Law.

**\*1002**      **SUPERINTENDENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

The Superintendent of Catholic Schools, appointed by the Archbishop, is the chief executive officer of the Department of Catholic Schools.

The Department of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese consists of a superintendent of Catholic Schools, and other staff positions as may be deemed appropriate. The Superintendent shall have such compensation and terms of employment as determined by the Archbishop. Other staff members shall have such compensation as recommended by the Archdiocesan Finance Council and other terms of employment as the Superintendent determines, all subject to the approval of the Archbishop.

The Superintendent respects the independent nature of certain major aspects of governance and management of private Catholic elementary and secondary schools. However, the Superintendent represents the Archbishop in preserving and promoting the teaching of Catholic doctrine in regards to faith, morals and liturgical policies. Furthermore, the Superintendent administers all policies of the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department.

**\*1003**      **ASSOCIATES, DIRECTORS AND CONSULTANTS**

Associates, Directors, and Consultants, in their representative educational areas, are responsible to the Superintendent and are to provide to the schools assistance in central administration, service and planning. A job description and explanation of services is shared with the principals.

**1100**      **CENTRAL ORGANIZATION**

**\*1101**      **CATHOLIC SCHOOLS COUNCIL OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN ANTONIO**

Appendix:    Catholic Schools Council of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, Constitution 1101A  
                  Catholic Schools Council of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, Bylaws 1101B  
                  Catholic Schools Council of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, Application 1101C

The Catholic Schools Council of the Archdiocese of San Antonio is a consultative organization appointed by the Archbishop to provide participation by the general Catholic community with the Superintendent in formulating goals, policies, and procedures for Catholic education in the archdiocese. Membership includes clergy, religious and laity.

The superintendent will consult the Council in the areas of Council membership, finances, school enhancement, policy, development and strategic planning. The Council will sponsor workshops and offer consultation for local councils.

**\*1102**      **PRINCIPALS' ADVISORY COUNCIL (PAC)**

The Principals' Advisory Council shall have as its general purpose to assist the Department of Catholic Schools in the operation of Catholic schools.

It shall achieve its purpose by acting as a consultative committee in supporting the Superintendent and Associate Superintendents in matters of school policies, procedures and programs; receiving suggestions and/or concerns on school-related issues from the principals and presenting these to the Department of Catholic Schools at regular committee meetings; acting as a channel of communication to and from the principals when requested by the Department of Catholic Schools; offering input on the agenda for the principals' meetings; and, hearing the concerns and needs of the Superintendent and the principals.

Membership shall be comprised of one principal elected from each region, and the Superintendent and Associate Superintendents. The members must have a minimum of two years experience as a principal in the Archdiocese. The term of elected membership is two years, renewable once, for a total of four years.

The regional representative shall be elected by the principals of each region during the spring regional meeting and shall take office the following school year. Elections will be held in even years for Regions 2 and 4, and in odd years for Regions 1, 3, and 5.

Meetings shall be held monthly during the school year August through May with the exception of December and March. (Revised for 2006-2007)

**\*1103 FEDERATION OF THE CATHOLIC PARENT-TEACHER CLUBS**

Appendix: Federation of the Catholic Parent Teacher Clubs, Constitution 1103A  
Federation of the Catholic Parent Teacher Clubs, Bylaws 1103B  
Federation of the Catholic Parent Teacher Clubs, Application 1103C

The Federation of the Catholic Parent-Teacher Clubs is a consultative organization with representatives appointed from parents and school employees, with approval of the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

The purpose of the Federation is to foster unity and partnership between the home and the school.

**\*1104 TEXAS CATHOLIC CONFERENCE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (TCCED)**

Link: Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED) <http://www.txcatholic.org>  
Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC) <http://www.tepsac.org>

All Catholic schools in the Archdiocese must be accredited through the process as outlined by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department.

The Texas Catholic Conference (TCC) is the association of the fifteen Roman Catholic (Arch)dioceses located in the state of Texas. In cooperation with the diocesan school offices, the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED) oversees the accreditation of Catholic elementary and secondary schools of Texas. The Education Department is assisted by the Texas Catholic Conference Accreditation Commission (TCCAC) and is part of the state-approved Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC). Non-public schools accredited by a TEPSAC approved association are recognized by the Commissioner of Education as accredited schools and are listed in the official Texas School Directory published annually by the Texas Education Agency.

**\*1105 CATHOLIC SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP**

The Archbishop approves the operation of Catholic schools by parishes of the Archdiocese and by Religious Orders. Any other group wishing to establish, sponsor, or contract for the operation of a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of San Antonio must receive the approval of the Archbishop, and must meet the following conditions:

1. The entity or group must be incorporated and explicitly contain in its constitution and by-laws a statement that it is Roman Catholic by nature, and is established for the sole purpose of operating a Catholic school.
2. The Articles of Incorporation must include an explicit statement that the Board of Directors will operate the Catholic school according to the policies of the Catholic Schools Council of the Archdiocese as promulgated by the Archbishop.
3. The school's philosophy and doctrine must be in accordance with Catholic teachings of the Second Vatican Council.

4. The By-laws must further acknowledge adherence to and acceptance of the accreditation standards and procedures of the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department, which shall become the official accrediting agency of the school.
5. The By-laws must also state that the school will be administered according to the fiscal policies and procedures of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, with accountability to the Archdiocesan Superintendent and the Archdiocesan Business Office for its financial operations.
6. It is not the desire of the Archbishop, Superintendent, nor of the Catholic Schools Council of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, to enter the internal control of a Catholic school sponsored by an approved entity, but it is in the interest of responsible stewardship, according to Catholic philosophy and standards for educational and fiscal policies, that the Archdiocese must establish this overall policy in order to safeguard the integrity of the Roman Catholic Church with any institution that seeks to be recognized as Catholic. Consequently, the relationship between the Archdiocese and such an independent corporation shall not be deemed a partnership or joint venture. (See Canons 803 and 806)

# SERIES 2000

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## LOCAL ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

“In recent years, thousands of lay people have come forward as administrators and teachers in the Church's schools and educational programs. By accepting and developing the legacy of Catholic thought and educational experience which they have inherited, they take their place as full partners in the Church's mission of educating the whole person and of transmitting the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ to successive generations of young Americans. Even if they do not “teach religion,” their service in a Catholic school or educational program is part of the Church's unceasing endeavor to lead all to “profess the truth of love and grow to the full maturity of Christ the head” (Eph 4:15)”

*Reference:*

**Pope John Paul II on the occasion of his second pastoral visit to the United States, 1998**

## **2000 PARISH**

### **2001 PARISH RESPONSIBILITY FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

In those parishes having a Catholic school, the parish, under the guidance and supervision of the pastor, and in consultation with the principal, local school council, parish pastoral council, and parish finance council, shall provide and maintain adequate facilities in which to house such a school.

Projects for expansion, establishment, or large repair or remodeling shall be accomplished only after approval of the Archbishop. All said projects must be submitted through established channels for such approval.

### **2002 THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR**

The pastor is the leader of the parish in which the school is a part, and which has been entrusted to him under the authority of the Archbishop. He maintains certain responsibilities related to the school. The pastor is responsible for fostering, nurturing, guiding and coordinating the ministries of the parish. He delegates the administration of the school to the principal, who administers the school in accordance with Archdiocesan policies and guidelines. Satisfactory and effective administration depends on the cooperation and mutual support of both pastor and principal in matters of local educational policy.

The pastor is the leader in all of the decision-making processes within the parish. The pastor's authority at the parish level includes the right to approve all recommendations made by the school council.

Selection of the principal must include a recommendation by a search committee appointed by the pastor. The principal is hired by the pastor, in consultation with the superintendent, and as per the ministry agreement arranged through the Department of Catholic Schools.

### **2003 PASTOR IN FORMATION OF FAITH**

By virtue of his office, the pastor has the prime responsibility for those matters within the school which affect worship and the ministry of the word and spiritual welfare of the students. It is his duty to see that the teachings of the Church are clearly and accurately presented.

### **2004 PASTOR AND FINANCE**

The pastor, in consultation with the parish finance council, is responsible for financial support of the school. He delegates the school budget development to the school council. As specified in Canon Law, he relies upon recommendations of the finance council regarding the total parish budget. (Canon #3)

Since financing the school is a major responsibility, the pastor must assume a significant role in the development of the school budget including all discussions regarding the amount of parish subsidy to be included in the school's budget.

**2005**

**PASTOR AND POLICIES**

The pastor must ensure that all Archdiocesan policies are implemented. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of the local school council ordinarily participating in all council meetings and exercising his leadership through a sharing of his vision, wisdom and expertise as part of the local council's ordinary activities. In light of his ministry to the total parish, the Pastor has the responsibility to ensure the council's decisions are consistent with the integral proclamation of the word of God with archdiocesan school policies, with established parish policies and with overall fiscal responsibility.

**2100**      **SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

**2101**      **SCREENING AND APPOINTMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL**

1. An application from a member of a religious community must be accompanied by an endorsement from a duly appointed representative of the religious community.
2. An application must be accompanied by letters of recommendation, preferably with one coming from a present or former principal or superintendent.
3. All candidates for principalship must be approved by the Department of Catholic Schools before being interviewed.
4. The principal must meet the qualifications specified by TCCED or be placed on a Deficiency Removal Plan.
5. Applications will first be processed according to the guidelines of the Department of Catholic Schools. Then the search committee shall conduct formal interviews.
6. Selection of a principal shall be based on recommendations by the search committee and must be approved by the Pastor.
7. The ministry agreement provided by the Department of Catholic Schools must be used.
8. Signatures required on the ministry agreement will be the principal, pastor, religious superior if desired (for religious communities) and the Superintendent. All signatures must be affixed on the agreement to validate employment.

**\*2102**      **PRINCIPAL'S PERSONNEL FILE**

Principals are required to have their updated personnel record on file in the Department of Catholic Schools.

**\*2103**      **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL**

The principal is the chief administrator and spiritual leader of the school. Supervision of instruction, curriculum development, and the professional development of the staff through in-service programs are her/his most important duties. The principal takes care to develop good public relations with the pastor, the parish community, the School Council, the parents, the neighboring public schools and community at large.

The Catholic school principal is the chief administrator of the school and administers policies set by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department, the Department of Catholic Schools, and the pastor in consultation with the local School Council. In cases where there is no pastor, the superintendent (for Archdiocesan schools) or the head of the local school governing body (for private schools) enacts policies in consultation with the local School Council.

**\*2104 PRINCIPAL AS SPIRITUAL LEADER**

As the spiritual leader of the school the principal:

1. Develops and implements statements of school philosophy and mission which are consistent with the Vision Statement for Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of San Antonio.
2. Nurtures the faith development of faculty and staff by providing opportunities for spiritual growth.
3. Ensures the quality of Catholic religious education and provides for the certification of catechists.
4. Supports and fosters Christian service activities among faculty and students.
5. Provides opportunities for liturgical celebrations.
6. Creates a school climate conducive to growth in moral and spiritual values.
7. Fosters collaboration between the parish(es) and the school.
8. Organizes effective ways of facilitating the role of parents and families as primary educators.
9. Works toward the creation of a Christian community within the school.
10. Integrates Gospel values and Christian ethics into the curriculum, policies, and life of the school.
11. Provides leadership for achieving the goals of Catholic education and demonstrates knowledge of the history and purpose of Catholic education in the United States.
12. Practices the principles of justice in all decision-making and provides for justice for education

**\*2105 PRINCIPAL AS INSTRUCTIONAL AND CURRICULUM LEADER**

As the instructional and curriculum leader of the school the principal:

1. Provides leadership in curriculum development, especially for the integration of Christian values.
2. Supervises instruction effectively, visits classrooms regularly, and requires systematic and well-developed lesson plans.
3. Engages the staff in the study and use of effective teaching practices.

4. Provides varied support strategies such as mentors, research and support teams.
5. Encourages the staff to create professional networks both within and outside the school.
6. Plans for the effective integration of technology into the curriculum.
7. Assists the faculty in implementing effective procedures for assessing student learning and in appropriately using standardized test results.
8. Provides special student services such as counseling, library, cafeteria, and health.
9. Plans, directs and actively supports the extracurricular program to meet students' needs.
10. Plans for continuous improvement of the learning program of the school.
11. Complies with TCCED requirements.

**\*2106 PRINCIPAL AS MANAGERIAL LEADER**

As the managerial leader of the school, the principal:

1. Recruits, interviews, selects, assigns and organizes staff in a way that assures the greatest potential for accomplishing the school's mission.
2. Keeps abreast of developments in education law.
3. Develops plans to apply technology to management.
4. Assists teachers in professional growth through staff development opportunities, faculty meetings, classroom observations and conferences.
5. Maintains a continuous program of supervision and evaluation of the faculty and staff.
6. Maintains open channels for two-way communication with all members of the school community; establishes and makes known the procedures for hearing complaints and resolving conflicts.
7. Develops and facilitates the use of all appropriate means of communication including employee handbook, parent-student handbook, regularly scheduled bulletins or newsletters, and parent conferences.
8. Provides for an orderly school environment and promotes student self-discipline.
9. Provides for effective management of the school office including submitting reports in an accurate and timely manner, keeping records up to date, publishing the

calendar and providing for office and phone coverage.

10. Works collaboratively with the local school council in decision-making, development of the budget, and long-range planning.
11. Plans, conducts, and reports fire and safety drills in accordance with adopted policies and local codes.
12. Enforces immunization and other health requirements and sees that health records and emergency information cards are maintained and kept up to date.
13. Ensures that the physical plant is adequate, safe, clean, and conducive to learning.
14. Provides for development in the broadest sense, including an effective public relations program and a school marketing program.
15. Seeks financial support and resources from beyond the school and parish.

**2107 PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE PASTOR**

1. Works with the pastor on matters pertaining to religious education, religious policies, liturgical celebrations and parental education programs.
2. Keeps the pastor informed of the status of the school, the faculty, staff and students.
3. Implements programs recommended by the pastor.
4. Maintains a collaborative relationship between the school and all other ministries of the parish.
5. Fosters understanding of the school as a ministry of the parish.
6. Represents the school or parish on committees and at parish events as requested by pastor.

**\*2108 PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE SUPERINTENDENT**

1. Implements Archdiocesan and TCCED policies.
2. Attends and participates in Archdiocesan-sponsored meetings and professional development programs.
3. Keeps the superintendent informed of the school program.

4. Communicates to the superintendent in a timely manner any extraordinary events (i.e., legal issues, media inquiries, etc.) that affect the school community and/or the Catholic Church.
5. Cooperates with governmental programs.
6. Maintains appropriate records and submits required reports in a timely manner.

**2109 PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE SCHOOL COUNCIL**

1. Keeps the Council informed on the status of all aspects of the school program as deemed within their purview.
2. Assists the Council in strategic planning for the school.
3. Assists the Council in appraising the effectiveness of the school program.
4. Proposes policies necessary for the improvement of the school.
5. Informs the Council of Archdiocesan and TCCED policies and updates them on current educational trends, issues, new laws and in-service opportunities.
6. Maintains appropriate confidentiality when addressing personal and personnel issues.
7. Works with the Executive Committee of the Council to develop the agenda for monthly meetings.

**\*2110 PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE PARENTS**

1. Maintains open communication with parents on a regular basis.
2. Encourages and cooperates with the Parent-Teacher Club and other organizations committed to the improvement of the school.
3. Acquaints parents orally and in writing with the school philosophy and mission, instructional program, policies, etc.
4. Provides the opportunity for parental involvement in school programs.
5. Assists in program planning for fund-raising.
6. Facilitates conferences with parents and is available for resolving conflicts.
7. Develops and maintains appropriate programs of public relations.

## **2111 ASSESSMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL**

Appendix: Principal Performance Assessment 2111A – See Admin Login

The assessment of a principal's performance should provide the principal with the information needed to minister more effectively to the people served. With this purpose in mind, the Department of Catholic Schools will prepare a process for the assessment of the performance of the school principal. The assessment may be initiated by the Department of Catholic Schools or may be requested by the pastor or principal with written approval from the superintendent.

In the event the pastor or principal requests an alternate assessment, approval must be received from the superintendent prior to beginning the process. (Revised for 2006-2007)

If a principal's ministry agreement will not be offered, written notice shall be given to the principal prior to the first day of March. In the event a ministry agreement will not be offered or in the event of termination, the superintendent must be consulted prior to principal notification.

## **2112 MINISTRY AGREEMENT FOR PRINCIPAL**

Form: Principal Ministry Agreement 2112A

By March 1<sup>st</sup> the principal must notify the pastor in writing of his/her intent in regards to employment for the following academic year.

By March 15<sup>th</sup> the pastor will provide written notification to the principal of whether or not a ministry agreement for the following year will be offered. If a principal has not received the notice from the pastor by said date, the principal should not assume that a ministry agreement is forthcoming, but should instead discuss it with the pastor and consult with the superintendent.

In the event a ministry agreement will not be offered for the following academic year, the superintendent must be consulted prior to principal notification. In the event of a termination during the academic year, the superintendent and Archdiocesan legal counsel must be consulted prior to principal notification.

## **2113 PRINCIPAL TERMINATION**

The following grievance procedure must be published every year in local school handbooks.

This policy and procedure shall apply only to instances of principal termination.

### PROCEDURE:

Prior to the initiation of a formal grievance, terminated principals who seek redress must first confer directly with the pastor/authorized agent ("conference") for resolution of the situation.

If there is not a satisfactory resolution of the complaint, the following are steps in the formal grievance procedure:

1. A written statement of the complaint, including a brief summary of the all pertinent conferences, must be prepared and filed with the school council secretary within (3) school days of the conference, or decision resulting there from, whichever is later. The date and time of filing will be recorded on the original written statement of the complaint.
2. The school council secretary will, within 24 hours of filing, inform and forward the grievance to the Local Grievance Council ("LGC"), who will review the grievance proceedings. If it deems necessary, the LGC may hear further statements, evidence or arguments within (7) school days of its receipt of the grievance. The LGC will render a recommendation within (10) school days of its receipt of the grievance.
3. If the aggrieved party remains unsatisfied with the decision of the LGC, the avenue of further appeal would be the Archdiocesan Grievance Council ("AGC"). Such an appeal must be sent in writing within five (5) school days of the LGC's recommendation.
4. The LGC's and AGC's findings are a mere recommendation to the parties on how they might resolve their differences. Notwithstanding the recommendation, the pastor/authorized agent retains the right to abate the termination or not, in his or her sole discretion.

#### Local Grievance Council - Composition

1. The local Grievance Council shall be composed of three to five members appointed by the local School Council.
2. Individuals appointed to this Council should be people of integrity with some expertise in education, human relations, and conflict management, if possible.
3. One member may be a present or former School Council member. The other two members should have no direct relationship to the school.
4. The appointment to the local Grievance Council is for one year and is renewable.

#### Local Grievance Council - Duties and Process

1. Both parties to the grievance will prepare a complete written statement of the nature of the grievance and the remedies sought. The LGC will review these statements and the procedures followed and decide if additional steps need to be taken or if it will uphold the decision of the pastor/authorized agent.
2. If the decision of the LGC is to uphold the pastor/authorized agent's decision, then the process moves to No. 8.

3. If the decision of the council is such that it feels that additional discussion of the situation needs to take place, it will call a meeting of both parties to the grievance.
4. Each party to the grievance may be accompanied by one other individual who is not an attorney and who will act as observer/advisor.
5. Both parties will appear before the LGC together and make an oral presentation. The aggrieved party will make the first presentation. At no time is there to be cross-examination or direct discussion between parties to the grievance.
6. After both presentations have been completed, the LGC will enter into closed session to consider the oral and written presentations.
7. The LGC may recall, together, both parties to the grievance for clarification of points that may have been raised in either of the written or oral statements.
8. The LGC will render its recommendation in writing to both parties involved.

*Archdiocesan Grievance Council – Composition, Duties and Process*

1. The AGC shall be composed of no less than three (3) members appointed by the superintendent. Members will be impartial parties with no direct connection to the school or individuals involved.
2. Upon receipt of written statements prepared by both parties, the AGC will schedule a meeting to occur within seven (7) school days.
3. The AGC will convene to review written statements and documentation submitted by both parties. If determined by the AGC that additional input is required, both parties will be asked to appear before the AGC. If the parties are asked to appear before the AGC, the same duties and process applicable to the LGC shall be followed for the AGC.

**2114 PRINCIPAL AND LEGAL COUNSEL**

The principal must call the superintendent whenever the Archdiocesan attorney's services are needed (subpoena, suit, counsel, etc.). The superintendent will inform the Archbishop's designee and the Archbishop of all legal matters pertaining to Catholic schools.

**\*2115 ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**

Form: Lay Administrator's Ministry Agreement 2115A

Every school must have an assistant principal who meets TCCED requirements. The assistant principal is appointed by the principal. The nature of the position will vary with the local circumstances and the size of the school. Ordinarily the assistant principal will be given scheduled times and appropriate compensation to perform the duties assigned.

The rationale for having an assistant principal, even in the smallest school:

1. The assistant principal will be responsible for the school in the absence of the principal.
2. The principal will have someone who can act as a sounding board and consultant.
3. The assistant principal provides knowledge and experience in administrative leadership.

## **2200 LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS**

### **2201 SCHOOL COUNCIL**

Appendix: School Council Constitution 2201A  
School Council Bylaws 2201B  
School Council Responsibilities and Duties of the School Council 2201C  
School Council Application 2201D  
School Council Handbook 2201E –see Admin Login

Every parish and archdiocesan school must have a school council. The local school council, whose authority is derived from the pastor of the parish or authorized agent, is called into being by the pastor/authorized agent and given its mission to advise the principal and pastor/authorized agent in areas of finances, school enhancement, policy, development and strategic planning.

A school council shall be established to serve as a consultative body to the pastor/authorized agent and the principal. Each council shall be composed of elected, appointed and ex-officio members as set forth in its constitution.

The blueprint constitution and by-laws of the Archdiocese shall be used for all school councils. Any addendum to the constitution and/or by-laws must be submitted to the president of the Catholic Schools Council of the Archdiocese of San Antonio (CSCASA), who in consultation with the Council, will approve the changes before implementation.

### **2202 CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD**

A private Catholic school is expected to establish a board that best fits its needs and mission. A board must have a written constitution and by-laws.

### **2203 PARENT-TEACHER CLUB (PTC)**

Appendix: PTC Constitution 2203A  
PTC Bylaws 2203B  
PTC Application 2203C

Every school must have a Parent-Teacher Club. The purpose of the club is to foster a partnership between the home and school and to aid the principal in providing programs and financial resources for the improvement of the educational programs of the schools. All teachers should attend the meetings and be available to the parents for consultation.

The blueprint constitution and by-laws of the Federation of the Catholic Parent-Teacher Club shall be used for all Parent-Teacher Clubs. Any addendum to the constitution and/or by-laws must be submitted to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools for approval of changes prior to implementation.

### **2204 ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOLS**

An archdiocesan school is one that has no parochial connectedness. The school is operated under the terms of agreement between the Archdiocese and the named school. The Archbishop, as defined by Canon Law, is the ultimate authority in the school and is

represented by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

A president and/or principal is recommended through a search process outlined by the Department of Catholic Schools and is appointed by the Archbishop.

Each archdiocesan school will have a consultative council.

## **2300 OPENING AND CLOSING SCHOOLS (ARCHDIOCESAN AND PARISH)**

### **2301 OPENING A NEW SCHOOL**

The following procedures are used when considering opening a school:

1. At least one year, but preferably two years, prior to the anticipated date of the opening of the new school, the pastor should consult with the Pastoral Council.
2. The pastor should write to the Archbishop to obtain approval to conduct a feasibility study.
3. Upon approval from the Archbishop, the Department of Catholic Schools will assist the pastor in conducting a feasibility study.
4. The Catholic Schools Council of the Archdiocese of San Antonio will examine the feasibility study as submitted by the Department of Catholic Schools. The Council, after consulting with the pastor, the Pastoral Council, the Finance Council, and the Department of Catholic Schools, will make a recommendation to the Archbishop for his consideration.

### **2302 CLOSING A SCHOOL**

When a school is faced with difficulties which, in the opinion of the pastor, may lead to the closure of the school, the pastor, in consultation with the principal, is directed to carry out the following procedures:

1. Consult with the Department of Catholic Schools in order to complete the proper study to determine the facts involved.
2. Acquaint the local school council with the nature of the problem and attempt to resolve the difficulty at this level.
3. Acquaint the parents of the school children with the nature of the problem and seek their input for solving the difficulty.
4. Consult the parish council for resolutions to the difficulty.
5. Acquaint the parish membership, at a general meeting, with the nature of the difficulty and seek methods of solution.
6. Evaluate legal liabilities involved (teacher ministry agreement, school suppliers etc.).

Pastors and principals are reminded that the consultative process will require months to accomplish. The process should begin as early as possible, preferably the year before what will become the last year the school is open. However, if it is impossible to foresee the closure of the school two years in advance, the process should at least begin as early as possible in the final school year, placing the matter in the hands of the Catholic Schools Council of the Archdiocese of San Antonio no later than December 31.

After the above steps have been completed, the matter must be brought to the Catholic Schools Council of the Archdiocese of San Antonio for consideration. The council will make its recommendation to the superintendent. The superintendent then makes a recommendation to the Archbishop. The pastor and principal must meet with the Archbishop and superintendent to further discuss a resolution. The superintendent will inform the pastor and principal of the Archbishop's decision.

Pastors and principals are reminded that no official announcements of a school's closing should be made at the local level until the appropriate process has been accomplished and the Archbishop has given permission for the closure.

**\*2303 CHANGES TO GRADE LEVEL STRUCTURE**

Consultation with the Superintendent is required prior to adding or deleting any grade levels.

# SERIES 3000

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## PERSONNEL

“The achievement of the specific aim of the Catholic school depends not so much on subject matter or methodology as on the people who work there. The extent to which the Christian message is transmitted through education depends on a very great extent of the teachers. The integration of culture and faith is mediated by the other integration of faith and life in the person of the teacher. The nobility of the task to which teachers are called demands that, in imitation of Christ, the only Teacher, they reveal the Christian message not only by word but also by gesture of their behavior. This is what makes the difference between a school whose education is permeated by the Christian spirit and one in which religion is only regarded as an academic subject like any other.”

*Reference:*

**The Catholic school, #43**

Personnel

Section 3000 – Page 1 of 22  
Revised: September 2001;  
January 2005; August 2006;  
April 2007; June 2009, June 2011

**3000**      **PERSONNEL**

**\*3001**      **CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYEES**

All employees are classified as exempt or non-exempt as defined in the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). This classification is the basis for determining eligibility for overtime pay and eligibility for vacation, holidays, sick leave, and personal leave. The following guideline applies:

*EXEMPT:*                      Position of a managerial, administrative, or professional nature as prescribed by federal and state labor statutes and which is exempt from mandatory overtime payments. Exempt employees must meet the salary test and the duties test to be classified as exempt.

*NON-EXEMPT:*              Position of a clerical, technical or service nature as defined by statute, which is covered by provisions of overtime pay.

**\*3100**      **GENERAL PERSONNEL**

Forms:    Professional Staff Data Form 3100A  
              Support Staff Data Form 3100B

The selection and employment of employees is the responsibility of the principal. In parish schools, the principal will consult the pastor before hiring.

All schools are to comply with the implementation of the *Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* as specified by the local (arch)diocesan bishop.

**[TCCED Policy, Implementation 2008-2009]**

**\*3101**      **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

The Archdiocese is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants. Accordingly, it is the policy of the Archdiocese not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, citizenship status, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, physical or mental disability, veteran status, or any other factor protected by law. Due to the unique philosophy and nature of the educational programs, appropriateness of personal religious beliefs are considered a bona fide condition of employment. Ordinarily, other things being considered equal, Roman Catholic candidates are preferred.

**3102**      **HIRING PROCEDURES**

Forms:    Employment Application 3102A  
R                Reference Form 3102B  
Letter            Requesting Transcript Form 3102C  
                     Applicant Letter 3102D  
Appendix:    Procedures for Filing an Application 3102A

Qualified persons interested in applying for teaching positions in the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of San Antonio shall obtain an employment application form from the DCS website, the Department of Catholic Schools or a local school. After the employment application has been completed and returned to the Department of Catholic Schools, information pertaining to the applicant will be distributed to interested principals. Background investigations are conducted by the Archdiocesan Office of Human Resources. The applicant must successfully complete a criminal background check prior to being offered employment.

**\*3103**      **BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS**

Forms:    Criminal Background Search Authorization & Release Form 3103A  
              Release Form – Credit Report 3103B

The Archdiocese retains the right to conduct background investigations on current employees, prospective employees, or volunteers for all positions in order to obtain criminal records and credit reports.

No employment agreement will be considered valid until the background investigation is completed.

No employee/volunteer may begin work until a clearance is issued. The finding of an arrest and/or conviction record will not automatically eliminate an individual from consideration for employment. All relevant circumstances, such as how long ago the arrest or conviction occurred and the crime involved, will be considered in relation to specific job responsibilities and requirements. Additionally, arrest records alone may not be considered in determining an individual's eligibility for employment.

Any employee who is hired to collect, record, and/or dispense monies (i.e., bookkeeper, cafeteria manager, etc.) must undergo a credit report investigation prior to hiring. Credit information will be reviewed in relation to the position for which the applicant has applied. A bankruptcy or negative credit history will not automatically disqualify a candidate from the employment process.

Background investigations are conducted by the Archdiocesan Human Resources Office, prior to school personnel extending an offer of employment to the candidate.

These investigative reports will be conducted as defined in Public Law 91-508 and/or the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

All employees and volunteers will be screened every three years based on the date of their first screening. If, during that time, an employee or volunteer wishes to minister at another Catholic institution within the Archdiocese of San Antonio, the employee or volunteer can request that the clearance status be transferred to the new site. (Revised for 2006-2007)

**\*3104 EMPLOYEE HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

There is no required tuberculin skin testing upon employment for school staff. The Catholic schools follow the guidelines from the Texas Department of Health.

Any employee who is HIV positive is not required to inform the employer of his/her condition. If the employee chooses to inform the employer, the employer must hold the information in strict confidence.

**\*3105 SEXUAL MISCONDUCT TRAINING**

All employees are required to receive orientation on the Archdiocesan Policy on Sexual Misconduct. Employees will receive a copy of the policy and must have the official certificate of completion in their personnel file. All school employees must fully comply with the *Policy on Sexual Abuse on the Part of Church Personnel of the Archdiocese of San Antonio*.

**\*3106 HIRING ORDAINED PERSONS**

Any priest or deacon hired in a Catholic school must have written approval by the Archbishop. The superintendent and the Chancellor must be informed of any such request.

**3107 TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEES**

Form: Record of Personnel File Transmittal 3107A  
Personnel Changes 3107B

Before terminating an employee, the principal must consult the superintendent and the archdiocesan attorney.

When an employee leaves the school, official transcripts, the Teacher Service Record, the Religion file, the criminal background clearance and Sexual Misconduct Attendance Certificate follow the employee. Any employee documents sent to prospective employers must be accompanied by the Archdiocesan transmittal form. The employee should request, in writing, the transfer of his/her personnel file documents to the sending employer.

**\*3108 EMPLOYEE PERSONNEL FILES**

Forms: Personnel Emergency Information 3108A  
Employment Acknowledgement 3108B

Links: Texas Hire Reporting Compliance Form [www.newhire.org/tx](http://www.newhire.org/tx)  
I-9 Form [www.i9check.com/I9download.htm](http://www.i9check.com/I9download.htm)

Personnel files for employees are to contain the following items and be kept in the Principals' office:

1. Employment Application Form
2. T.B. Test (if required)
3. Signed Evaluations/Assessments, Growth Plan (when applicable) (current and past years)
4. Job Description
5. Extracurricular Responsibilities
6. Employee Attendance Record
7. Criminal Background Clearance
8. Sexual Misconduct Attendance Certificate from the Archdiocese of San Antonio
9. Employee Emergency Information (retain in a separate accessible file)

10. Bloodborne Pathogen Training Acknowledgment Form (taken from TCCED Health Manual)
11. Texas New Hire Reporting Employer Compliance
12. I-9 (if hired after 1986)

*Exempt Employees*

1. Official college transcripts
2. Certificates and Endorsements (when applicable)
  - i.e., Catechist Certification,
  - Specialized Instructor Certificate
  - State Certification
  - State EXCET Exam results
3. Professional Growth to Strengthen Competence
4. Deficiency Removal Plan (when applicable)
5. Technology proficiency documentation (if hired after 2000, exempt staff only)
6. Ministry Agreement (current and past years)
7. Teacher's Service Record

*Non-Exempt Employees*

1. Employment Acknowledgment Form

**\*3109 EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

Each school shall develop and annually revise an employee handbook.

Archdiocesan and parish schools will incorporate the archdiocesan Catholic schools' brand platform, the school's philosophy, mission, goals and objectives, and the school's policies, regulations, and procedures. Each employee shall be given a copy of this handbook along with a copy of the school's Parent-Student Handbook. Current copies of these handbooks shall be on file in the Department of Catholic Schools.

**3200**

**LEAVE AND ABSENCES**

Forms: Annual Attendance Record 3200A  
Absence Request Form 3200B

Policies regarding leave and absences apply to employment at one particular school. Accumulated leave days and sick leave are non-transferable to another school.

**3201**

**PERSONAL LEAVE FOR EXEMPT EMPLOYEES**

A full-time exempt employee, with a signed ministry agreement, must be granted 7 days of personal leave per year without salary deduction. A principal must be granted 8 days. Personal leave shall cover illnesses of the individual or members of the household and other personal needs. An employee is permitted one personal leave day for each completed month of work. Leave days shall be cumulative to total 30 days in a given school.

There is no financial remuneration for unused accumulated personal leave days.

When the personal leave days are depleted, a day's salary is deducted for each additional day's absence. A day's salary for a teacher shall be computed at 1/190 of the total annual salary. A day's salary for a principal shall be computed at 1/220 of the total annual salary.

Part-time employees must be granted personal leave that is proportionate to the time worked.

The principal must approve all personal leave.

**3202**

**VACATION LEAVE FOR NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES** (Revised for 2009-2010)

Vacation leave for new employees, who do not hold a signed ministry agreement and who are classified as being non-exempt and who are full time (30 hours per week or more) is earned from the first day of employment. Vacation leave is earned but cannot be used until the completion of a satisfactory review period and six months of employment, nor is vacation leave due the employee at the end of an unsatisfactory review period. Full time employees shall be entitled to paid vacation leave of one day for each month of work for the first year of employment plus two extra days for each 12 months of employment in each succeeding year, up to a maximum of 20 working days per year. Any vacation leave accrued by full-time employees in excess of 20 days at the end of each anniversary year will be forfeited.

Part-time employees working 20-29 hours per week will receive one day for each month of work of vacation time. This 1-day per month will not automatically be 7.5 hours, but will equate to the employee's average work hours per day.

Owed vacation leave pay must be paid to the employee upon termination of employment. The principal must approve all vacation leave.

**3203 HOLIDAY LEAVE FOR NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES**

The principal and pastor, in consultation with the School Council, will publish an annual paid holiday schedule for non-exempt employees.

**3204 SICK LEAVE FOR NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES (Revised for 2009-2010)**

Sick leave for full-time employees, who do not hold a signed ministry agreement and are classified as being non-exempt, provides time off in the event of their own illness, physical inability to work, as well as for family illness. Employees are eligible for sick leave after successful completion of review period and six months of employment.

Full-time employees who do not hold a signed ministry agreement and who are classified as being non-exempt, accrue sick leave at the rate of one day for each month of work from date of employment. Sick leave shall accrue up to a total of 30 days in a given school.

Accrued sick leave is not paid.

Employees must notify the Principal as soon as possible if they will be absent due to an illness.

Part-time employees working 20-29 hours per week will receive 1 day per month of sick leave. This 1 day per month will be calculated according to the same formula as vacation days.

**\*3205 FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)**

As a Christian community, the sacredness we place on the family as the fundamental unit of Christian life and as the basic unit of society is paramount. Employees are eligible for unpaid leave with certain benefits and job protection for birth or adoption of a child, caring for a seriously sick family member (spouse, child, or parent) or for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform his or her job in accordance with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). A "serious health condition" is an "illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider.

**\*3206 FMLA EMPLOYEE ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible for FMLA benefits, an employee must:

1. have worked for the employer for at least 12 months;
2. have worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months; and
3. work at the location where at least 50 employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles.

**\*3207 FMLA LEAVE ENTITLEMENT**

The schools of the Archdiocese have therefore established family leave which entitles Employee's to take up to twelve (12) workweeks of unpaid leave during any twelve (12) month period for certain specified conditions. However, the educational needs of the students being affected by the absence of their teacher, the financial burden which May be placed on the school, and the demands of the school calendar should all be considered when requesting leave. FMLA is available for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Birth, adoption or foster care of a child.
2. Care for a child, dependent, spouse or parent with a serious health condition. (Medical certification must be sought. The child can be an adult and the parent includes related or non-related persons who were in loco parentis, such as a grandmother who raised the employee. )
3. Care for the worker's own serious health condition. (Again, medical certification must be sought.)
4. Family leave shall be treated as any other long-term disability, which would prevent an employee from carrying out his or her assigned duties. The employee shall give written notice of the anticipated days to be missed, at least 30 days in advance, and in the case of emergencies as soon as possible.
5. Following the leave, the employee must be returned to his or her previous position or an equivalent position (equivalent pay, authority, etc.). If the equivalent position requires new skills, the employee must be given a reasonable amount of time to learn the acquired skills.
6. During the leave all benefits must be continued on the same basis as before the leave. This means, for instance, that the school must continue to pay the health insurance premium for the employee.
7. Employees on leave retain all previously earned seniority and vesting rights, but the leave time does not count towards vesting or seniority rights.
8. If agreed upon by the employer and the employee, the leave may be taken in short intervals during the year. (Example: one day of leave each week so that the employee or her/his spouse could undergo chemotherapy treatment).
9. If the employee had been put on probation prior to the start of the leave, the time spent on leave does not count toward the probation period.
10. If the employee takes a leave near the end of an academic quarter, the employer may, depending on the duration of the leave and time remaining in the quarter, require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term.

Married couples working for the same school are entitled to a combined total of 12 work weeks of FMLA leave for birth or placement of their child for adoption or foster care in order to care for their child. If leave is required for personal illness of one or both of the employees, or a child, each will be eligible for a 12 week leave period.

The employee must take FMLA leave of uninterrupted period of time unless the school agrees otherwise, except that FMLA leave may be taken intermittently or on a reduced work schedule if medically certified as necessary for the care of a seriously ill spouse, child or parent or for the employee's own serious illness.

The employee may use personal leave or vacation time and will be required to use any sick leave that has accrued. Such paid leave runs currently with and reduces any available FMLA leave.

**\*3208 FMLA NOTICE AND CERTIFICATION**

Links: Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)  
[www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla](http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla)  
[www.dol.gov/elaws/fmla.htm](http://www.dol.gov/elaws/fmla.htm)

The employee may contact the Archdiocesan Office of Human Resources for additional information. The FMLA application and regulations can be found on the following sites: [www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla](http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla) [www.dol.gov/elaws/fmla.htm](http://www.dol.gov/elaws/fmla.htm)

The employee requesting FMLA leave must provide:

1. 30-day advance notice when the need for FMLA is foreseeable; and
2. Medical certifications supporting the need for FMLA leave due to a serious health condition affecting the employee or the employee's spouse, child or parent.

The employee may also be required to provide:

1. Second or third medical opinion and periodic re-certification; and/or
2. Periodic reports (recertification) during FMLA leave regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work.

**\*3209 FMLA MAINTENANCE OF HEALTH BENEFITS**

The employee will maintain group health insurance for covered employees on FMLA leave on the same terms as if s/he was still working. The employee must make arrangements to pay his/her share of health insurance premiums while on FMLA leave.

**3210 PARENTAL LEAVE**

In addition to FMLA, the employee is entitled to three weeks paid parental leave upon the birth or adoption of a child. Accumulated personal or vacation leave may be applied.

**3211****JURY DUTY**

Time required for jury duty is given in addition to normal leave time. A signed document showing days on jury duty must be provided to the Principal. An employee is expected to work on days when the jury is not in session. No deductions will be made from the employee's salary.

**3212****BEREAVEMENT**

Up to 3 additional days of paid leave may be granted to full-time employees in the event of death in the employee's immediate family. This includes parents, spouse, children, or siblings. Leave for part-time employees is proportionate to time worked.

**3213****MILITARY LEAVE**

The employee serving in the armed forces of the United States must be granted time off for duty and service. The employee will be given the required time off for active duty, active duty training, or inactive training duty. The employee may use personal leave during all or part of the leave period, or request military leave of absence. The employee must provide the Principal with a copy of the military orders requiring the need for the military leave upon receipt of the orders or unless notice was precluded by military necessity.

**3214****LEAVE WITHOUT PAY**

Leave without pay is authorized by the principal in consultation with the pastor/authorized agent and local Council for justifiable reasons, upon written request by the employee. If such leave is authorized but is in excess of thirty (30) days, the leave may result in a loss of position for the employee. An attempt will be made in such an instance to return the employee to his or her former position, and other benefits which existed at the time of leave will be restored.

**3300****SALARIES AND BENEFITS**

Forms: Designated Schools Salary Information Form 3300A

**3301****SALARY SCALE**

The Department of Catholic Schools annually establishes a minimum salary scale for principals and teachers who meet TCCED Educational Personnel Requirements. Local schools are encouraged to establish policies for yearly increments and additional financial remuneration for years of experience and educational preparation, state teacher certification and religion certification. They are also encouraged to establish specific stipend increments for all additional responsibilities beyond the normal teaching load, including major extra-curricular and administrative assignments.

**3302****RELIGIOUS SALARY SCALE**

A minimum stipend for Religious is set by a committee appointed by the Vicar for Religious. Consultation with the Religious Congregation must be made to be sure that this is adequate for the needs of the Religious Congregation. Major Superiors have requested that they be able to negotiate the Religious salary with the school where the Religious is ministering.

**\*3303****OVERTIME COMPENSATION**

Non-exempt employees will be paid at the rate of one and one-half times their regular rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in any single work week.

Exempt employees do not receive overtime pay and do not generally receive compensatory time off. It is understood that the nature of the job will sometimes call for more than a 40-hour week.

Overtime is never at the employee's discretion. Overtime should only be worked with prior written approval from the principal.

**3304****HEALTH PLAN**

All full-time employees who work 30 hours per week are eligible to enroll in the Archdiocesan group health plan. Part-time employees (those working less than 30 hours per week) are not included in the health plan.

**3305****LIFE INSURANCE PLAN**

All full-time employees who work 30 hours per week are eligible to receive life insurance. The basic benefit is \$20,000. The school pays the full premium.

**3306****WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

All employees lay, clergy and religious, in parish schools and Archdiocesan-owned schools are covered by workers' compensation. The Archdiocese also has a blanket liability policy to cover these employees.

**3307****LAY PENSION PLAN**

Lay personnel may be eligible to participate in the lay pension plan adopted by the Archdiocese.

An employee is eligible to participate in the Plan upon completion of six months of employment with an Archdiocesan agency. If employment began after July 1, credit will not be received for that particular year.

An employee must earn the minimum wage rate applicable at the beginning of the Plan year (January 1) times a thousand hours in order to be eligible. Information about the details of the plan can be obtained from the Archdiocesan Office of Human Resources Office in the Pastoral Center.

**3308****UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION**

The Archdiocese of San Antonio is exempted from mandatory participation in the Unemployment Compensation Program and has elected not to participate. Therefore, there are no unemployment benefits as an employee of the Archdiocese.

**3400      NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES**

**3401      AUXILIARY PERSONNEL**

It must be the responsibility of the principal to recruit and employ custodial and other auxiliary staff in consultation with and approval from the pastor/authorized agent.

Each Catholic school must have at least one full-time secretary and a bookkeeper who assist the principal. Duties will be outlined in the local job descriptions for school secretary and bookkeeper. In the case of some parish schools, one person may serve as bookkeeper for both the parish and school.

All auxiliary and support staff must undergo a criminal background check. Background investigations are conducted and letters of clearance are issued by the Archdiocesan Human Resources Office, prior to school personnel extending an offer of employment to an applicant.

**\* 3402      SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS**

All school bus drivers must meet Texas Department of Public Safety physical and licensing requirements and permit requirements set out by the Archdiocesan Office of Risk Management.

**\*3403      TIME SHEETS**

Form:      Time Sheet 3403A

Schools must have a timekeeping method for non-exempt employees. The timekeeping method must be complete and accurate and remain on file.

**3500**      **EXEMPT EMPLOYEES**

**3501**      **SELECTION OF TEACHERS**

Forms:      Ministry Agreement, Teacher 3501A  
                 Ministry Agreement, Religious 3501B

Principals must use only the approved Archdiocesan Ministry Agreement for lay and religious teachers.

Whenever a teacher has signed a ministry agreement to teach for a given period, no other Catholic school shall in any way attempt to interfere with the completion of the agreement or engage the teacher's services for the same period. This prohibition shall include the obligation not to discuss or in any way disparage the terms of the existing agreement, working conditions, or other aspects of the binding relationship between teacher and school under the existing agreement

**\*3502**      **EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Forms:      Specialized Instructor Certificate Application 3502A

All teachers, library staff, counselors, extended day personnel, and paraprofessionals in Catholic schools must meet the Educational Personnel Requirements as determined by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED). Personnel who do not meet the requirements may not be offered a ministry agreement until a Deficiency Removal Plan, as specified by the TCCED, is approved by the Superintendent.

All teachers of religion must meet the requirements of Teachers of Religion as determined by TCCED. Those not meeting this requirement must have a Deficiency Removal Plan on file, approved by the superintendent. Teachers of Religion must also complete Catechetical Certification according to the policies of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

**\*3503**      **TEACHER TRANSFER**

All Principals are expected to respect the rights and ministry agreements of other schools when there is occasion for a transfer from one Catholic school to another within the Archdiocese.

**\*3504**      **TEACHER ORIENTATION (ARCHDIOCESAN)**

New teachers are required to attend the August orientation session provided by the Department of Catholic Schools.

**3505**      **TEACHER ORIENTATION (LOCAL SCHOOL)**

Principals shall conduct an orientation for new and beginning teachers and assign a mentor teacher. The orientation shall include a review of regulations, personnel procedures, and local school policies and procedures.

**3506****TEACHER HIRING AND ASSESSMENT**

Forms: Statement of Intent 3506A

Appendix: Teacher Professional Growth and Evaluation Process – Forms A-H 3506A1-7  
– see Admin Login  
Classroom Technology Implementation Observation Form 3506B

1. By March 15<sup>th</sup> the teacher must submit a written statement of intent on the form provided by the Department of Catholic Schools.
2. By April 15<sup>th</sup> the principal will provide written notification to the teacher of whether or not a ministry agreement for the following year will be offered. If a teacher has not received the notice from the principal by said date, the teacher should not assume that a ministry agreement is forthcoming, but should instead discuss it with the principal.
3. All schools shall provide to each member of the teaching staff who is being hired an annual term ministry agreement. This agreement is prepared by the Department of Catholic Schools and distributed annually.
4. A school may have an agreement with the Religious Congregation whose members staff the school. In these cases, the Ministry Agreement for Religious must be used as created by the Department of Catholic Schools.
5. Two copies of the agreement must be signed by all parties for it to be validated; one copy is kept in the Principal's files and one is given to the teacher.
6. When a teacher resigns, there must be a written resignation that is signed by the teacher and principal.
7. An annual teacher assessment is conducted by the principal. Teachers new to the school will be observed a minimum of four times during the first year of employment (twice each semester). In each succeeding year, teachers will be observed a minimum of twice (once each semester). The end-of-the-year written assessment will be done according to the procedures determined by the Department of Catholic Schools.

**3507****EMPLOYEE TERMINATION**

The following grievance procedure must be published every year in the local faculty handbook.

This policy and procedure shall apply only to instances of non-principal employee termination.

### PROCEDURE:

Prior to the initiation of a formal grievance, terminated employees must first confer directly with the principal (“conference”) for resolution of the situation.

If there is not a satisfactory resolution of the complaint, the following are steps in the formal grievance procedure:

1. A written statement of the complaint, including a brief summary of all pertinent conferences, must be prepared and filed with the school council secretary within three (3) school days of the conference, or decision resulting therefrom, whichever is later. The date and time of filing will be recorded on the original of the complaint.
2. The school council secretary will, within 24 hours of filing, inform and forward the grievance to the Local Grievance Council (“LCG”), who will review the grievance proceedings. If it deems necessary, the LGC may hear further statements, evidence or arguments within seven (7) school days of its receipt of the grievance. The LGC will render a recommendation within ten (10) school days of its receipt of the grievance.
3. If the aggrieved party is still not satisfied with the recommendation of the LGC, an appeal may be made to the pastor within three (3) school days of the recommendation of the LGC. The pastor/authorized agent, will review all documentation of the grievance procedure and set a date for hearing the grievance with all parties of the initial grievance in attendance. This meeting will take place within seven (7) school days of the pastor’s receipt of such an appeal. The pastor will then render his decision within five (5) school days.
4. If the aggrieved party remains unsatisfied with the decision of the pastor, the avenue of further appeal would be the Grievance Council. Such an appeal must be sent in writing within five (5) school days of the pastor’s decision.
5. Pending outcome of the formal grievance, only the principal or pastor/authorized agent may, with or without condition, abate the termination.

### Local Grievance Council – Composition

1. The LGC shall be composed of three to five members appointed by the local School Council.
2. Individuals appointed to the LGC should be people of integrity with some expertise in education, human relations, and conflict management, if possible.
3. One member may be a present or former School Council member. The other two members should have no direct relationship to the school.

4. The appointment to the LGC is for one year and is renewable.

#### Local Grievance Council – Duties and Process

1. Both parties to the grievance will prepare a complete written statement of the nature of the grievance and the remedies sought. The LGC will review these statements and the procedures followed and decide if additional steps need to be taken or if it will uphold the decision of the principal.
2. If the decision of the LGC is to uphold the principal's decision, then the process moves to No. 8.
3. If the decision of the LGC is such that it feels that additional discussion of the situation needs to take place, it will call a meeting of both parties to the grievance.
4. Each party to the grievance may be accompanied by one other individual who is not an attorney and who will act as an observer/advisor.
5. Both parties will appear before the LGC together and make an oral presentation. The aggrieved party will make the first presentation. At no time is there to be cross-examination or direct discussion between parties to the grievance.
6. After both presentations have been completed, the LGC will enter into closed session to consider the oral and written presentations.
7. The LGC may recall, together, both parties to the grievance for clarification of points that may have been raised in either of the written or oral statements.
8. The LGC will render its recommendation in writing to both parties involved.

### **3508**

#### **GRIEVANCE FOR NON-TERMINATION**

All disciplinary actions/decisions that do not result in employee termination will be resolved at the local school level. Neither the Local Grievance Council nor the Archdiocesan Grievance Council will hear these matters.

Schools are to provide an opportunity for individuals to be heard in redress of a policy, regulation, or decision that is perceived to inflict hardship on an individual or group.

The primary aim of any local procedure is to establish and publish the procedure to be followed and to provide fair notice and hearing of the matter. Complaints may be heard from individuals, parents, parent organizations and employees. Schools are encouraged to devise creative ways of addressing and resolving these situations, while at the same time, providing a consistent forum for redress of perceived wrongs.

The principal, council and pastor/authorized agent shall formulate a local grievance procedure in advance of the school year and must publish it in the employee handbook for that year.

**\*3509 SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS**

When the regular teacher is absent, the principal determines the necessary qualifications of the substitute teacher and hires the substitute teacher. Names of potential substitute teachers may be obtained from the Department of Catholic Schools.

**3600**      **WORKING CONDITIONS**

**\*3601**      **ALCOHOL**

Employees/volunteers shall not report to work under the influence of alcohol. Consumption of alcoholic beverages on school property during regular work hours is prohibited. Any employee/volunteer who violates this policy will be subject to sanctions up to and including termination.

**\*3602**      **ANTI-HARASSMENT ENVIRONMENT FOR EMPLOYEES/VOLUNTEERS**

Appendix: Harassment 3602A

All employees of the Archdiocese are to be treated with dignity and respect.

Harassment in any form, including bullying and cyber bullying, is prohibited. Bullying, a form of abuse, can be defined as repetitive acts of manipulation and/or aggression by one or more persons against person. For bullying to occur, there must be an imbalance of power, intent to harm, and repetition of the type of act. Bullying can be further defined as either physical (verbal or written), or non-physical. (See appendix for behaviors considered as bullying behaviors.) This prohibition against acts of harassment applies to all people engaged in all school-sponsored activities.

*Throughout the rest of this policy, the term “person” will be used to refer to lay employees, religious and clergy ministering in schools.*

**Procedure When an Allegation of Harassment is made Against Laity**

The person may first choose to tell the individual causing the harassment that the conduct is offensive and must stop.

When an allegation is made regarding harassment against **laity**, the person reporting the complaint should be informed to notify the Human Resources Office who will in turn notify the Archbishop (or his designee). Their office telephone number is (210) 734-1689.

The Director of Human Resources will immediately initiate a preliminary investigation to begin a prompt and thorough evaluation of the alleged harassment. The alleged perpetrator will be placed on Administrative Leave with Pay (if an employee) or Suspension (if a volunteer) during the evaluation process. Care will be taken to avoid endangering anyone’s good name during this process.

The Director of Human Resources will notify the alleged perpetrator, his/her supervisor, and the person who brought the allegation of the conclusion of the evaluation.

**Procedure When an Allegation of Harassment is Made against a Cleric**

The person may first choose to tell the individual causing the harassment that the conduct is offensive and must stop.

When an allegation is made regarding harassment against a cleric, the person reporting the complaint should be informed to notify the Office of Victim Assistance and Safe Environment (OVASE) who will in turn notify the Archbishop (or his designee). The OVASE telephone number is (210) 734-7786 or 1-877-700-1888.

The Archbishop (or his designee) will initiate the preliminary investigation.

The Archbishop (or his designee) will notify the alleged perpetrator, his/her supervisor, and the person who brought the allegation of the conclusion of the evaluation.

**Procedure When an Allegation of Harassment is Made Against a Person Who is Not an Employee or Volunteer**

All incidents of alleged harassment shall be investigated by the principal and/or pastor/authorized agent and reported to the superintendent. A written report of the allegation and the investigation shall be kept on file at the school. The final action taken shall be determined by the investigator and may include, especially in cases of second offenses, removal of the individual from participation in any school activities or programs.

**Procedure When an Allegation of Harassment is Made Against a Student**

All incidents of alleged harassment shall be investigated by the principal and/or pastor/authorized agent and reported to the superintendent. A written report of the allegation and the investigation shall be kept on file at the school. The final action taken shall be determined by the investigator and may include, especially in cases of second offenses, suspension or expulsion.

**\*3603 INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Schools will normally follow the decisions made by their local public school district regarding school closure (early dismissal, full day, or late start) because of inclement weather or any other emergency.

Each school must establish a clear process of communication with school families regarding school closure. This communication process may include use of the school's website, email, and/or telephone.

In the event that a school has a late starting time, provision must be made for supervision of students who are dropped off early.

**\*3604 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT**

It is recognized that the Archdiocesan community, the community at large and an employee might benefit from employment outside of the school.

Employees should not have outside employment which could be considered immoral, a conflict of interest, contrary to the Church's teachings or interfere with providing their best performance. Any employee participating in outside employment must notify the Principal in writing, so a determination can be made that a conflict does not exist. The notification must include the employer's name, address, title of the second position held, and the nature of the business.

**\*3605 INTERNET**

Appendix: Employee Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement 3605A

Internet terms, conditions and regulations for employees, volunteers, and students are as follows:

Access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action taken for any violations that is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense.

Schools must follow the state and federal laws regarding the use of filters on computers connected to the Internet.

# SERIES 4000

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# STUDENTS

## **Entrusting Our Children to Catholic Schools**

**For generations, families have partnered with Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of San Antonio in order to meet the educational needs of their children. Families who send their children to Catholic schools value an education rooted in Catholic teachings and tradition and are confident that Catholic schools will provide their children with spiritual, moral, intellectual and social formation. Along with an emphasis on faith and rigorous academics, students are furnished with a solid foundation for lifelong learning. Dedicated teachers and families working together in a safe, positive learning community prepare students to make a difference in our world.**

### **Reasons to believe:**

-  **Integration of Faith & Academics**
-  **Positive Learning Community**
-  **Generations of Families & Teachers Working Together**
-  **Rigorous Academics**

**4000**      **STUDENTS**

**\*4001**      **CATHOLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS**

A Catholic school exists primarily for the Catholic student. (where room and facilities permit) Students of other faiths or traditions may be admitted and according to stated priorities issued by the local school.

**\*4002**      **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Form:          Non-Discrimination Certification 4002A

The schools of the Archdiocese admit students of any race or national origin to programs and activities with all rights and privileges. Equal opportunity and access is provided to students without regard to race, national origin or gender.

**\*4003**      **DRESS**

Each school must establish a standard of student dress which will promote dignity, cleanliness and good health.

**4100**      **ADMISSION**

**\*4101**      **ADMISSION OF STUDENTS**

Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese are open to all students regardless of race or ethnic background, but preference must be given to students of the Catholic faith.

Reasonable effort must be made to provide Catholic students with a Catholic education. Parish and school councils should make a strong effort to provide a Catholic education for students whose parents are unable to pay full tuition.

In those cases in which physical space makes it necessary to restrict the intake of students in a given school, priority must be given to students of Catholic parents residing in the parish and who have demonstrated support of Catholic education in the past.

**\*4102**      **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Form:      Registration 4102A

Parents who seek a Catholic education for their child enter into a contractual agreement. This agreement is established between the parent/student and the school and in accordance with the rules of the school governing all areas of the student's development. As part of the contractual agreement, there are explicit (expressed) and implicit (implied) expectations placed on both the parent/student and the school. Explicit rules and regulations are included in the parent/student handbook and various school communications.

**Age Requirements**

A student should be three years of age on or before September 1 to be admitted into the 3K program, and four years of age on or before September 1 to be admitted to the 4K program.

A student should be five years of age on or before September 1 to be admitted to Kindergarten. In the process of admitting students to Kindergarten, preference will be given to families who are parishioners, regardless of whether or not their child attended the school's 4K program. Participation in a school's 4K program does not ensure acceptance into Kindergarten.

A student should be six years of age on or before September 1 to be admitted into the first grade. Exception may be made in the case of a student who has completed Kindergarten in a different state where the entering age is lower, provided there is also a written statement from the Kindergarten teacher that the student is ready for first grade.

A student who does not meet the age requirement may apply for admission and/or placement outside of the student's age group. Admission and placement is within the sole discretion of the principal based on testing, observation and other assessments.

Consideration must be given to the student's emotional, social, and academic development, and maturity.

Recommended assessments for predicting school readiness:  
Bracken School Readiness Test (does not include social/emotional development)  
Brigance (Developmental Screening test for ages 21-90 months)  
Developmental Assessment of Young Children (whole child assessment)  
First Step (whole child assessment)

### **Document Requirements**

Before a student's admission, the following records are required:

1. Official Birth Certificate
2. Baptismal certificate
3. Official cumulative record or transcript of previous grade.
4. Health Record
  - a. Immunization record
  - b. Illness record
  - c. Acknowledgment of participation in the school health program.

**Enrollment is not complete until all required documents are received, reviewed, and found to be in order by the school.**

#### **4103 ADMISSION OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOLS WITHIN THE ARCHDIOCESE**

The transfer of a student from one Catholic school to another within the Archdiocese can occur only after consultation between the principals of the two schools involved.

#### **4104 ADMISSION OF STUDENTS FROM PUBLIC AND OTHER NON-PUBLIC STATE APPROVED SCHOOLS**

**Admission** of students transferring from public and other state approved non-public schools is the decision of the principal based on testing, observation and other assessments. This decision is made if it is deemed in the best interest of the student and the placement is agreeable to both parents and the principal.

#### **\*4105 ADMISSION OF STUDENTS FROM HOME SCHOOLING AND NON - ACCREDITED SCHOOLS**

Every school in the Archdiocese must have a written policy for admitting students who transfer from non-accredited schools or home schooling.

**\*4106      ADMISSION OF STUDENTS FROM FOREIGN SCHOOLS**

Form:      Data Required to Request I-20 4106A

Admission of students transfer ring from foreign schools m ust be determined by the principal of the school in which the student is enrolling.

All government required documents m ust be com pleted by the school and parent/guardian; copies must be kept on file at the school and Department of Catholic Schools.

Credits earned by students in schools loca ted in foreign countries, once verified, will be accepted only after review and approval of the principal.

**\*4107      ADMISSION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Schools, if able, will provide students with special needs an opportunity for admission. However, if students with specia l needs apply to a sc hool that is not capable of offering the necessary program s and facilities, they will be ref erred to other schools and programs that have the ability to effectively serve their needs.

Catholic schools strive to provide the accommodations and/or modifications within the scope of their school's resources for students who are identified as having special learning needs. Catholic schools will collaborate with parent(s), the public school, and appropriate agency and/or professional when providing school's services for the child.

**4200      EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

**\*4201      ACTIVITIES PROGRAM**

The activities program, including sports, is the responsibility of the principal and must be under her/his general supervision. Any activity or program held during the school day should meet the needs, interests and abilities of the students and must not interfere with the normal routine of the school.

**\*4202      ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ATHLETICS**

Elementary Catholic schools may be members only of an athletic league recognized by the superintendent. Schools must abide by all rules required by the league to which they belong.

**4300**      **ATTENDANCE**

**\*4301**      **STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

Ordinarily, a student may not receive credit for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 per cent of the days the class is offered.

Students are to attend school unless there are valid reasons for absence. Local school policy will determine when other absences or tardies are to be excused. Valid reasons, such as sickness, are considered excused. Invalid reasons, such as extra vacation, are considered unlawful detention by the parents and are unexcused. In all cases, students are responsible for all work missed and are subject to the local school policies (*or discretionary authority of the principal*) for determination of whether absences are excessive and to determine what consequences will be enforced.

An excused absence does not mean a student will not be marked absent. A student not physically present at a school, excused or unexcused, is marked absent.

Each school shall determine its own guidelines for awarding perfect attendance.

**\*4302**      **RECORDING ATTENDANCE**

The school is required to keep an accurate record of attendance, tardiness, and absences.

Daily attendance records must be kept for each student and a daily report must be reviewed by the principal. Every student enrolled in the school must be included in the records and is a member of that school until officially withdrawn. A student is considered absent unless officially withdrawn. Attendance records are to be maintained by the school office. The attendance record must be kept on file for a minimum of five years.

**\*4303**      **NOTIFICATION NECESSARY FOR RELEASING STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

A student may be released from school during school hours into the custody only of those persons listed on the student's emergency information card. Identification of the person to whom the student is released must be verified.

Parents or guardians must be notified by telephone to make suitable arrangements when it is necessary to send a student home because of illness or other reason. Documentation of this notification must be made.

Students must not be released from school, sent on errands off the school grounds, or sent home for books, homework, etc. without written parental permission.

Students must only be released through a definite process conducted through the school's main office.

**\*4304**

**RELEASE OF STUDENTS TO A LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER**

The following procedures must be observed when students are released to an officer:

1. Ask for identification to verify that the person is an officer . The officer is not required to present a warrant to speak with a student, but will be requested to wait until parents are notified and given reasonable time to come to the school.
2. Contact and ask the parents or guardian to come to the school to be present with the student during the interview. If a parent or guardian cannot come to school, the principal or his/her designee will sit in for the interview in loco parentis.
3. A warrant for arrest must be presented by an officer before removing the student from the school. If the student has been involved in some suspected illegal activity immediately prior to the officer's arrival on campus, or while the officer is present, the principal must contact the parent or guardian to come to the school. If the parent or guardian cannot come, the principal or designee must accompany the student.
4. Contact the superintendent immediately if a student is arrested.

**4400**      **STUDENT RECORDS**

**\*4401**      **EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARD FOR STUDENTS**

Form:      Health Emergency Data Card 4401A

Schools must keep an emergency information card for each student enrolled in the school. These cards must contain pertinent information in case of accident or illness.

The school must arrange for parents to update emergency information each year. Parents must send emergency card information changes throughout the school year as they occur.

**\*4402**      **PERMANENT RECORD**

Form:      Permanent Record Card 4402A-1 4402A-2

A permanent record must be maintained for each student according to a system approved by the superintendent.

The student's official file should contain only these items: academic transcripts (high school)/ permanent record (elementary); academic testing; health records (unless kept in a separate health office); and emergency information. Only the contents of the official file should be forwarded to a new school.

A copy of the permanent record is retained by the school when a student transfers or graduates.

**\*4403**      **HEALTH FILE**

Forms:      Health Questionnaire 4403A  
                  School Health Card 4403B  
                  Emergency Health Care Plan 4403C

A health file must be maintained on each student which will include a record of immunization, vision, hearing, scoliosis and Acanthosis Nigricans screenings, pertinent medical information and doctor's name. Health records are treated as confidential; they are available to the Principal, school nurse, health coordinator and the professional staff. The student's original Health Record is given to the receiving school when the student transfers to another school.

A copy of the health record is to be kept as part of the permanent record. Computerized records will be accepted as long as the required health data is maintained.

**\*4404 ACCESS TO RECORDS**

Link: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)  
[www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html)

In 1975, the Buckley Amendment, also known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, gave parents and students the right of access to records and the right to request that statements be changed or deleted. If the school refuses to change or delete records, statements made by parents or students should be included in the record. The school should state in writing what procedures are to be followed if a parent or student wishes to view a record and/or receive copies. The school can ask for twenty-four hours notice and can require the parent to make the request in writing.

**\*4405 RELEASE OF RECORDS**

All material in the student's file shall be treated as confidential and shall be accessible only to the principal, members of the professional staff, to the legal guardian, the parents and to the student after his/her eighteenth birthday. Parents are to be made aware that they have the right to this information. (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 1974)

**\*4406 NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' ACCESS TO RECORDS**

The school is to abide by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

**\*4407 REQUEST FOR AND TRANSFER OF STUDENT RECORDS**

Form: Request for Records 4407A  
Transfer Card 4407B

Permanent record cards and health records will be released to a receiving school when that school applies directly by mail to the sending school. A release form signed by the parent or legal guardian must be obtained by the requesting school.

If the student is transferring to a Catholic school within the Archdiocese, the original permanent record card and health records shall be transferred. A copy should be retained for the school's records. If the student is transferring to a school that is not recognized as a Catholic school within the Archdiocese, a copy of the student's permanent record card and the original health records shall be transferred.

All special education or psychological test results, which are to be released to a receiving school, must include a parent's signed release of that information. The student's original permanent record card or a copy is then placed in the inactive file with a notation made indicating to which school the student has transferred, the date and the reason for the transfer.

**4500      DUAL ENROLLMENT**

**\*4501      DUAL ENROLLMENT WITH NON-ACCREDITED SCHOOLS**

The Catholic schools of the Arch diocese may not enter into a dual enrollment arrangement with non-accredited schools for any portion of the day. This position is taken because of the commitment to operating accredited schools.

**4600      CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE**

**\*4601      CODE OF CONDUCT**

The school principal, with the assistance of the faculty and the input of parents, must develop a code of conduct and disciplinary procedures based on Catholic values and the dignity of the human person. The purpose of the code of conduct is to develop sound moral character, responsibility, and citizenship.

Each school must have its code of conduct and discipline procedures published in the parent/student handbook. Within the first week of the opening of school, the handbook must be distributed to students and parents for the purpose of communicating all school policies and procedures, including the code of conduct. Parents and students must sign a letter indicating that they have received the handbook and agree to be bound by the provisions it contains.

**\*4602      DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

In establishing appropriate disciplinary regulations, the following guidelines should be used:

1. Good classroom discipline is first and foremost the responsibility of the classroom teacher.
2. Emphasis should be placed on positive values rather than on punishment.
3. In dealing with student behavior, respect for the personal dignity of the student should be evident.
4. Conferences and written communication between the home and school regarding infractions and reasons for continued dissatisfaction must be documented and kept on file.

The following disciplinary measures are forbidden:

1. Corporal punishment (e.g., but not limited to: spanking, shaking, slapping, pinching, etc.);
2. Language which is sarcastic or calculated to bring ridicule on the student, his/her parents, or background;
3. Sending a student outside the classroom where he/she is deprived of supervision;
4. Using religious exercises or important class assignments as punitive measures;
5. Any extreme or unusual form of punishment or any touching of a student in a manner that is considered punitive.

**4603 SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

No student shall possess, use, or attempt to possess, use, or be under the influence of any of the following substances on school premises during any school term or off school premises at a school-related activity, function, or event:

1. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate;
2. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage;
3. Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or any other volatile chemical substance for inhalation;
4. Any other intoxicant, or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drug.

Definitions:

“Use” means a student has smoked, ingested, injected, imbibed, inhaled, drunk, or otherwise taken internally a prohibited substance recently enough that it is detectable by the student’s physical appearance, actions, breath, or speech.

“Under the influence” means a student’s faculties are noticeably impaired, but the student need not be legally intoxicated.

Students who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action including expulsion.

The transmittal, sale, or attempted sale of what is represented to be any of the above-listed substances is also prohibited under this policy.

**\*4604 SUSPENSION**

A student may be suspended by the principal or his/her designee for a serious violation of school regulations. The school must carefully document the violation and the reason for the suspension. Written notice must be given to the parent or guardian of the student. No suspension must last longer than three (3) days. Each school must determine the exact punitive conditions for suspension and these must be published in the school's parent/student handbook. During the period of suspension the student is marked absent.

**\*4605      EXPULSION**

A student may be expelled from school when other means of discipline have failed. A student may be immediately expelled from school for certain very serious reasons and/or after a single violation if, despite his or her previous disciplinary history, the student's continued presence in the school would seriously hamper the school in fulfilling its obligation to other students.

Expulsion is a serious matter and should be invoked only as a last resort. Normally it will follow a single grave offense or a series of offenses indicating a basically hostile attitude. When such a serious case arises the following procedures are followed:

1. There must be a documented conference of the principal, teacher and student. If the problem cannot be resolved in this conference, the student is suspended.
2. This meeting is followed by a documented conference of the principal, teacher and parent. If no solution is reached, another conference is held with the pastor/authorized agent or his/her designee present.
3. The principal and pastor/authorized agent or his/her designee then decide either to readmit or expel the student. If readmitted, the student is on probation for a period of time. If the decision is for expulsion, the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools is notified and given a brief explanation of the reasons in writing.

**IMMEDIATE EXPULSION**

A student may be subject to immediate expulsion when he/she:

1. participates in disruptive activities by a group such as a gang;
2. possesses, uses, or delivers narcotics, dangerous drugs or alcohol on school property or at school sponsored activities;
3. smokes or uses any tobacco product on school property or at a school-related activity;
4. possesses, uses or conceals a weapon (a weapon is any instrument which may produce bodily harm or death) on school property or at a school-related activity;
5. threatens of bodily injury or harm to a student/school personnel;
6. assaults a student, parent or any school personnel;
7. vandalizes school property or the property of others;
8. engages in chronic or repeated behavior which disrupts the learning environment.

**GRIEVANCE FOR STUDENT EXPULSION**

The following grievance procedure must be published every year in local school handbooks.

This policy and procedure shall apply only to instances of student expulsion.

**PROCEDURE:**

Prior to the initiation of a formal grievance, parents who seek redress for their expelled child must first confer directly with the principal (“conference”) for resolution of the situation.

If there is not a satisfactory resolution of the complaint, the following are steps in the formal grievance procedure:

1. A written statement of the complaint, including a brief summary of all pertinent conferences, must be prepared and filed with the school council secretary with in three (3) school days of the conference, or decision resulting there from, whichever is later. The date and time of filing will be recorded on the original of the complaint.
2. The school council secretary will, within 24 hours of filing, inform and forward the grievance to the Local Grievance Council (“LGC”), who will review the grievance proceedings. If it deems necessary, the LGC may hear further statements, evidence or arguments within seven (7) school days of its receipt of the grievance. The LGC will render a decision within ten (10) school days of its receipt of the grievance.
3. If the aggrieved party is still not satisfied with the decision of the LGC, an appeal may be made to the pastor with in three (3) school days of the decision of the LGC. The pastor/authorized agent, will review all documentation of the grievance procedure and set a date for hearing the grievance with all parties of the initial grievance in attendance. This meeting will take place within seven (7) school days of the pastor’s receipt of such an appeal. The pastor will then render his decision within five (5) school days.
4. If the aggrieved party remains unsatisfied with the decision of the pastor, the avenue of further appeal would be the Archdiocesan Grievance Council. Such an appeal must be sent in writing within five (5) school days of the pastor’s decision.
5. Pending outcome of the formal grievance, only the principal of pastor/authorized agent may, with or without condition, abate the termination.

### Local Grievance Council – Composition

1. The LGC shall be composed of three to five members appointed by the local School Council.
2. Individuals appointed to the LGC should be people of integrity with some expertise in education, human relations, and conflict management, if possible.
3. One member may be a present or former School Council member. The other two members should have no direct relationship to the school.
4. The appointment to the LGC is for one year and is renewable.

### Local Grievance Council – Duties and Process

1. Both parties to the grievance will prepare a complete written statement of the nature of the grievance and the remedies sought. The LGC will review these statements and the procedures followed and decide if additional steps need to be taken or if it will uphold the decision of the principal.
2. If the decision of the LGC is to uphold the principal's decision, then the process moves to No. 8.
3. If the decision of the LGC is such that it feels that additional discussion of the situation needs to take place, it will call a meeting of both parties to the grievance.
4. Each party to the grievance may be accompanied by one other individual who is not an attorney and who will act as an observer/advisor.
5. Both parties will appear before the LGC together and make an oral presentation. The aggrieved party will make the first presentation. At no time is there to be cross-examination or direct discussion between parties to the grievance.
6. After both presentations have been completed, the LGC will enter into closed session to consider the oral and written presentations.
7. The LGC may recall, together, both parties to the grievance for clarification of points that may have been raised in either of the written or oral statements.
8. The LGC will render its recommendation in writing to both parties involved.

## **4607 GRIEVANCE FOR NON-EXPULSION**

All disciplinary actions/decisions that do not result in student expulsion will be resolved at the local school level. Neither the Local Grievance Council nor the Archdiocesan Grievance Council will hear these matters.

Schools are to provide an opportunity for individuals to be heard in redress of a

policy, regulation, or decision that is perceived to inflict hardship on an individual or group.

Student complaints will be presented by the students in the presence of their parents/guardians.

The primary aim of any local procedure is to establish and publish the procedure to be followed and to provide fair notice and hearing of the matter. Complaints may be heard from individuals, parents, parent organizations and employees. Schools are encouraged to devise creative ways of addressing and resolving these situations, while at the same time, providing a consistent forum for redress of perceived wrongs.

The principal, council and pastor/authorized agent shall formulate a local grievance procedure in advance of the school year and must publish it in the student/parent/employee handbooks for that year.

**\*4608 SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Since the legal relationship between the Catholic school and the student [or the student's parent(s) or guardian(s)] is one of contract law, the parent/student handbook of rules and regulations governing school operations and procedures must contain a statement concerning the use of lockers, the possession of illegal substances and objects, and the resulting disciplinary action for violation of the school rules in these areas.

The School Principal and/or his/her designee may search student desks, lockers and belongings including, but not limited to, handbags, briefcases, backpacks and other items in a student's possession.

**\*4609 ANTI-HARASSMENT ENVIRONMENT**

Appendix: Harassment 4609A

The schools of the Archdiocese do not condone harassment of any kind. All students of the Archdiocese are to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment in any form, including bullying and cyber bullying, is prohibited. Bullying, a form of abuse, can be defined as repetitive acts of manipulation and/or aggression by one or more persons against a person. For bullying to occur there must be an imbalance of power, intent to harm, and repetition of the type of act. Bullying can further be defined as either physical (verbal or written), or non-physical. (See appendix for behaviors considered as bullying behaviors.)

This prohibition against acts of harassment applies to all people engaged in all school related activities; all students, regular or temporary, part-time or full-time employees; volunteers, itinerant instructors, and consultants.

Each Catholic school is to develop or adopt a bullying prevention program and school policies to address bullying behaviors on and off school campus which directly impacts school climate. Each school should share their plan with teachers, staff, parents, and students. (See appendix recommended components of a bullying plan.) Schools shall also adopt specific guidelines for students who are readmitted to school if they have been suspended due to bullying behavior.

#### **Procedure When an Allegation of Harassment is made Against Laity**

The person may first choose to tell the individual causing the harassment that the conduct is offensive and must stop.

When an allegation is made regarding harassment against laity, the person reporting the complaint should be informed to notify the Human Resources Office who will in turn notify the Archbishop (or his designee). Their office telephone number is (210) 734-1689.

The Director of Human Resources will immediately initiate a preliminary investigation to begin a prompt and thorough evaluation of the alleged harassment. The alleged perpetrator will be placed on Administrative Leave with Pay (if an employee) or Suspension (if a volunteer) during the evaluation process. Care will be taken to avoid endangering anyone's good name during this process.

The Director of Human Resources will notify the alleged perpetrator, his/her supervisor, and the person who brought the allegation of the conclusion of the evaluation.

#### **Procedure When an Allegation of Harassment is Made against a Cleric**

The person may first choose to tell the individual causing the harassment that the conduct is offensive and must stop.

When an allegation is made regarding harassment against a cleric, the person reporting the complaint should be informed to notify the Office of Victim Assistance and Safe Environment (OVASE) who will in turn notify the Archbishop (or his designee). The OVASE telephone number is (210) 734-7786 or 1-877-700-1888.

The Archbishop (or his designee) will initiate the preliminary investigation.

The Archbishop (or his designee) will notify the alleged perpetrator, his/her supervisor, and the person who brought the allegation of the conclusion of the evaluation.

#### **Procedure When an Allegation of Harassment is Made Against a Person Who is Not an Employee or Volunteer**

All incidents of alleged harassment shall be investigated by the principal and/or pastor/authorized agent and reported to the superintendent. A written report of the allegation and the investigation shall be kept on file at the school. The final action

taken shall be determined by the investigator and may include, especially in cases of second offenses, removal of the individual from participation in any school activities or programs.

**Procedure When an Allegation of Harassment is Made Against a Student**

All incidents of alleged harassment shall be investigated by the principal and/or pastor/authorized agent and reported to the superintendent. A written report of the allegation and the investigation shall be kept on file at the school. The final action taken shall be determined by the investigator and may include, especially in cases of second offenses, suspension or expulsion.

**\*4610 USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

Whether occurring within or outside of school, when a student's use of electronic communication jeopardizes the safe environment of the school or is contrary to Gospel values, the student can be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences, including expulsion.

This policy applies to communications or depictions through email, text messages, or web site postings, whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through private communication, which: (1) are of a sexual nature; (2) threaten, libel, slander, malign, disparage, harass or embarrass members of the school community; or (3) cause harm to the school community

**4700**      **MORALITY**

**\*4701**      **PREGNANCY**

A primary purpose of Catholic education is to guide students' growth in Christian values and moral conduct. Catholic teaching stresses that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and that the sanctity of family life is enhanced through the fulfillment of God's plan as expressed by a loving and permanent commitment. Premarital sexual activity is contrary to these values. However, when a pregnancy occurs outside of marriage, the total school community seeks to offer support to the pregnant student and or the student father so that the pregnancy can be brought to term. The reality of the situation, in all its dimensions, is to be treated in a Christian and humane manner.

In order to insure the best interests of the student(s), parents and the school community, the following guidelines will be implemented:

When school personnel become aware of the pregnancy, the principal must meet with the pregnant student and then her parent or guardian.

The student must receive appropriate professional counseling consistent with Catholic teaching.

If the father-to-be is identified and if he is a student in a Catholic school, the following guidelines will be implemented:

1. The principal of that school must meet with him and his parent or guardian.
2. The father-to-be must be involved in a counseling program similar to that provided the mother-to-be.

The school will assist the pregnant student in completing her education either by allowing her to continue attending classes or by referring her to an appropriate alternative program.

If the student is to remain in school, she will be allowed, with a doctor's written approval, to participate in all activities to the extent that her condition and the common good of the school dictate.

If the student desires to return to the school after the birth of the child, the school will facilitate her continuance only with appropriate documentation from a health care provider.

The condition of pregnancy, itself, must not exclude the student from participating in the public graduation activities and events. However, the principal, in consultation with the superintendent, the parent or guardian, and in the case of parish schools, the pastor, must determine whether unique circumstances may necessitate pursuing an alternate action.

**\*4702 ABORTION**

Abortion, which disregards innocent human life, is incompatible with and contradictory to the fundamental teachings of the Church, the mission of the Catholic school and the values that ought to permeate Catholic education. Catholic teaching does not accept that anyone may justifiably arrange for or procure an abortion for oneself or for another person, be forced or pressured into having an abortion or influence or coerce another person to have an abortion.

Therefore, the involvement of any student in procuring or assisting in the procurement of an abortion is cause for such student to be dismissed from school.

If it becomes known to any member of the school community that a student is contemplating or planning an abortion all reasonable encouragement must be given to the student to save the life of her unborn child. In all circumstances, the mother of the unborn child must be treated with compassion and respect.

**\*4703 MARRIAGE AND CO-HABITATION**

If a marriage of a student is recognized as valid by the Catholic Church, the school administration will determine the status of the student within the school on an individual basis. Such a marriage, in itself, is not cause for dismissal or sanctions against the student.

Co-habitation and a marriage not recognized by the Catholic Church may be causes for expulsion.

**\*4800 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

*Refer to the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department Health Manual.*

**\*4801 IMMUNIZATION**

Every student enrolled in a Catholic school in the State of Texas shall be immunized against vaccine preventable diseases caused by infectious agents in accordance with the immunization schedule adopted by the Texas Department of State Health Services. A student who fails to present the required evidence shall not be accepted for enrollment. The only exception to the foregoing requirement is a medical exemption signed by a licensed physician (M.D. or D.O.) authorized to practice in the State of Texas.\*

\*See *Dignitas Personae* from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

**\*4802 MEDICATION POLICY**

Form: Medication Permission Request Form 4802A

Students are not allowed to carry medication on their person, including non-prescription medications. (The only exception is that, by physician direction, a student may be allowed to carry and self-administer inhaler medication.) Only medication which is necessary for a student to remain in school will be given during school hours. The *Medication Permission Request Form* must be completed by the parent/guardian and the health care provider in order for any medication, including "over-the-counter" medication (including but not limited to acetaminophen, ointments, cold tablets, cough drops), to be given by school personnel.

Medication is to be brought to the office by the parent (responsible party). If the medication is liquid, it must be accompanied with a calibrated medication dispenser which has legible numbers on it. Only medication prescribed by a licensed physician or dentist and labeled by a registered pharmacist will be administered during school hours. Medication will be dispensed by a designee of the principal.

Each student's medication must be in its original container clearly labeled with the following information:

1. Student name
2. Physician/Dentist name
3. Date
4. Name of medication
5. Dosage
6. Directions for administration
7. Duration of administration

The staff member who is designated by the principal to assist a student in taking his/her medication may refuse to do so at any time. No medication which has expired

will be given. Medication will be returned only to the parent/responsible party by school personnel.

By physician direction, a student may be allowed to carry and self-administer inhaler medication.

**\*4803 BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS**

All schools follow the Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan approved by the Superintendents of the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department in 1993, with the following modifications:

All schools are to have a designated waste receptacle in the area of the health coordinator. The receptacle should be of heavy duty plastic with a fitted lid which opens in and not out. The receptacle should be lined at all times with a plastic bag. Whenever handling waste material, the staff person should always wear latex gloves, or something comparable in the case of latex allergies.

Schools are not viewed by the Texas Department of Health or the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission as being generators of “regulated medical waste” and are therefore not required to use red bags or biohazard labels for trash disposal. The school nurse or health coordinator may dispose of waste in the regular dumpster.

If red sharps containers are used, the TNRCC does not recommend dumpster disposal. Options for disposal include: working with the current waste services provider, partnering with a local health department clinic, hospital, physician’s office or other health care provider, or utilizing an approved medical waste transport service.

**\*4804 ROLE OF SCHOOL HEALTH COORDINATOR**

The health coordinator is appointed by the principal and is responsible for ensuring that required health screenings are performed, followed-up and documented according to state regulations by certified screeners. Additionally, they may monitor immunizations, maintain health records, complete state and archdiocesan statistical reports and perform other health service-related duties as designated.

**\*4805 ROLE OF SCHOOL NURSE**

A registered nurse or a licensed vocational nurse employed (or volunteering) to act in the capacity of the school nurse may perform nursing functions only under the supervision and standing orders of a licensed physician and only with a current Texas license.

**\*4806 MEDICATION/HEALTH RELATED INCIDENTS DOCUMENTATION**

Each school is to maintain a daily log of health related incidents, illnesses, or complaints, as well as a daily medication log.

**\*4807**

## **CHILD ABUSE**

Link: Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)  
<http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us> ; [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)

The Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of San Antonio will pursue all reasonable measures to assist maltreated children and their families. The Archdiocese and Department of Catholic Schools will:

1. Require that all Catholic schools comply with the requirements of *Texas Statutes Family Code Chapter 261*—Investigation of Report of Child Abuse or Neglect.
2. Cooperate with official child protective agencies in identification and reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect.
3. Cooperate with official child protective agencies if officials seek to interview a child at school.
4. Provide child abuse awareness in-service education, including legal requirements, for school personnel.
5. Encourage inclusion of appropriate child abuse awareness education in classrooms at all grade levels.

### Reporting Abuse or Neglect:

A person who has cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall immediately make a report as required by law. *Family Code 261.101*. The report must be made no later than 48 hours after the hour that the person first suspects that the child has been or may be abused or neglected.

The report shall contain: name and address of the child, the name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child, and any other pertinent information concerning the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect.

Reports shall be made to any local or state law enforcement agency, and in addition shall be made to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) at the San Antonio phone number 53-ABUSE or by their toll-free number 1-800-252-5400. More information on reporting can be found on the DFPS website: ([www.tdprs.state.tx.us](http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us)). On-line reporting can be done at [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org).

If the allegation of abuse is being made against a school employee, the Superintendent of Schools must also be notified immediately.

### Reporting of Sexual Abuse (For implementation 2006-2007)

Any allegation of sexual abuse that involves a school employee, volunteer, or student must be reported to the Office of Victim Assistance and Safe Environment (OVASE).

The Superintendent of Schools must be notified of the reporting.

**4808 STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

Each school must carry the required Archdiocesan student accident insurance for every student enrolled. This student accident insurance provides basic coverage and payment and is usually part of the regular fees charged to parents each school year. Student accident insurance is secondary insurance and covers students at all school-related activities and for travel to and from all school-related activities. Parents are given the opportunity to purchase supplementary insurance at higher levels in addition to the required basic insurance coverage.

**\*4809 STUDENT TRANSPORTATION**

If a school or parish is responsible for the operation of a school bus/van, it is expected that all state regulations regarding licensing, insurance, safety and other legalities be observed.

Any driver transporting students in an archdiocesan vehicle must be approved by the insurance company of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

In July 1999, the National Transportation Safety Board issued a safety bulletin, which officially requested organizations to discontinue the use of 10-15 passenger vans to transport children. It has been determined that 10-15 passenger vans are unsafe. Included in the webpage for the insurance company of the Archdiocese is literature distributed by the National Safety Transportation Board. For more information, call 1-800-228-6108.

**\*4810 WELLNESS**

Appendix: Wellness Policy – Guidelines for Implementation 4810A

Form: Wellness Policy Compliance Evaluation 4810A

The Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of San Antonio are committed to providing school environments that promote the development of lifelong wellness practices. In order to protect students' health and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity, the schools will:

- Strive to comply with the Texas Public School Nutrition Policy and /or the USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans for all foods and beverages sold or served at school.
- Provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical education.
- Provide opportunities for all students to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Assure compliance with the federal Child Nutrition Program requirements and nutrition standards for reimbursable school meals.

- Involve students, parents, teachers, food service employees, and other interested community members in developing and implementing school nutrition and physical activity goals.
- Appoint a Wellness Committee to annually evaluate compliance with the wellness policy and local school goals.

### **Local School Goals**

Schools will implement the Wellness Policy by developing local school goals based on the Guidelines for Implementing the Wellness Policy. A Wellness Committee will annually evaluate compliance with the Wellness Policy and local school goals. That evaluation will be shared with the Department of Catholic Schools.

# SERIES 5000

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## FINANCES

The biblical concept of Stewardship serves as the basis for the financial administration of the Department of Catholic Schools and Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of San Antonio: “As Christian stewards, we receive God’s gifts gratefully, cultivate them responsibly, share them lovingly in justice and with others, and return them with increase to the Lord.”

Reference:

*U.S. Bishops Pastoral Letter, To Be Christian Stewards*

**5000**      **CENTRAL FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

**5001**      **DEPARTMENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BUDGET**

The annual budget of the Department of Catholic Schools shall be prepared by the archdiocesan superintendent in consultation with the Archdiocesan Business Office and the Catholic Schools Council. The final budget is forwarded to the Moderator of the Curia for approval, then to the Finance Council for approval before it is included in the total archdiocesan budget. If any changes are recommended, they will be made before the Archbishop gives his final approval to the budget.

The Department of Catholic Schools shall be financed partially through the assessment of a school tax.

**5100      LOCAL FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

**5101      THE PASTOR AND SCHOOL FINANCE**

Recognizing that the pastor has the ultimate fiscal responsibility for the school, he is canonically responsible for the fiscal operation of the parish, including the parish school.

All financial decisions regarding the school shall be approved by the pastor in consultation with the local School Council and the principal, and where applicable, the parish Finance Council.

Individual line items in the school's budget are not the responsibility of the Parish Finance Council; however, the parish Finance Council does approve the parish investment (subsidy) to the parish school.

**5102      REMUNERATION FOR SERVICES**

1. Salaries for employees are assigned according to qualification of the individual hired as determined by the local school council. A recommended base salary is published by the Department of Catholic Schools.
2. All payments made to lay employees are to be made by check recorded in the appropriate payroll records and reported on the payroll tax returns which must be filed quarterly.
3. Annually the Department of Catholic Schools will publish the stipend package for all priests and religious.
4. All non-exempt employees are to be paid on an hourly basis. The school is required by federal law to maintain time records for all non-exempt employees. All non-exempt employees must accurately record on their time card the number of hours worked and paid absences. Occasionally, it may be necessary for non-exempt employees to work overtime or more hours than was agreed upon at the time of employment. Adjustments of this nature must be approved in writing by the Principal.
5. All lay employees are subject to Federal Income Tax and Social Security. The FICA taxes are levied against the employer and again with the employee at the same rate. As a non-profit religious organization, a parochial school is not required to offer state unemployment or disability insurance.
6. All records pertaining to employment taxes must be readily available for inspection by the Internal Revenue Service, if the need should arise.

7. Written teacher salary and wage plans shall be developed by the local School Council for personnel according to TCCED qualifications and years of experience. The plans shall be developed for full-time and part-time regular employees of every job classification, with provisions for minimum and maximum salaries.
8. If it is financially feasible, every effort must be made by the local School Council to establish the teacher salary scale in line with that recommended by the Department of Catholic Schools. The local School Council must notify the superintendent in writing annually if the local teacher salary scale will deviate from the minimum archdiocesan base scale.
9. Minimum salary cannot be less than the federal minimum wage scale.
10. Salaries and wages must have the approval of the pastor and shall be adhered to for the duration of the fiscal year. Payment of compensation shall be according to a fixed time schedule established by the principal.
11. All benefits (i.e., medical, dental, life insurance & pension plan) must be made available to all employees working thirty (30) hours a week or more if effective in subject school.
12. Section 125 (Cafeteria Plan), if effective in subject school, must also be offered to all employees.
13. No employee refusing benefits will be compensated monetarily; s/he must sign a waiver acknowledging benefit refusal.

**5200**      **SCHOOL BUDGETS**

**5201**      **SCHOOL BUDGETS ACCOUNTABILITY**

Annually a local school budget must be prepared by the principal and the Finance Committee of the local School Council, submitted to the entire local School Council for study and approved by the pastor prior to signing employee ministry agreements.

School revenue consists of tuition, fees, donations to the school and school functions, and funds raised by the PTC or any organization which advertises that the proceeds are for the benefit of the school. Also included in revenue are such items as income from school endowments, interest on school bank deposits, earnings from trusts, and rental of school property, etc.

All revenue and expenditures must be supported by documentation that is kept on file.

Subsidy is the amount the parish contributes from its general fund to the school budget.

**5202**      **BUDGETARY PREPARATION**

Form:            Budget by Cost Center with Calculations 5202A – see Admin Login  
                      Budget by Cost Center with NO Calculations 5202B – see Admin Login  
                      Budget by GL Account Number 5202C – see Admin Login  
                      Monthly Cash Budget 5202D

Appendix:      Strategic Financial Planning 5202A  
                      Budget Preparation Time Schedule 5202B

Budgets must be constructed in accordance with information supplied by the Department of Catholic Schools. The budget forms furnished by the DCS are the official forms that must be used in submitting budgets. However, the superintendent may approve computer printed budget forms that conform to the content of the official Archdiocesan budget forms.

All schools must submit to the Department of Catholic Schools a projected budget followed by an adjusted budget report on dates indicated by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

**5203**      **SCHOOL BUDGET TRANSFER**

Transfer of funds between budget categories shall be made by the pastor and principal in consultation with the local School Council. Before granting such approval the pastor and School Council shall be provided with complete information regarding funds available, the proposed expenditure, and reserves.

**5204**      **SCHOOL BUDGET MONITORING**

The pastor and the School Council shall be furnished a monthly budget report by the principal. This copy is kept in the school's budget file.

A monthly deficit in excess of **15%** must be reported to the superintendent immediately.

## **5300**      **ACCOUNTING**

### **5301**      **SYSTEMS OF ACCOUNTS**

If the school's financial activity is recorded on computer, hard copies of monthly reports must be printed and bound as official documentation.

All schools of the Archdiocese of San Antonio shall be operated on a sound financial basis while meeting the educational goals of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. It should be evident that a wise use of financial resources and an accurate, clear accounting of these resources are incorporated in each school's overall management.

The Archbishop has mandated that the Archdiocesan School Accounting System be implemented in every parish school. This system accomplishes two primary goals:

1. To provide a standardized financial reporting system within the archdiocese.
2. To maintain current financial information at the Pastoral Center to permit assistance in maintaining current, accurate information and allowing expeditious development of end-of-year archdiocesan financial statements.

This accounting system is explained in the School Accounting System (SAS) manual, which can be obtained from the San Antonio Archdiocesan Business Office along with other necessary information.

Financial records and budgets of schools are to be kept separated from those of the parish in order to keep an accurate record of the cost of school operations. The Principal is responsible for the school accounts.

### **5302**      **SCHOOL BANK ACCOUNTS**

All school organizations such as PTC, Boosters, Councils, etc. shall be under the school accounting system and be established under the name of the school. The pastor or his delegate and the principal or his/her delegates are authorized signatories for these checking accounts.

1. All checks written require two signatures.
2. The pastor's signature is required on any expenditure written over \$5000 and all checks written to cash for more than \$100.00.

**5303 BANK STATEMENT RECONCILIATION**

Bank statement reconciliation should be completed within 10 days after it is available from the bank. These reconciliations must be reviewed by the principal.

Any discrepancies with the bank (unreconciled figures) must be addressed immediately.

**5304 RECORDS RETENTION**

Retain on file in perpetuity: 1) annual finance reports; 2) school account books (ledgers); and 3) copies of state and federal tax returns.

Retain on file until audit has been completed: 1) invoices supporting expenditures; 2) deposit slips; and 3) petty cash vouchers.

Retain on file for a period of seven years: 1) employee earning records; 2) payroll checks; and 3) monthly bank statements, check stubs, and canceled checks for all accounts.

Retain employee time sheets/cards for seven fiscal years.

**5305 INVENTORY**

For optimum fiscal management of school materials and resources and for insurance purposes, each school shall have on file an accurate and up to date inventory of the school's physical resources. This inventory should include the description and item numbers of all furniture, equipment, supplies, and material resources of any kind throughout the school facility, e.g. all classrooms, offices, gym, auditorium and cafeteria. All equipment should be clearly labeled with permanent labels as belonging to that school.

An accurate inventory must also be kept on all federally-owned or state-owned equipment and materials. These items must also be clearly labeled as belonging to a certain federal or state program.

**5400**      **SCHOOL INCOME**

**5401**      **TUITION RATE**

Prior to registration tuition rates shall be approved by the pastor in consultation with the local School Council.

To keep pace with cost of living increases and inflation, each school should plan to raise tuition every year. If a local School Council plans to maintain current tuition rates into the next year, adequate proof of the financial feasibility of this decision should be presented to the pastor, in writing, prior to the approval of the new budget in the spring.

**5402**      **COLLECTION OF TUITION AND OTHER FEES**

Procedures for collection of tuition, as well as for registration fee and other student fees, shall be promulgated to parents in a handbook, bulletin, or letter prior to the time of registration.

**5403**      **TUITION ASSISTANCE**

Where need is such that a family is unable to pay the fixed rate of tuition, a tuition reduction must be considered. In addition, to the extent that local resources will allow, local School Councils are encouraged to establish family tuition rates and/or set family ceilings on tuition rates to assist families with several children in school.

Each school is encouraged to establish a program of tuition assistance to the extent that local resources will allow, for families who are unable to pay the fixed rate. Councils shall establish guidelines and procedures for the administration of such a program and publish an application for tuition assistance. These guidelines and procedures shall be published in the Student-Parent Handbook and shall also be promulgated in a bulletin or letter prior to the time of registration.

**5404**      **REGISTRATION FEE**

A registration fee shall be used to reserve a place for the student. The amount of the registration fee shall be determined by the local School Council.

The registration fee shall be non-refundable. The only exceptions to this regulation are: when a family moves out of town after registration has been paid or when services cannot be provided.

The registration fee may not be transferred from one Catholic School to another unless the principals of the two Catholic Schools involved in the transfer agree to special arrangements because of the financial needs of the family involved.

**5405 OTHER FEES**

Every effort should be made to incorporate needed funds into the overall tuition base of the school.

Most school fees, excluding the registration fee except as noted above, are refundable. However, each school shall establish a policy regarding the refunding or non-refunding of fees and the method used for computing refunds.

**5406 DEFERRED FUNDS**

Monies collected during the current school session which are applicable to the subsequent fiscal year must be applied to that fiscal year's revenue. These include registration fees, tuition, etc. collected in the spring but which in fact are being collected to offset the cost of the succeeding school session.

In the interim these funds are accounted for as "unearned revenue" and are reported in the school's liability account. These monies should be placed in an interest-bearing account until July 1st. It is not advisable for a school to borrow from these funds to cover the expenses of the current budget year.

**5407 FUND RAISING ACTIVITIES**

Any organization or group proposing to conduct any fund raising activity for the school and using the school name must have the approval of the principal.

All revenues collected must be remitted to the school or its representative.

Any funds raised from these activities will be spent at the sole discretion of the principal and pastor and in consultation with the organization raising the funds.

All fund raising activities must adhere to local, state, and federal regulations, where applicable.

## **5500 HANDLING CASH**

### **5501 GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES**

1. No one person will have exclusive knowledge and control of any financial transaction.
2. Persons employed as cashiers or bookkeepers should be under the direct supervision of the financial administrator (principal), and their work should come under his/her review on a regular basis. Cashiers and bookkeepers should be carefully instructed regarding their duties. A complete job description, delineating all duties, should be on file at time of employment.
3. Cash receipts will be processed daily and promptly deposited.
4. Each payment received will be promptly recorded. A receipt is issued to the payer with a duplicate kept on file.
5. No disbursements will be made from incoming funds for any reason. All receipts are deposited in the bank. All disbursements are made either by check or from an interest fund.
6. The cashing of paychecks from school receipts or office funds is prohibited. The cashing of accommodation checks will be avoided. The cashing of accommodation checks should always require prior approval, through the initializing of the face of the check by an authorized official of the school (pastor or principal). Checks cashed will be for small amounts and should be made payable to an individual accountable for the cash.
7. The area or areas that are utilized primarily for cashing functions will be separate and protected to the greatest extent practical. However, this area will not be secluded in such a manner as to interfere with the observation of cashier operations by the financial administrator.
8. All receipts of cash through the mail will be recorded by an administrative clerk prior to transfer to the cashier. Copies of the record should be kept in a file to which the cashier does not have access.
9. Bank statements will be mailed to or be delivered unopened to the principal for his/her preliminary review.
10. Bank statements will be reconciled by administrative staff not directly involved in the receipt or disbursement of cash.

## **5600      RECEIPTS**

### **5601      “OVER THE COUNTER” PAYMENTS**

All “over the counter” payments from students, parents, school staff, and others should be immediately acknowledged by the issuance of a receipt to the payer.

If book-type receipts are used, in addition to their being numbered, the name and address of the school should be imprinted.

The receipts are to be carefully completed as follows:

1. Issue receipts in strict printed number sequence.
2. Enter correct date.
3. Enter name of person from whom cash is received.
4. Enter, in space provided, a brief description of payment. (Example: Tuition \$150.00)
5. Sign the full name of the person accepting payment.

A daily record of all cash receipts should be recorded in a journal.

### **5602      PAYMENTS RECEIVED BY MAIL**

Standard internal control procedures require that persons whose primary duties are cashiering and/or bookkeeping do not have direct and initial access to incoming mail.

A list of mail payments should be prepared in duplicate each school day by the administrative staff person who opens the mail.

All checks drawn in favor of the school, or to cash, should be immediately endorsed for deposit into the school’s bank account.

The original of the completed list of payments received by mail, with the checks attached, should be delivered to the bookkeeper. The copy of the daily list should be initialed by the Principal or his/her delegate and filed in the administrative office.

Upon receipt of the daily list of payments and the related checks, the bookkeeper should record the payment in the same manner as “over the counter” payments. It is recommended that receipts be issued, also, for payments received in the mail.

### **5603      BANK DEPOSITS**

Deposits should be made daily (if cash or checks have been received) or at least twice weekly.

A duplicate deposit slip, showing a detailed list of checks, is to be retained in the school office with full documentation as to the revenue component of the deposit and source.

**5700 SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT FUNDS**

**5701 DEVELOPMENT**

All schools must seek to plan a program of development that can be implemented to assist the school in supplementing the funds it will need when funding new and innovative educational programs and activities.

**5702 INVESTMENTS, ENDOWMENTS, TRUSTS AND LOANS**

All investments, endowments, trusts and loans made by the school shall be subject to the policies and procedures of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

All permission for the above shall be subject to the approval of the pastor, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools.

**5703 ESTABLISHMENT OF ENDOWMENTS, FOUNDATIONS AND TRUST FUNDS**

Each local School Council shall establish programs that will provide financial stability to help insure the continuation of the Catholic school.

Interest from such programs should be dedicated to teacher salaries and benefits, scholarships, and/or perpetual maintenance of facilities.

**5704 ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS**

Gifts will be evaluated by the local School Council in consultation with the principal and pastor. Gifts will be evaluated upon the ability to meet the following criteria:

- supports to the mission and philosophy of the archdiocese;
- is appropriate to the mission and purpose of the local school;
- is appropriate to the development level of the students affected;
- creates no unanticipated or excessive financial burden to the school or parish;
- complies with the tax rules and regulations governing gifts;
- requires limited maintenance;
- is compatible with the other equipment/property currently owned by the school;
- carries no unreasonable restrictions by the donor;
- becomes the property of the recipient;
- creates no additional staff requirements.

In the case of a gift of real estate, consultation with the superintendent and Archdiocesan Business Office must take place.

# SERIES 6000

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# GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

Catholic education needs - now, and in the future - leaders who 1) know education and work in service of the Church, 2) know the Church, 3) understand the connection, 4) have new ideas, 5) know what it means to lead.

Reference:

**NCEA - Catholic Schools for the 21st Century**

## **6000**      **GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

### **\*6001**      **ASBESTOS**

Forms:      Notice of Asbestos 6001A

Principals are required to maintain an approved and updated Management Plan in the school office. The plan includes information about the location and condition of asbestos containing materials in the school, as well as inspection and surveillance records and copies of annual notices to parents, faculty, staff, and short-term workers. The school will annually notify parents, faculty, staff and short-term workers (e.g. telephone repair workers, utility workers, or exterminators) who may come in contact with asbestos in the school, using the form letters and notices provided by the Department of Catholic Schools. Copies of the notices must also be sent to the Department of Catholic Schools. The cost of the compliance inspections is to be borne by the school and should be included in budget deliberations for the school year.

### **\*6002**      **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

The Department of Catholic Schools publishes a calendar annually. Schools may request changes from this calendar because of local public school schedules or other serious reasons. All schools must have 180 instructional days and 10 professional days. One of those 10 days is the required archdiocesan conference. All school calendars must be submitted and approved by the Associate Superintendent to ensure that TCCED requirements are being met.

The Superintendent will specify the maximum number of early dismissal days. Any instructional days missed because of inclement weather will be made up at the discretion of the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, in accordance with TCCED standards.

Any missed instructional days will be made up at the discretion of the Superintendent of Catholic Schools and in accordance with TCCED standards.

### **\*6003**      **HANDBOOKS**

Each school will publish and annually update an Employee Handbook and a Parent/Student or Family Handbook. Parents/guardians must annually sign an agreement verifying that they have read the Parent/Student or Family Handbook and agreeing to abide by it. Employees must sign an agreement verifying that they have read the Employee Handbook and agree to abide by it.

### **6004**      **PUBLICATION OF ADDRESSES**

The school will not publish the addresses or phone numbers of any parents/guardians, students, or employees without their written consent.

**\*6005 SCHOOL LUNCH AND MILK PROGRAM**

Child Nutrition Programs, administered by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, are open to participation by Catholic schools. Applications for participating in any of the Child Nutrition Programs are obtained by contacting the Special Nutrition Programs Area Program manager at the Health and Human Services Commission by calling (210) 820-0288 ext. 500, by e-mailing [Barbara.zachary@tda.state.tx.us](mailto:Barbara.zachary@tda.state.tx.us) or in writing to 8918 Tesoro, Suite 120, San Antonio, TX 78217.

The National School Lunch and the National School Breakfast Programs provide cash and commodity assistance to schools that serve meals that meet the dietary requirements of the statute. Through this program, schools provide free or reduced-price meals to students that qualify under the poverty guidelines of the program, which are adjusted for family size. Other children may purchase meals at cost. Schools receive reimbursement for each meal served. The highest rates of reimbursement are provided for meals served to children eligible for free meals and reduced-price meals.

The special Milk Program reimburses participating schools for a portion of their expenditures in providing milk to students of all income ranges. Students may qualify for free milk under this program. Schools not participating in other federally funded food programs participate.

**\* 6006 STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS/INTERVIEWS**

Students' photographs and interviews may not be taken or used without written parental and administrative permission. Schools are to apprise parents of their procedures in the school's registration packet and/or handbook.

## **6100 COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

### **6101 RECRUITMENT**

Reasonable tuition rates and the economic viability of a Catholic school are directly related to the number of students enrolled in a school. Enrollment can be maintained only if there is an active recruitment program in the school.

While the need may vary according to the school, each school must seek to plan, implement, and maintain a program for recruitment of new students.

### **6102 MARKETING AND ADVERTISEMENT**

The Department of Catholic Schools, in collaboration with Archdiocesan agencies, seeks to provide effective marketing and advertisement strategies for all of the schools of the system. Each individual school, in turn, is expected to implement a marketing and advertisement plan for itself.

### **6103 PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY LIFE**

Good public relations demand harmonious and friendly cooperation with the local public school system and its officials. Schools shall make efforts to participate in activities of the community and to assist civic officials in projects aimed at the common good.

### **6104 SCHOOL-PARISH RELATIONS**

The school shall promote parish loyalty and shall cooperate with the parish. The principal, in particular, shall do whatever is possible to foster good school-parish relationships.

### **6105 SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS**

School publications serve not only to foster the creative talents of students but also to assist and support the school in its public relations. Such publications shall be available to students, parents, pastors, and the parish community at large. Articles of archdiocesan interest shall be sent to the editor of the archdiocesan newspaper for publication. All publications must be approved and reviewed by the school administration.

### **\*6106 VISITORS AND/OR UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS**

Each school shall develop a policy concerning visitors to the school which must be published in the school handbook and posted at all entrances to the school. A definite process must be in place to make the school community aware of the presence of unauthorized personnel and what steps are to be taken in such a situation.

Each school shall develop a method of identification for the regular school faculty and staff, so as to be easily differentiated from visitors and/or unauthorized persons.

Visitors must report to the school office immediately upon arrival.

**\*6107 MEDIA**

Members of the media will not be allowed on school property unless authorized by school administration after presenting appropriate valid identification.

School Administration shall notify the Superintendent if members of the media come onto school property.

The school administration shall approve communication with the media prior to any information being released.

**6200**      **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

**6201**      **BUILDING SAFETY PROCEDURES**

Schools must meet all safety standards according to city ordinance and Archdiocesan Risk Management Programs.

It shall be incumbent on the principal to make inspection reports known to the pastor/authorized agent and school council so that the recommendation of such inspectors can be implemented.

Principals shall be diligent in conducting the appropriate fire drills, tornado drills, and any other disaster drills. Evacuation routes must be posted in each room.

Schools not in compliance with safety standards are to immediately report circumstances to the pastor/authorized agent and the superintendent.

**6202**      **CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Appendix: Crisis Response Plan Template 6202A – see Admin Login

Catholic schools are to use the “*Emergency Response Procedures*” guide as a resource in providing a safe school environment.

School facilities are to be organized as to provide smooth and safe flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. All building exit doors are to open outward and be equipped with panic hardware. All exits are to be clearly marked and have legal exit lights. An exit plan is to be prominently displayed in each room.

It is the principal’s responsibility to develop and publish a comprehensive plan for use in the event of emergency conditions. Areas to be considered, but not limited to, are: death of a student/teacher, natural or chemical disaster, drive-by-shooting, intruder on the campus, transportation accident, etc. Staff training must be provided.

The plan should include:

1. Chain of command and responsibilities
2. List of all emergency numbers and contact person
3. Emergency calling system (before and after school)
4. Emergency calling system for notification of parents/guardians
5. A warning system different from the fire alarm
6. Designation of places to which the student will be taken
7. Practice drills at irregular intervals

8. Formation of a Damage Assessment Team and a SWEEP Team.

**\*6203 BOMB THREAT**

If a telephoned or written bomb threat is received by the school, the following procedures are to be observed:

1. Evacuate the school as for a fire drill.
2. Inform the police immediately. Once the police arrive, accept their decision as to the course of action to be taken.
3. Inform the pastor/authorized agent and Superintendent immediately.

**\*6204 FIRE DRILL**

Schools must consult with local city ordinances regarding fire drill requirements. Schools are to conduct a minimum of one fire drill for each month with ten or more school days. Also recommended is that each drill be slightly different, some obstructed and some unobstructed. The principal must record and file the date and time of each fire drill and other emergency evacuation drill. Personnel are to be trained in the use of fire extinguishers and fire safety equipment.

A warning system different from the fire alarm and not dependent on the electrical system of the school shall be established to alert school personnel in case an emergency condition arises during the school day. (For example, use of a hand bell, use of a pressurized fog horn, a special verbal "catch phrase" announcement delivered in person from room to room, etc.)

The fire drill plan must include:

1. The designation of places to which students will be taken.
2. The supervision of practice drills at regular but unscheduled intervals.
3. If there is a fire, the pastor/authorized agent and superintendent are to be notified immediately.

**\*6205 TORNADO WARNING**

If a warning is in effect in the locality of a school, students should be taken to a safe place. Students should be kept inside, away from windows/glass and preferably in an interior hallway on the lowest floor. Students should be directed to assume the accepted protective position - sit on the floor - head between raised knees - clasped hands covering the head and neck.

**\*6206 LOCK DOWN DRILLS**

Lock Down drills are to be conducted periodically as a protection against intruders in the school, drive-by shootings, emergency situations around school property, etc. All procedures during such an event are to be followed according to the school's Crisis Management Plan.

**\*6207 SCHOOLS AS WEAPON FREE ZONES**

Schools must follow the regulations as stated in Texas state law.

It is a crime for any person, student or non-student, to carry a firearm or any other type of dangerous weapon within 1,000 feet of school property, onto a school campus or bus or at school-sponsored athletic, social, or extracurricular activities. The person who does this should be immediately reported to the police. The principal should notify the parents/guardians of any student who is arrested for violation of this statute.

A policy pertaining to this law and the consequences of disobeying this law must be stated in the school's handbook.

**6300**      **NEW CONSTRUCTION**

**6301**      **BUILDING DESIGN**

When new construction is being considered, the Superintendent and the Archdiocesan Business Office are to be contacted. Proxies are required to engage the services of an architect. Building plans are subject to the approval of the Archdiocesan Building Commission before construction begins.

**6302**      **NAMING OF PRESENT OR NEW BUILDINGS / PROPERTY**

The designation of an official name for a building or a portion of a building or a piece of property is a significant matter.

The following considerations are to be adhered to when arriving at an official name for a building or any section of the building:

- Catholic identity of the building;
- traditions and heritage of the local faith community;
- implications for development programs;
- pastoral concerns; and
- views, interests and concerns of members of the local community.

The approval of the Archbishop is needed before proposals for the naming of buildings or properties are considered by local school councils. Proposed names (3 names in order of preference and reasons for the names) are to be submitted to the Archbishop for a final decision.

# SERIES 7000

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## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The general goal of the school's religion program is formation in Catholic faith, together with education in that faith. The program should strive to make the student's faith become "living, conscious, and active through the light of instruction."

"This ideal of Christian education will best be realized by programs which create the widest opportunities for students to receive systematic catechesis (Message), experience daily living in a faith community (Community), and develop commitment and skill in serving others (Service)," enhanced and strengthened by worship (Worship).

"When most students attending a Catholic school belong to families who associate themselves with the school because of its Catholic character, the ministry of the word can be exercised in it in multiple forms: primary proclamation, scholastic religious instruction, catechesis, homily."

### References:

**To Teach As Jesus Did, #83**  
**General Directory for Catechesis, #260**

## **7000      RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

### **\*7001      FAITH FORMATION OF FACULTY/STAFF**

Every faculty member in a Catholic school teaches religion by word and example. Teachers who teach secular subjects should be made aware of this responsibility when they join the staff of a Catholic school. They must be fully aware of their responsibility to unite their efforts with those of all other staff members in upholding the Catholic ideals and values of the school.

All faculty and staff will participate in programs of faith formation.

### **\*7002      TEACHERS OF RELIGION**

Forms:      Catholic School Teachers of Religion 7002A  
                  New Hire – Catholic School Teacher of Religion 7002B  
                  Level 1 Tracking Form 7002C  
                  Level 2 Tracking Form 7002D

Participation in the Archdiocesan catechetical certification program is an opportunity for growth in one's faith. If a teacher does not possess the catechetical certification required by Archdiocese but is enrolled in the certification program or in a Master's program in Theology, the teacher is eligible to teach religion in a Catholic school of the Archdiocese.

Teachers of religion must be Catholic. Elementary teachers must have a minimum or equivalent of Level II Archdiocesan catechetical certification. High school teachers of Religion must have a minimum or equivalent of Level III Archdiocesan catechetical certification. Teachers who have not met TCCED requirements must have a TCCED deficiency plan approved by the Superintendent.

Principals and assistant principals must have a commitment to ongoing formation in catechetical and spiritual leadership development.

### **\*7003      TIME ALLOTMENTS FOR RELIGION**

Religious education is considered a core course and is to be taught according to the minimum time allotment required by TCCED. Any deviation from this schedule must be approved by the Superintendent.

In schools using modular or block scheduling, the number of minutes of religious education each week must be equal to the number of minutes specified by TCCED. In schools using modular scheduling, efforts must be made to place religious education and faith awareness at the forefront throughout each school day and during each modular time block.

### **\*7004      CATECHETICAL CONTENT**

The school must base its religion curriculum on the Archdiocesan Religion curriculum guide. The curriculum must represent a properly sequenced presentation of the essential truths of our faith at levels designed to complement the age-appropriate learning capabilities of the students.

**\*7005 CATECHETICAL METHODOLOGY**

Catechesis should include both elements of contemporary Church praxis as well as elements of traditional piety and devotion and certain easily understood prayers often recited by the faithful.

**\*7006 RELIGION TEXTBOOKS**

Link: [Conformity Listing of Catechetical Texts and Series  
www.usccb.org/catechism/document/Currentlist.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/catechism/document/Currentlist.pdf)

Textbooks “must present the authentic and complete message of Christ and the Church, adapted to the capacity of the learners.” (SLF, #264, p. 158) The texts must present the importance of certain truths of our faith in a manner that students will understand. Graphics should present Christian art in a manner appropriate to the age, intelligence, and sensitivity of the learners.

Policies outlining the Religion textbook adoption process are found in the Archdiocesan Religion Curriculum Guide.

**\*7007 CATECHESIS IN HUMAN SEXUALITY AND SEXUAL MORALITY**

Each school must develop a program of education in family living, human sexuality, and sexual morality appropriate to the age and maturity of the students. This program shall be described in the school handbook. This program shall be developed and administered according to the guidelines issued in the Archdiocesan Religion Curriculum Guide.

**\*7008 SERVICE LEARNING**

Each school must develop a service program for its students that will be:

1. Developmentally appropriate.
2. Rooted in and growing from real-life situations.
3. Regularly evaluated in the light of Gospel values.

**\*7009 VOCATIONS**

All schools will encourage Church vocations through annual programs.

**\*7010 ACRE Testing**

The required archdiocesan testing program includes a standardized test of religion programs. NCEA ACRE (Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education) is a religion program assessment, given in grades 5, 8 and 12. It measures the religious knowledge, beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, and practices of students in elementary and secondary schools. A school that wishes to administer an alternative comprehensive assessment which is based on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* must seek approval from the Superintendent.

A copy of this assessment and the student's results must be submitted to the Superintendent on an annual basis. (Approved 1/19/2006 for implementation 2006-2007)

# SERIES 8000

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## CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

The primary goal of the curriculum and instruction in the Archdiocese of San Antonio is to provide those learning experiences most conducive to providing students with the virtues, knowledge, understanding, and skills necessary for each student's spiritual, intellectual, social, cultural and physical development in keeping with the stated philosophy of each school.

"We teach knowledge and critical skills so that students can function fully as citizens within a changing technological and multicultural society."

Reference:

## **Vision statement – Core Belief**

### **8000 CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

#### **8001 CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS**

All Catholic schools must have curriculum documents in place for use in instructional planning as well as a process for assessing and documenting student mastery of curricular objectives. (TCCED Policy, Implementation 2009-2010)

#### **8002 CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES**

Curriculum implementation for all schools should follow the curriculum guides of the Archdiocese of San Antonio that are developed using the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and national curriculum standards with the integration of Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Special programs and courses outside of TCCED standards may be established by schools in consultation with and approval by the Archdiocesan Superintendent.

#### **\*8003 CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS**

Each school maintains a balanced curriculum including religion, language arts (English-grammar and composition, reading, vocabulary, spelling, handwriting), science, mathematics, social studies, fine arts, health, guidance, physical education, technology applications and foreign languages.

To implement these standards the school will follow the TCCED requirements.

#### **8004 LOCAL CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

Archdiocesan curriculum guides/standards should be used for each discipline in the school to ensure continuity and unity of purpose. Principals and local school councils shall obtain approval from the Archdiocesan Superintendent before instituting any innovative program or course, which deviates from the established program.

Local curriculum development, that builds on and enhances the archdiocesan curriculum guides/standards, shall be the responsibility of the principal in consultation with the faculty. Each school shall strive for well-balanced curriculum development by considering factors such as individual needs, curriculum standards, student assessment, instructional organization, strengths of the faculty, and current research.

The curriculum shall be evaluated by the administration and staff on a yearly basis to determine whether it is fostering the achievement of the philosophy and goals of the school.

**\*8005      COPYRIGHT**

Appendix:    Copyright Law Overview 8005A

All employees, volunteers, and students will abide by the federal copyright laws. Employees, volunteers, and students may copy print or non-print materials allowed by:

1. copyright law,
2. fair use guidelines,
3. specific licenses or contractual agreements, and
4. other types of permission.

Employees, volunteers and students who willfully disregard copyright law are in violation of Archdiocesan policy, doing so at their own risk and assuming all liability.

**\*8006      FILM REVIEW**

Films are to be age appropriate and pertinent to curriculum. The film industry rating sets the minimum standards. Films rated other than "G" must be previewed by the faculty member wishing to show the film and by the administrator if there is any questionable content. There should be no exception to this policy, unless approval is given by the Superintendent of Schools.

**8100**      **INSTRUCTION**

**\*8101**      **TEXTBOOKS**

The selection of textbooks shall be the responsibility of the principal, in consultation with the faculty. The school's objectives, the needs of individual students, and the financial resources of the school community shall be used as guidelines in this selection process.

The selection of textbooks must support the Archdiocesan curriculum.

**\*8102**      **METHODOLOGY**

The methods of instruction used in the Catholic schools shall be adapted to the needs and developmental stages of the students. These methods should emphasize the progressive development of concepts and understanding throughout the student's academic career.

Lesson planning is essential to good teaching. Each teacher must have a daily planning period within the instructional day for the purpose of individual or team planning and conference. Teacher lesson plans should be reviewed weekly by the principal or her/his designee.

**\*8103**      **EVALUATING AND REPORTING**

Appendix      Student Support Process 8103A

The academic progress of each student is an important goal of the school. Policies and procedures of evaluating and reporting the student's achievement shall be published in the parent/student handbook.

Each school is encouraged to establish a process which goal is to assist students in preventing academic failure by the use of the schools' resources and staff by helping the student in their learning needs. The process includes systemic procedures in analyzing and monitoring the student behavioral and/or academic struggles during and after interventions. (See appendix for the recommended components of this process.)

Elementary schools shall use the report cards and grading scale provided by the Department of Catholic Schools.

When electronic grade books and reporting systems are used, they must include the same information noted on the archdiocesan report card and grading scale.

**\*8104 GRADING PERIOD AND REPORT CARDS**

Forms: Developmental Checklist 3K-4K 8104A – see Admin Login  
Kindergarten Report Card 8104B– see Admin Login  
Grade 1 Report Card 8104C – see Admin Login  
Grade 2 – 5 Report Card 8104D – see Admin Login  
Departmental Report Card 8104E – see Admin Login

1. All schools are on a quarterly (nine weeks) grading period schedule.
2. Numerical grades are used from second grade through grade twelve.
3. For 3K, 4K, 5K and grade 1, the following evaluation keys are used:

**E** = Exceptional Progress  
**V** = Very Good Progress  
**G** = Good Progress  
**L** = Limited Progress

4. For grades 2 through 12, the following evaluation keys are used:

**94-100** = Exceptionally High Achievement  
**85-93** = High Achievement  
**75-84** = Average Achievement  
**70-74** = Low Achievement  
**0-69** = Failure to Master Material

5. Conduct grades are indicated in the following manner:

**O** = Outstanding Effort  
**S** = Satisfactory Effort  
**I** = Improvement Needed  
**U** = Unsatisfactory Effort  
**N** = Not Observed

6. Academic Honor Roll is defined in the following manner (each school may include other qualifications in addition to these minimum standards):

**High Honors:** 94-100 Average of core subjects with no grade below 85 in any subject.

**Honors:** 85-93 Average of core subjects with no grade below 70 in any subject.

Core subjects include: *Religion, English, Reading/Literature, Social Studies, Science and Mathematics.*

**\*8105 PROMOTION POLICY**

Appendix: Summer Make-up Work 8105A

Social promotions are prohibited in the schools in the Archdiocese. Students are promoted to the next grade level based on their academic achievement.

Retention of a student is to be considered the last resort for students who do not meet the academic criteria for promotion. Factors leading to the decision made by the principal and parent include the following:

- age of student,
- maturity of student,
- degree of deficiency in the student’s learning as per grade level requirements,
- achievement and instructional data,
- review of academic interventions, and
- any other special circumstances which has lingered academic progress for the student.

The following are the specific regulations for promotion for various grade levels:

**3K-4K:** Promotion at this level is determined by the teacher and principal in consultation with the parent/guardian.

**5K-1:** A student must have at least a “G” final average in Reading and Mathematics.

**2-5:** A student must have at least a “70” final average in Religion, Reading, English, and Mathematics. A student who fails Reading and Mathematics is not promoted.

**6-8:** A student must have at least a “70” final average in all core subjects – Religion, English, Reading/Literature, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. A student who fails more than 2 core subjects is not promoted.

For each core subject below “70” a student must demonstrate the successful completion of work in summer school. If summer school is not available, work will be assigned and the student will be tested prior to advancement to the next grade level. The Superintendent is to be informed in writing of the availability of summer school programs.

Secondary Level-schools must follow the credit requirements for graduation established by TCCED. It is the school’s responsibility to monitor the number of credit units that students earn during the regular school semesters and during the summer. Credit(s) earned from outside sources other than the school are at the discretion of the school administration.

**\*8106      HOMEWORK**

Each school shall establish a homework policy which is to be shared with both students and parents. Homework assignments are meaningful and fit the intellectual needs of the students. The amount assigned should be reasonable and based on material that has been taught.

**\*8107      INTERNET**

Appendix: Technology Appropriate Usage Policy and Parent Permission Form and User Agreement 8107A

Internet terms, conditions and regulations for students are as follows:

Access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action taken for any violations that are unethical and may constitute a criminal offense.

Schools must follow the state and federal laws regarding the use of filters on computers connected to the Internet.

**INTERNET SAFETY**

Schools must have in place an Internet Safety Policy to address concerns about access to offensive pictures over the Internet on school computers.

- An Internet safety policy must include technology protection measures to block or filter Internet access to materials that: (a) are obscene, (b) are pornographic, or (c) are harmful to minors, for computers that are accessed by minors.
- Schools are required to adopt and enforce a policy to monitor online activities of minors; and
- Schools are required to adopt and implement a policy addressing: (a) access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet; (b) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications; (c) unauthorized access, including so-called “hacking,” and other unlawful activities by minors online; (d) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and (e) restricting minors’ access to materials harmful to them.
- Schools are required to certify that they have their safety policies and technology in place.
- Whether to block and filter content other than the visual depictions is a local decision.
- An authorized person may disable the blocking or filtering measure during any use by an adult to enable access for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.
- Policies do not require the tracking of Internet use by minors or adults.

**FIELD TRIPS**

Form: Sample Field Trip Form 8108A

Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and the experience ensure a successful learning opportunity. The principal must initially approve the planning of the field trip or outing.

The following criteria should be taken into consideration when planning a field trip or outing:

- The nature and purpose of the trip should relate to the mission, philosophy and goals of the school.
- Field trips should be related to the curriculum, meeting educational objectives and goals.
- The trip should be appropriate for the age and maturity level of the students.

The following requirements must be met when seeking approval for a Field Trip:

- The principal reserves the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.
- Adequate transportation must be provided by the school. Appropriately licensed, insured and bonded transportation must be used. The school is discouraged from using private individuals for transportation. In the event that private individuals are considered for transportation, all requirements from the Archdiocesan Office of Risk Management must be met.
- Adequate supervision by qualified adults must be provided by the school, including one or more employees of the school.
- The student must have a signed and dated release form from the parent/guardian for each field trip. Any specific information such as purpose, activities, fees, emergency numbers, must be indicated or requested on the permission release form.
- All student emergency medical information or medication permission forms remain in effect during the field trip activity. The permission form and the medical forms must accompany the students on the trip. If the field trip is out of town and/or overnight, parents should be asked to submit more specific information as needed.
- One day out of town field trips – Along with approval from the principal, the local School Council must be consulted and the local School Board must approve the trip.
- Overnight field trips, out of state and out of country field trips – Along with approval from the principal, the local School Council must be consulted and the local School Board must approve. In addition, the Office of Risk Management must approve if the ultimate liability coverage for the trip is carried through the Archdiocese.

Unless the school specifically approves a trip, the school's name cannot be used. Trips that involve students will not be promoted or organized within the school.

**8109****PILOT PROGRAMS**

Principals are encouraged to conduct pilot studies in order to provide better educational opportunities for students. The following conditions are to be met before beginning a pilot program:

1. Specifically define objectives of the program;
2. Review current literature to determine research findings;
3. Orient the persons involved - faculty, pastor, school council, parents and students;
4. Write a plan for implementation and evaluation;
5. Seek approval of the superintendent.

## **8200**      **THE SCHOOL SCHEDULE**

### **\*8201**      **THE SCHOOL DAY**

A school day, as defined by TCCED, is seven hours in length with a required minimum of six hours for instruction, except for:

- Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten with a minimum of 5 hours, 20 minutes
- Half-day Pre-kindergarten and Kindergartens programs with a minimum of 2 hours, 40 minutes.

Any time set aside for lunch, recess, etc. will be in addition to this minimum instructional time.

Reduction of the amount of instruction time in the regular school day, apart from the approved calendar, shall be only for serious reasons and requires the prior approval of the Archdiocesan Superintendent.

Class schedules are planned according to the time allotments specified by TCCED. A master schedule is retained in the principal's office.

### **8202**      **FACULTY MEETINGS**

Faculty meetings are held at least once a month. Classes may be dismissed early to provide time for such meetings. The meetings should have a time limit, and be well prepared. The agenda should be distributed at least one day before the meeting. Routine administrative business should be kept to a minimum. The faculty meeting provides an opportunity to improve communication between administration and faculty, but above all, it should be an instrument for the professional growth of the staff. Minutes of the meetings should be kept on file in the principal's office.

**8300**      **ACCREDITATION AND ASSOCIATIONS**

**\*8301**      **TEXAS CATHOLIC CONFERENCE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (TCCED)**

All Catholic schools PK-12 are accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED), an accrediting agency established by the Bishops of Texas which has been formally recognized by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to provide to TCCED updated information regarding the schools in the Archdiocese so that appropriate data is available to TEA and TEPSAC (Texas Private School Accreditation Commission).

**\*8302**      **DUAL ACCREDITATION**

Accreditation by an additional association is a local school option but does not substitute for accreditation by TCCED.

**\*8303**      **NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NCEA)**

Link: National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) - <http://www.ncea.org>

Every school in the Archdiocese must have an institutional membership in the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA).

## **8400**      **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

### **\*8401**      **ARCHDIOCESAN TESTING PROGRAM**

Each school shall test according to the guidelines established by the Department of Catholic Schools.

The Archdiocesan testing program includes standardized tests of general achievement and scholastic ability for grades first through eighth. Kindergarten testing is optional. This balance should provide local schools and the Archdiocese with sufficient data for making realistic decisions about the future goals of the system, its individual schools, and individual students.

The required archdiocesan testing program includes a standardized test of religion programs. NCEA ACRE (Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education) is a religion program assessment, given in grades 5, 8 and 12. It measures the religious knowledge, beliefs, perceptions, attitudes, and practices of students in elementary and secondary schools. A school that wishes to administer an alternative comprehensive assessment which is based on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* must seek approval from the Superintendent.

A copy of this assessment and the student's results must be submitted to the Superintendent on an annual basis.

### **\*8402**      **PUBLICATION AND UTILIZATION OF TEST RESULTS**

The superintendent may release the yearly average archdiocesan test scores on standardized tests to anyone inquiring about these scores. However, the results of standardized testing for each individual school or for specific grade levels from an individual school are not released through the Department of Catholic Schools.

School principals may release average standardized test scores for the entire school or for individual grade levels as they see the need.

Test results and other data on student potential and achievement shall be utilized by the school in efforts to improve instruction.

**8500**      **CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND OBSERVANCES**

**\*8501**      **PRAYER DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

Prayers will be said throughout the school day as appropriate. This practice should impress on students the need for prayer and reliance on God and should help in forming the habit of prayer in their lives.

**\*8502**      **DISPLAY OF RELIGIOUS ARTICLES**

A crucifix will be displayed prominently in each classroom. It is recommended that a picture or other image of the Blessed Virgin Mary also be displayed. Each classroom will include a sacred space for devotional items relevant to the Catholic identity of the school.

**\*8503**      **FLAG DISPLAY**

The United States flag will be displayed throughout the school. Students should recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag daily.

**\*8504**      **THE NATIONAL ANTHEM**

When the national anthem is played, students shall stand and be encouraged to sing the words.

**8600**      **GOVERNMENT FUNDED PROGRAMS**

**8601**      **FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

All schools that participate in programs funded by the government are expected to maintain accurate records. The principal must keep accurate and current lists of the names and addresses of all students who are eligible to participate in the various programs. All equipment and materials provided by federal funds must be clearly labeled, carefully inventoried, and made easily available to all eligible teachers and students.

To ensure that students, teachers, and other personnel have every opportunity to participate in federal education programs for which they are eligible, Catholic school administrators should contact their local public school district for consultation and equitable participation.