

MONTANA CATHOLIC SCHOOLS-GFB



Policy Manual

SECTION 1000: ORGANIZATION, ADMINISTRATION, AND GOVERNANCE

2021-2022

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1000 Diocesan Mission and Belief Statement

1001 Montana Catholic School Policies

The policies found in this and all policy manuals apply to Diocesan and parish Catholic schools in Montana under the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings.

- Private and order-run Catholic schools will maintain their own personnel and HR policies but must abide by all Montana Catholic School policies specific to governance and relationship with the Diocese.
- These policies supersede any local policies of Diocesan and parish Catholic schools. All their school handbooks should be based on these policies.
- These policies parallel and are based on Diocesan HR and employee policies. If there is a conflict between the two policies (i.e. dispute resolution) then the Montana Catholic School Policies take precedence.
- Diocesan Safe Environment policies (aka Diocesan Policy Regarding Abuse of Minors, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment) takes precedent over these policies and must always be consulted.

1002 Mission

The Catholic schools in Montana exist to provide our students with the best Catholic formation and academic preparation possible so that our graduates will live their adult life as examples of Christ's love, forgiveness, and justice.

1004 Belief Statement

- We believe that all employees of our Catholic schools serve as ministers of the Catholic faith
- We believe that Catholic education is Christ-centered and strives to address the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical, and social needs of each person.
- We believe that the Catholic School is the most effective means to teach our young people the Catholic culture of faith, values, traditions, and doctrine.
- We believe that the entire Catholic community shares in the responsibility to educate young people in faith, spirituality, and traditions of the Catholic Church.
- We believe the Church and Catholic School support and challenge the parents in their role as the primary educators of their children.
- We believe the Catholic School is a loving faith community that includes students, parents, clergy, faculty, support staff, parishioners, and friends.
- We believe that the Catholic School program maintains standards of academic excellence, recognizing the dignity and uniqueness of the person so that the gifts of each are recognized, developed, and celebrated.
- We believe that the Catholic School prepares students to be leaders and advocates for justice and peace in the Church and in our world.
- We believe the Catholic School models justice and financial responsibility in its stewardship of resources, including time, talent, and treasure.

- We believe that given its limited resources, the Catholic School strives to be accessible to students of diverse economic needs, physical or mental abilities.
- We believe that the Catholic Church in Montana has a rich and proud history

1006 Standards & Benchmarks

The Catholic Schools of Montana are committed to upholding the National Standards & Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Schools:

- **Defining Characteristics of Catholic Schools:**
 - Centered in the Person of Jesus Christ
 - Contributing to the Evangelizing Mission of the Church
 - Distinguished by Excellence
 - Committed to Educate the Whole Child
 - Steeped in a Catholic Worldview
 - Sustained by Gospel Witness
 - Shaped by Communion & Community
 - Accessible to All Students
 - Established by the Express Authority of the Bishop
- **Principle 1: Mission & Catholic Identity**
 - Standard 1: An excellent Catholic school is guided and driven by a clearly communicated mission that embraces a Catholic Identity rooted in Gospel values, centered on the Eucharist, and committed to faith formation, academic excellence and service.
 - Standard 2: An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides a rigorous academic program for religious studies and catechesis in the Catholic faith, set within a total academic curriculum that integrates faith, culture, and life.
 - Standard 3: An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides opportunities outside the classroom for student faith formation, participation in liturgical and communal prayer, and action in service of social justice.
 - Standard 4: An excellent Catholic school adhering to mission provides opportunities for adult faith formation and action in service of social justice.
- **Principle 2: Governance & Leadership**
 - Standard 5: An excellent Catholic school has a governing body (person or persons) which recognizes and respects the role(s) of the appropriate and legitimate authorities, and exercises responsible decision making (authoritative, consultative, advisory) in collaboration with the leadership team for development and oversight of the school's fidelity to mission, academic excellence, and operational vitality.
 - Standard 6: An excellent Catholic school has a qualified leader/leadership team empowered by the governing body to realize and implement the school's mission and vision.
- **Principle 3: Academic Excellence**

- o Standard 7: An excellent Catholic school has a clearly articulated, rigorous curriculum aligned with relevant standards, 21st century skills, and Gospel values, implemented through effective instruction.
- o Standard 8: An excellent Catholic school uses school-wide assessment methods and practices to document student learning and program effectiveness, to make student performances transparent, and to inform the continuous review of curriculum and the improvement of instructional practices.
- o Standard 9: An excellent Catholic school provides programs and services aligned with the mission to enrich the academic program and support the development of student and family life
- **Principle 4: Operational Vitality**
 - o Standard 10: An excellent Catholic school provides a feasible three to five year financial plan that includes both current and projected budgets and is the result of a collaborative process, emphasizing faithful stewardship.
 - o Standard 11: An excellent Catholic school operates in accord with published human resource/personnel policies, developed in compliance with (arch)diocesan policies and/or religious congregation sponsorship policies, which affect all staff (clergy, religious women and men, laity and volunteers) and provide clarity for responsibilities, expectations and accountability.
 - o Standard 12: An excellent Catholic school develops and maintains a facilities, equipment, and technology management plan designed to continuously support the implementation of the educational mission of the school.
 - o Standard 13: An excellent Catholic school enacts a comprehensive plan for institutional advancement based on a compelling mission through communications, marketing, enrollment management, and development.

1100 Diocesan Organization

1102 The Bishop

- Appointed by the Holy Father, the bishop is the man to whom the care of a given diocese is entrusted. The bishop is the shepherd or head of the diocese and retains all responsibility and authority of the Catholic institution.
- The bishop has the right and responsibility to watch over and inspect the Catholic schools situated in his territory, and he has the right to issue directives concerning the general regulation of Catholic schools.
- The bishop has reserved powers--namely, to open or close Catholic schools, to name or re-name schools, and to buy and sell real estate. The Bishop has to sign off on new loans, major purchases, and can remove (or take personnel actions) any Diocesan or parish personnel for violating the terms of Safe Environment policies, laws, or the employment contract.

1104 The Pastor

- The bishop appoints to each parish a parish priest as its pastor who is responsible for providing the educational, spiritual, and sacramental needs of the parishioners, as well as for administering all of the parish goods in accordance with the law.
- The pastor clearly is not only the pastor of the parish, but also the pastor of the school. However, when a pastor hires a principal to be the administrator of the school, he is to permit the principal to become the leader of the school and support the principal in this leadership role.
- Aside from employing a principal, one of the most important roles of the pastor in respect to the school is addressing the spiritual and pastoral needs of the school employees, the students and their families. The pastor is also involved in the school governance, which in most cases he establishes a local parish school board/council that is advisory or consultative. When it comes to policy development, this body formulates policy that is recommended to the pastor. It is then the pastor's responsibility to enact the policy; and the principal's responsibility to implement it.

1106 The Superintendent

The bishop appoints a superintendent of schools to act on behalf of the bishop regarding the Catholic schools within the diocese.

The superintendent, who is a trained and experienced educator first, serves as the bishop's chief advisor on matters regarding the schools of the diocese.

The superintendent is also an advisor to the pastor and to Boards of Specified Jurisdiction; in that he/she is to help the pastor find and select a qualified principal and work directly with the principal in administering the school.

The responsibilities of the Superintendent include:

1106.1 Policy, Strategic Planning and Catholic Identity Services

In order to assist Diocesan and parish schools in the formulation of policies, strategic planning, and Catholic identity the Diocesan Superintendent shall provide the following services:

- Act as a communication liaison between the Bishop, the chancery staff, and diocesan parish communities. Any HR, Safe Environment, or legal matters should come to the superintendent first.
- Coordinate professional and religious development workshops for the school's administrative personnel.
- Maintain contact with the school principal to facilitate accountability on the formulation of policies to satisfy the guidelines and requirements of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA), Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA), and Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) schools.
- Follow the guidance from the NCEA, the United States Conference of Bishops (USCCB), WCEA and OPI in order to assist with the development and promulgation of the religious goals and policies for the School.
- Complete all diocesan reports, for the requirements of the NCEA, WCEA, OPI or the USCCB.
- Collaborate with state agencies and the local public school district in which the Catholic school is located.

- Assist the school leadership in the development of handbooks and/or policy manuals, in accordance with the guidelines of these policies.
- Assist the school leadership in providing safe and secure environments and in formulating crisis and compliance plans.
- Provide consultation and assistance to the school leadership on the development and training of its Council / Board.
- Serve as an “ex-officio” member and maintain regular communication with the School Council / Board.
- Select/approve religious curriculum to be used in the schools.

1106.2 School Personnel and Human Resource Services

In order to assist the school in identifying potential Catholic administrators and teachers and support them in carrying out their responsibilities the Diocesan Superintendent shall provide the following services to Catholic schools:

- Establish and make available employment applications for all school personnel.
- Be the final arbiter in all matters regarding school personnel, including personnel discipline, up to and including termination.
- Direct the employment search, annual evaluation, and termination process for school administrator(s).
- Chair or serve on the search committees for school principals or chief administrators.
- Provide consultation and support services to Pastors, Board chairs, and principals regarding school personnel matters.
- Provide employment contracts and/or employment agreement forms for school personnel.
- Generate contract offers for all chief administrators or school principals. Compensation will be set at the local level.
- Schedule and facilitate school administrator meetings and communication.

1106.3 Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Services

In order to assist the school in providing a quality education and continuous school improvement, the Diocesan Superintendent shall provide the following services to the local Catholic school:

- Provide training opportunities and/or current research for ongoing curriculum development, with involvement from faculty, administration, and Council / Board.
- Facilitate the study and development of curriculum standards (guidelines and policies) consistent with Roman Catholic teachings, the policies of the diocese, and the State of Montana.
- Assist with the process of accreditation of the School, where appropriate, in accordance with the guidelines of the WCEA and OPI.
- Regularly observe school and classrooms on an informal basis.
- Consult with school leadership regarding serious student discipline matters and be the final arbiter in all matters regarding student discipline.

1106.4 Facility, Property, Financial and Accounting Services

In order to assist the school in securing financial and viable stability, the Diocesan Superintendent shall provide the following services to the local Catholic school:

- Act as the initial Diocesan consultative resource for all accounting and financial issues.
- Review for Diocesan approval, the annual school budget.
- Monitor school financial income and expenditure in association with the approved annual budget.
- Be the final arbiter in all matters regarding school finances, including tuition assessment and collection.
- Provide consultation and/or training on policies and procedures relating to insurance, internal audits, accounting and internal controls.
- Assist in the procurement of special events coverage insurance and student accident insurance coverage for the School.

1106.5 Legal Services

- In order to assist the school in all legal matters and/or avoiding potential litigious conflict, the Diocesan Superintendent shall provide the following services to the local Catholic school:
- Provide consultation regarding legal matters, including any real or potential legal claim against the school.
- Negotiate for the settlement, compromise or satisfaction of claim(s) asserted by or against the School.
- The Principal of the School shall contact the Superintendent whenever attorney or insurance claim services are needed.
- Facilitate resolution when serious conflict arises between school personnel and parent(s) and/or student(s).
- The Diocesan performance regarding all legal claims is contingent on receipt of timely notice from the school administration of the assertion of any claim against the school or knowledge of facts that the school reasonably believes may lead to the filing of a claim against the school. Therefore, the diocese shall be notified of the existence of any and all claims, demands, crimes, or the presence of facts that the school reasonably believes may lead to a claim, charge or demand against the school. Any and all information regarding such claim(s) shall make available to the diocese, as well as any assistance that the diocese may reasonably request.
- The diocese may obtain and retain on behalf of the School outside counsel to assist the School, as deemed necessary.

1200 School Affiliation with the Diocese

1202 Diocesan Authority

- All Catholic schools in the diocese are canonically responsible to the Bishop. Each school has a local authority such as a pastor or Board chair. Its bylaws must delineate the governing authority and relationship to the Bishop.
- The Bishop of the diocese has sole authority to recognize and designate a school as "Catholic."
- All Catholic schools within the diocese must be affiliated with the diocese in one of five ways:

1. Diocesan Schools: Schools that are owned and operated by the diocese, including multi-parish schools
2. Parish schools: Schools that are part of the local parish community
3. Order Schools: Schools that are owned and/or operated by a Religious Community;
4. Private schools: Schools that are formally recognized by the Bishop as Catholic but are legally owned and operated by a private corporation.
5. Combination Schools: schools that possess one or more of the characteristics above. For example, an order school operating on diocesan property.

1210 Diocesan Standards of Affiliation

- Catholic schools shall conform to the authority of the Bishop in all matters related to religious education and liturgical practice.
- With regard to religious education, the Catholic school shall:
 - o Teach an approved religious curriculum.
 - o Employ licensed, competent school personnel who are supportive of the teachings of the Catholic Church.
 - o Require religion teachers to engage in a catechetical certification program.
 - o Require all teachers to engage in faith formation activities and support the liturgical life of the school.

1220 Process to Gain Affiliation for Independent Schools Sponsored by a Religious Community or Lay Corporation

1220.1 Required Documentation

- A school seeking recognition and approval must submit to the Bishop through the Superintendent of Schools:
 - o A letter requesting that the Bishop recognizes and approves the school as a private Catholic school.
 - o Documentation that demonstrates the school has met or is in the process of meeting the Standards of Recognition and Approval.
 - o The Bishop may, at his/her discretion request further documents or waive required documents for evidence of meeting the standards.
 - o The school shall be incorporated as a nonprofit corporation and be exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
 - o The school has a written statement of commitment that it will work toward Diocesan approved and/or accepted accreditation standards.
 - o The school's various policies, handbooks, contractual and other agreements, etc. are in compliance with federal and state employment rules and regulations and those other requirements set forth for all schools in the diocese.
 - o The school has a public liability insurance policy, in the amount of not less than two million dollars per occurrence

1220.2 Standards of Recognition and Approval

The recognition and approval process shall be guided by but not limited to evidence that the school has achieved the following standards:

General Standards

- The school shall be incorporated as a nonprofit corporation and be exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- The school has a written statement of commitment that it will work toward Diocesan approved and/or accepted accreditation standards.
- The school's various policies, handbooks, contractual and other agreements, etc. are in compliance with federal and state employment rules and regulations and those other requirements set forth for all schools in the diocese.
- The school has a public liability insurance policy, in the amount of not less than two million dollars per occurrence

Personnel Standards

- The school employs men and women that respect the Catholic faith and its practices, and exhibit a competency in their selected profession.
- The school shall respect the biological sex with which a person is born and shall apply all policies and procedures in relation to that person according to that person's biological sex at birth.
- The school complies with the Diocesan Policy Regarding Abuse of Minors, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment.

Administrative Leadership Standards

- The school employs a school administrator (principal) who is an active and practicing Catholic.
- The Principal shall hold or actively be in pursuit of a Class 3 Administrative License with the Montana Office of Public Instruction or an equivalent certificate appropriate to the setting.

Teacher and Support Staff Employee Standards

- The school employees live a lifestyle compatible with Catholic moral values, exercise conduct consistent with Catholic teachings, and do not engage in any practice, whether in their personal life or their employed capacity that may be in conflict with the Catholic Church teachings on faith and morals.
- Religion/Theology teachers are active and practicing Catholics in their local community, outstanding for their doctrine, witness of Christian living, and pedagogically competent.

Governance Standards

- The school's governance structure supports a membership that is subject to term limits and diversity to ensure the opportunity for involvement and representation across a wide spectrum of the school community.

Catholicity and Religious Education Standards

- The school shall conform to the authority of the Bishop in all matters of faith and morals, especially as related to the catholicity of the school, religious education, and liturgical requirements and practice.
- The school shall provide sacramental and liturgical services on a regular basis.

- The school does not knowingly permit the use of school facilities by any speaker, program, political or other groups or persons who publicly oppose or bring into question the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- The school does not invite, support, and/or endorse any speaker, program, political or other groups or persons who publicly oppose or bring into question the teachings of the Catholic Church.

The Superintendent shall review documents submitted by the school, summarize his/her findings, and make a recommendation to the Bishop whether the Standards for Recognition and Approval have been met. The Bishop shall determine whether recognition and approval as a private Catholic school is to be granted and will communicate his decision to the school. If granted recognition and approval as a private Catholic school, the diocese will memorialize the affiliation with a formal statement that will include the above-mentioned requirements. The statement will be signed by the Bishop and the duly authorized officer of the school's governing board / administration seeking recognition and approval.

1220.3 Related Issues

If granted recognition and approval, the following related issues shall take effect:

- The school shall cooperate with the Bishop, through the Superintendent of Schools, in an ongoing review for compliance with these standards, which may include periodic scheduled visits to the school.
- A private Catholic school in the diocese shall state on all its official materials and documents that it is "a private Catholic school recognized and approved by and within the diocese".
- Due to its recognition and approval as a private Catholic school, the school will be listed in the Diocesan Catholic Directory as a private Catholic school.
- The diocese (including any parish or parishes) will have no financial obligation with respect to the ownership or operation of the private Catholic school.
- Local parishes, as well as the diocese, are under no obligation to support the school financially; however, they may support the school financially and are encouraged to support Catholic education whenever and however possible.
- The diocese and the local parishes may provide tuition assistance to any student who enrolls at the school, but are under no obligation to do so.
- The school will be encouraged to participate in Diocesan school in-services, administrative meetings, curriculum conferences, and any other activities provided for Catholic schools in the diocese.
- Prior to opening, expanding, reducing, and/or closing the school itself, a school division, and/or a grade level, the school administration and/or governing board shall consult with the diocese.
- The Bishop will appoint a Diocesan representative to be an ex-officio; non-voting member of the school's governing body.
- The school will not pay fees to the diocese nor will the diocese be obligated to provide services or resources of the Office of Catholic Schools or any other diocesan office to the school.
- The school will provide statistical data, as requested by the Superintendent for the annual data bank registry.
- The Bishop shall not be required to assign a cleric to serve as chaplain and/or celebrate liturgy for the school.

- All clergy and religious engaged by the school to provide any services shall be approved by the Bishop.
- The school shall manage and address its personnel matters.
- In cases when the school seeks a new principal, the Bishop, shall be consulted before a candidate is so named.
- The school principal will meet with the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools once each semester.

1220.4 Withdrawal of Recognition and Approval

- Recognition and approval may be withdrawn by the Bishop if a school fails to comply with or maintain these Standards. The school will be given three weeks to address and remedy any concerns with respect to its compliance with these Standards.
- For serious reasons and/or in his sole discretion, the Bishop may withdraw at any time the recognition and approval of a school as "Catholic". Any withdrawal of recognition and approval shall be communicated to the school in a written document.
- If recognition and approval is withdrawn by the Bishop, the governing board and school administrator(s) must immediately remove the Catholic designation from all school references,
- The school may withdraw from this agreement at any time without cause. However, sufficient notification must be sent to the diocese preceding this action. If the school withdraws from the agreement, it must remove all references to the school as "Catholic."
- This policy on Requirements for Recognition and Approval of a Private Catholic school within the diocese may, from time to time, be amended by action of the Bishop, who will consult with all parties impacted by the amendment. Such amendments may originate by a request of the school or a request of the diocese.

1220.5 Continuation of Recognition and Approval

- Normally private schools requesting affiliation for the first time shall be granted a probationary affiliation for two (2) years. At the end of this probationary period, the school must request continued affiliation.
- The Superintendent of Schools shall determine what steps, if any, must be taken to grant continued affiliation.

1300 Catholic School Governance

1302 Responsibilities

Every Catholic school is responsible for meeting its obligations to its students, employees, parents, and the Diocese.

1302.1 Administrative Responsibilities

The administrative requirements, personnel tasks, financial requirements, and Montana Catholic School requirements are all outlined in the [Administrative Requirement document](#). These requirements are ultimately the responsibility of the Chief Administrator but are certainly shared by the Board/Commission and pastor (when applicable).

1302.2 Monthly Tasks

The administrative requirements are broken down by month in the [Monthly Administrative Tasks](#) document.

1304 School Council / Board

- All Catholic schools shall establish a Council / Board that will meet regularly throughout the school year. Elementary Schools generally have an advisory council while the high schools have School Boards of Specified Jurisdiction
- Each Council/Board will undergo yearly training & formation
- Each Council/Board will have updated bylaws which will outline its functions. Any changes must be approved by the Bishop.

1304.1 Membership

- School Council/Board membership shall be a group of adults, supportive of Catholic schools, who willingly volunteer their experience, expertise, and/or education to assist the administration for improving Catholic school administration and operation.
- School Council/Board membership should be representative of parents of students in the school, members of the parish/parishes that support the school, and/or alumni of the school(s).
- All activities of the School Council/Board should be modeled on the Gospel values of love and justice toward one another, and toward anyone who will be affected by action recommended by the Council/Board.

1304.2 Responsibilities

- In the exercise of its functions, as stated in its bylaws, it is recommended the School Council / Board shall have the following areas of responsibility:
 - Planning
 - Policy Development
 - School Finance
 - Marketing
 - Administrative Evaluation

1400 Catholic School Personnel

1402 Principles of Employment

- All employees who work in the Catholic schools of the diocese agree to live and/or support a lifestyle compatible with Catholic values, exercise professional conduct consistent with Catholic teaching, and promote the Catholic identity of the schools through personal example.
- All employees serve as ministers of the Catholic faith
- All employees will aid students in the Catholic schools in their Catholic formation by good example.
- All employees will participate in required faith formation and catechetical formation requirements.
- The diocese and local Catholic school personnel policies should be in accord with the following principles and circumstances:
 - The mutual dignity, rights, and responsibilities of the school and employee
 - Applicable Diocesan, state, and federal policies, regulations, and laws

- o The employee’s professional status
- o Ethical and acceptable management policies
- o Fiscal realities based on valid data
- o The common interest of the entire Catholic Church community

1402.2 Equal Employment Opportunity

- In keeping with its mission, Catholic Schools will develop recruitment and retention strategies specifically designated to attract, hire, and retain faculty, support staff, and administrators who come from the diverse populations represented in the Catholic schools.
- In keeping with its mission of providing a Catholic education, hiring preference will be given to practicing Catholics.

1404 School Administration

1404.1 Administration Employment Status

- The Catholic school administrator is an academic and/or administrative officer of the school, engaged by the diocese and/or local council / board and financially compensated by the Catholic school system / parish, as outlined in the administrator’s letter of employment and corresponding job description.

1404.1.1 Exempt Employee

Catholic school administrators are “exempt employees” and therefore, not entitled to overtime pay and / or hourly wages in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (“FLSA”).

- As an exempt employee, the administrator is provided one (1) financial compensation package for all work associated with and conducted on behalf of the school, under the terms of his/her offer of employment.
- The administrator may not work a second position associated with or conducted on behalf of the school, for additional / supplementary financial compensation.

1404.2 School Administrative Positions

1404.2.1 The Chief Administrator

- The person appointed as Chief Administrator shall be responsible for the overall administration of the local Catholic school system in complete accordance with the policies of the diocese.
- The Chief Administrator shall act as the liaison between the local School Council / Board and Diocesan Superintendent for communication and collaboration.

Supervision

- o The Chief Administrator answers to the Superintendent and/or Pastor and/or council / board– as designated in the school’s governance bylaws.

Requisites

- o Candidates for the Chief Administrator should meet the following requirements:
 - Active membership in the Catholic Church
 - Graduate degree in education, administration or related field
 - Educational license in school administration or ability to obtain one.
 - A minimum of five (5) years experience in a Catholic school / Catholic organization or related fields/area

Employment

- o After a Diocesan approved application, screening, interview, and selection process, the School Council / Board and Superintendent shall recommend the Chief Administrator to the Bishop.
- o The terms of employment for the Chief Administrator will comply with Diocesan policy, as an exempt, full-time employee (twelve (12) months/year).

Salary

- o The Chief Administrator's salary is negotiable, subject to the approval of the School Council / Board / Commission.

Evaluation

- o The Chief Administrator shall receive an annual evaluation conducted by his/her supervisor.

1404.2.2 The Building Principal (Principal)

The person employed as Principal shall be responsible for the administration of his/her building or program in complete accordance with the policies of the diocese.

Supervisor

- o The Principal answers to the Chief Administrator.
 - In the absence of a Chief Administrator, the Principal answers to the Superintendent and/or Pastor and/or the person(s) designated in the school's governance bylaws.
 - In the absence of a Chief Administrator, the Principal assumes the responsibilities of the Chief Administrator, unless otherwise determined in his/her formal job description.

Requisites

- o Candidates for principalship in the Catholic School should meet the following requirements:
 - Active membership in the Catholic Church
 - Graduate degree in education, administration or related field
 - Educational license in school administration or ability to obtain one.
 - Unless otherwise noted, Principals must have a current Montana School Administrator's License with the appropriate endorsements in their personnel file within sixty (60) days of the first day of employment.
 - A minimum of five (5) years teaching experience, preferably in a Catholic school.

Employment

- o The terms of employment for the Building Principal will comply with Diocesan policy, as an exempt, full-time employee (twelve (12) months/year).

Salary

- o The Building Principal's salary is negotiable, subject to the approval of the School Council / Board.

Evaluation

- o The Building Principal shall receive an annual evaluation.

1406 Catholic School Teaching Personnel

1406.1 Employment Status

- The Catholic school faculty member is an employee of the school, engaged by the diocese and financially compensated by the Catholic school, as outlined in his/her employment contract.
- All teachers must agree to abide by the Diocesan Policy Regarding Abuse of Minors, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment.
- Faculty/staff members must be qualified, professionally, and pastorally, to perform the duties of the assigned employment responsibilities in accordance with the policies of the diocese.
- The appropriate handbook shall be made available to each faculty member at the beginning of his/her employment (see Section 3000) as well as the Diocesan Safe Environment Policy.

1406.1.1 Exempt Employee

Catholic school faculty members are “exempt employees” and therefore, not entitled to overtime pay and / or hourly wages in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (“FLSA”).

- As an exempt employee, the faculty member is provided one (1) financial compensation package for all work associated with and conducted on behalf of the school, under the terms of his/her employment contract.
- The faculty member may be offered additional responsibilities for compensation, such as coaching a team or directing a program.
 - Under normal circumstances, additional work-related responsibilities beyond the faculty contract shall be outlined and compensated per a supplementary contract offered by the school.
- Any additional duties or responsibilities assumed by the faculty member do not entitle him/her to additional financial compensation, unless it is pre-approved by the Principal and a formal amendment to the faculty contract takes place.

1406.2 Requisites

- Candidates for a faculty position in the Catholic School shall meet the following requirements:
 - A Bachelor's degree
 - A teaching license or ability to obtain a license in State of Montana
- Unless otherwise noted, all faculty members shall have an up-to-date Montana teaching license with the appropriate endorsements in their personnel file within sixty (60) days of the first day of employment.
- Each faculty member is expected to remain current in his/her particular field or discipline.
- Because of the distinct purpose of the Catholic school is “to create a Christian educational community where knowledge is enlightened and enlivened by faith” and because faculty members are expected to model the principles and moral values which are part of Catholic school curriculum, all faculty members employed in the Catholic school should:
 - Be practicing Catholics who have knowledge of the Catholic faith adequate to teach its content.
 - Live out the practical demands of the Catholic faith in their lives.
 - Understand and be dedicated to the ministry of Catholic education.
- If a Catholic faculty member is not available, or when deemed otherwise appropriate by the school administration, the school may employ a non-Catholic applicant.

A non-Catholic applicant may be offered a teaching position before a Catholic applicant, only when the qualifications, education, and experience surpass those of the most qualified Catholic applicant

Faculty members of other faiths can make a valuable contribution as members of the faculty. Their employment should be:

- o On the condition that they understand and are fully committed to the distinctive purpose, philosophy, and spirit of Catholic school education.
- o Contingent upon living their professional and personal life within the spirit of the Catholic Church and its teachings.

1406.3 Employment

- Faculty members are employed by the diocese and are entitled to all employee benefits presently in force.
- The Faculty contract will be effective only when signed by the administration and the employee.
- Faculty members shall perform their duties subject to the supervision, advice, and direction of the building's Principal.

1406.4 Probationary Period

- A probationary employee may be terminated with or without cause, with or without notice, on or before the completion of the probationary period. Montana Codes Annotated state that an employee shall be provided twelve (12) months of a probationary period (HB 254, 2021)
- Employees who have been employed for more than 12 months may be terminated during the school year according to the terms stated in the letter of employment and/or employment contract.

1406.5 Assignments

- All faculty members will receive their teaching and classroom assignment from the Principal.

1406.6 Faculty Positions

1406.6.1 The Classroom Teacher

The role of the Teacher calls for persons of faith who will integrate the inseparable religious and educational goals of a Catholic school. Teachers must be qualified, professionally and pastorally, to perform the educational and instructional responsibilities of the school programs, in accordance with the policies of the diocese.

A comprehensive Faculty Handbook will be made available to each teacher at the beginning of his/her employment (see Section 3000).

1406.6.2 The Religion / Theology Teacher

In addition to the above requirements, applicants seeking positions as teachers of religion shall provide evidence of the following:

- Elementary school religion teachers shall be an active and participating Catholic in his/her local Catholic parish
- Secondary school religion teachers shall be an active and participating Catholic
 - o Preferred: M.A. or B.A. in theology or religious studies or twenty-four (24) college credit hours in theology or religious studies

All teachers of religion in the Catholic Schools are responsible for continuing education in religious studies and Diocesan religious certification, if available.

Annually, the Principal shall verify with the Pastor of the reported Catholic Parishes that Religion / Theology teachers are active and practicing Catholics.

1408 Support Staff

1408.1 Support Staff Employment Status

- The Catholic school support staff is an employee of the school, engaged by the diocese and financially compensated by the Catholic school, as outlined in his/her job description.
- Support Staff employees must be qualified, professionally, and pastorally, to perform the duties of the assigned employment responsibilities in accordance with the policies of the diocese.
- Staff members must agree to abide by the Diocesan Policy Regarding Abuse of Minors, Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment.
- A comprehensive Support Staff Handbook shall be made available to each Support Staff Employee at the beginning of his/her employment (see Section 4000).
- Because of the distinct purpose of the Catholic school is “to create a Christian educational community where knowledge is enlightened and enlivened by faith” and because support staff personnel are expected to model the principles and moral values which are part of Catholic school curriculum, support staff employees should:
 - Be practicing Catholics who have knowledge of the Catholic faith adequate to teach its content.
 - Live out the practical demands of the Catholic faith in their lives.
 - Understand and be dedicated to the ministry of Catholic education.
- If a Catholic applicant is not available, or when deemed otherwise appropriate by the school administration, the school may employ a non-Catholic applicant.
- Support staff personnel are employed by the diocese and are entitled to all employee benefits presently in force. Support Staff members shall perform their duties subject to the supervision, advice, and direction of the Principal.
- At no time does the employment of a support staff employee constitute a contractual relationship between the employee and the diocese or school.
- A probationary employee may be terminated with or without cause, with or without notice, on or before the completion of the probationary period. Employees who have been employed for more than twelve months may be terminated during the school year according to the terms stated in the letter of employment and/or employment contract.
- All support staff employees shall meet the requirements of employment as required by Montana law, Diocesan insurance policies, and the diocese.

1500 Students, Parents, Volunteers, and Collaborative Groups

1502 The Student

- The Catholic school student shall be an active learner who is a member of the total Catholic school community.

- Students are called to grow to their potential in faith, knowledge, skill development, interdependence and service to others.
- Students shall abide by the rules of the school, as published in the school's handbook.

1504 The Parent / Guardian

- Catholic parents of students in Catholic schools serve as the primary educators and faith formation leaders for their children.
- Parents are urged to participate in school-related and church-related organizations and activities.
- Parents are expected to comply with all school policies, as published in the school's handbook and Diocesan policy manual(s). **This includes all health directives as well as dress codes.**

1504.1 Parental Behavior

- Parental cooperation with the teachers and administrators of the Catholic school is essential for the welfare of all students. Parents are expected to behave in a manner consistent with the Catholic School philosophy and be excellent role models for their children at all school sponsored functions and activities.
- The education of a student is a partnership between the parents and the school. Just as the parent has the right to withdraw a child if desired, the school administration reserves the right to require the withdrawal of a student if the administration determines that the partnership with the parent is irretrievably broken.
- The school may require parents to withdraw their children, if, in the opinion of the administration:
 - o Parental behavior seriously interferes with the teaching/learning process.
 - o Parental behavior interferes with the ability of the teacher or administrator to complete his/her assigned responsibility.
 - o Parental behavior/actions are a disruptive influence to the school environment or the school's reputation.
 - o Parental behavior is contrary to or in conflict with the teachings and practices of the Catholic Church.
- When students are required to withdraw from the Catholic school due to parental behavior or actions, the student's records shall reflect that the student has either withdrawn or transferred. The student's records shall not reflect that the student has been expelled, unless the parents refuse to remove the student from the school after having been notified that the child must withdraw or transfer to another school.

1506 The Volunteer

- Volunteers, especially parents, grandparents, parishioners, and civic resource personnel shall be incorporated into school programs for the benefit of the students.
- The Principal will authorize the need for volunteers to work within the Catholic Schools System before individuals volunteer their services.
- Volunteers cooperate with the Principal in providing a positive educational climate for the students in the Catholic school.
- All volunteers are directly accountable to the Principal or his/her delegate.

- All volunteers agree to abide by the established policies and procedures of the diocese.
- Training and background checks will be conducted for volunteers.

1508 Collaborative School Groups

1508.1 Parent/Teacher Organizations

- Groups, such as Parent's Club, Home and School organizations, Parent Teacher Associations, etc., collaborate with the administration, Faculty, and Support Staff to develop and strengthen mutual understanding between the school and the home.
- Such groups shall be organized and maintain affiliation with the school, with the permission of the Principal.

1508.2 Special Interest Groups

- Special Interest Groups and Student groups, such as yearbook, science clubs, athletic or service organizations, etc., using the school name, students, and/or facilities to promote a special interest or activity of any nature and/or to generate monies for such promotion shall function according to the philosophy and policies of the Catholic School and of the diocese.
- Special Interest Groups are ultimately responsible to the administration in consultation with the School Council / Board.

1508.3 Education Foundations

- With the permission of the Local Ordinary, a Catholic school may have a separate Foundation (designated by the Federal Government as a not-for-profit 501 (c) (3)) for the purpose of raising, gaining, and managing funds for the Catholic school.
- The local school administration and/or Superintendent will serve as ex-officio members of the local Education Foundation if the bylaws permit