

MONTANA CATHOLIC SCHOOLS-GFB



Policy Manual

SECTION 2000: STUDENTS & SCHOOL OPERATIONS

2021-2022

Table of Contents

2000 Enrollment and Admissions	7
2002 Open Enrollment	7
2004 Statement of Non-Discrimination	7
2006 Students with Disabilities	7
2008 Parental Commitment to Purpose of Catholic Education	7
2008.1 Tuition Requirement	8
2010 Admission Policy	8
2012 Admission Priority	8
2014 General Admissions	9
2014.1 Admissions Protocol	9
2016 Admission into Grade School	9
2016.1 Grade School Entrance Requirements	9
2016.2 Grade Placement	9
2016.3 Admissions Exceptions	9
2016.4 Transfer Students	9
2018 Admission into High School	10
2018.1 Entrance Requirements	10
2018.3 Foreign Exchange Students	10
2020 Registration	10
2022 Student Immunization Requirements	10
2024 Student Attendance	11
2024.2 Daily Attendance	11
2024.4 Maximum Allowable Absences	11
2024.6 Daily Attendance Records	12
2026 Required Residency with Parents or Guardians	12
2028 Conditional / Probationary Admission	12
2100 Student Guidelines	13
2102 Student Discipline	13
2102.2 Dismissal from School	14
2102.4 Dismissal Procedures	14
2102.6 Voluntary Withdrawal	14
2102.8 Required Withdrawal	14
2102.10 Earned Return	15
2102.12 Suspension	15
2102.14 School-Structured Discipline	16
2110 Probationary Attendance	17

2112 Student Dress and Personal Appearance	17
2112.2 Personal Appearance	17
2112.4 Dress Code	17
2114 Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drugs	17
2114.2 Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drug Screening	18
2118 Student Pregnancy	18
2120 Chronic Infectious Conditions	18
2122 Hazing, Harassment, or Intimidation	18
2122.1 General Statement	18
2122.2 Definitions	18
2122.3 Responsibilities	19
2122.4 Reporting Process / Investigation Procedures	20
2122.5 Corrective Action	20
2122.6 Prevention	20
2122.7 False or Frivolous Reports	21
2124 Marriage and Cohabitation	21
2126 Abortion	21
2128 Student Drivers	21
2200 Student Safety, Health, and Welfare	21
2202 School Environment	21
2204 Access to the Student	21
2204.1 General Access	22
2204.2 Parental Access – Divorce and/or Custody	22
2204.4 Access by Federal, State, County, or City Officials	23
2204.5 Investigation of possible criminal activity	23
2204.6 Removing a Student from School (Release of Custody)	23
2206 Protecting God’s Children / Safe Environment	23
2208 Student Information, Medication, Illness, and Emergencies	23
2208.1 Student Emergency Information	23
2208.2 Student Injury/Illness	24
2208.3 Administration of Medication	24
2208.4 Student Safety and Supervision	25
2208.6 Student Health Records and Services	26
2208.8 Students with Food Allergies	26
2210 Search and Student’s Right to Privacy	27
2210.1 Search of School Property	27
2210.2 Searches of Student’s Person and Personal Property	27
2210.3 Vehicle Search	28

2210.4 Canine Searches	28
2212 High School Student Drug-Screening Program	28
2212.2 Intent	28
2212.4 Drug Screening Regulation	28
2212.6 Purpose	28
2212.8 Scope	29
2212.10 Screening Protocol	29
2212.12 Screening Procedures	29
2212.14 Screen Results	30
2212.16 Appeals	30
2212.18 Confidentiality	30
2212.20 Financial Responsibility	30
2212.22 Consent Form	30
2300 School Emergency Procedures	31
2302 Employee Responsibilities	31
2304 Emergency Procedures Manual	31
2306 First Aid Training	31
2308 Emergency Drills	31
2310 Emergency School Closure	32
2310.1 Weather	32
2400 Facility Insurance and Inventory	32
2402 Facility (Multi-Peril) Insurance	32
2404 Insurance Inspection	32
2406 Insurance Inventory	32
2500 School Operations - Instruction	32
2502 Spiritual Activities	32
2502.2 Catholic Liturgies	32
2502.4 Student Retreats	33
2502.6 Display of Crucifix/Religious Icons	33
2502.8 Classroom Prayer	33
2504 Academic Activities	33
2504.1 Remote Instruction	33
2504.8 Community Service Programs	33
2506 Homework	34
2508 Use of Instructional Materials / Duplications and Photocopies	34
2509 Use of Supplemental Instructional Material (Videos & Guest Speakers)	34
2509.1 Videos	34
2509.2 Guest Speakers	34

2510 Local Field Trips	35
2510.1 Definition	35
2510.2 Field Trip Forms	35
2510.3 Policy	35
2510.4 Student Attendance	35
2510.5 Field Trip Supervision	36
2511 Distant Field Trips	36
2511.1 Definition	36
2511.5 Administration's Responsibility	36
2511.6 Faculty Coordinator's Responsibility:	36
2511.7 Minimum Supervision Requirements	37
2512 Calendars, Schedules, Holidays, and Dismissals	37
2512.1 School Calendar	37
2512.2 Standard School Day	37
2512.3 Standard School Year	38
2512.4 Early Dismissal	38
2512.5 Professional Development Dismissal	38
2512.6 Holy Days of Obligation	38
2514 Class Size	38
2514.1 Grade School	38
2514.2 High School and Middle Schools with a High School-Type Schedule	39
2516 Student Supervision	39
2516.1 On Campus Supervision	39
2516.2 Off Campus - School-Sponsored / School-Sanctioned Events - Supervision	39
2600 School Operations - Non-Instruction	40
2602 Administration of Federal Government Programs	40
2602.2 School Breakfast, Lunch and/or Milk Program	40
2604 Facility Appearance	40
2605 Display of American Flag	41
2606 Plant Safety and Maintenance	41
2606.2 Asbestos	41
2608 Use of School Facilities	41
2610 Posting of School Facilities	42
2612 Security of Building and Grounds	42
2614 Keys	42
2616 Vandalism and Theft	42
2618 General Safety	43
2620.3 Construction, Remodel, Renovation, Furnishing	43

2622 Transportation	43
2622.1 Diocesan-Owned Vehicles	43
2622.2 Chartered Transportation	43
2624 Student Fundraising and Collection	44
2626 Communication - Suggestions, Concerns, or Complaints	44
2626.1 Formal Communication Problem Resolution (Due Process) Application	44
2700 Student / Parent Handbooks	45
2702 Requirement	45
2704 Recommended Topics for the Student / Parent Handbook	45

2000 Enrollment and Admissions

2002 Open Enrollment

- Catholic Schools in the Diocese maintain a policy of open enrollment in elementary and secondary schools. Open enrollment means that students meeting the school's admission requirements are to be admitted regardless of race, or ethnic origin according to the subsequent provisions and priorities of this policy.
- Catholic Schools have admission requirements and standards regarding academic and behavior expectations for all students.
- Catholic Schools accept students on a space-available basis.
- Catholic Schools require families to remunerate tuition for educational services within the academic year (See Policy 2008).

2004 Statement of Non-Discrimination

- In an ecumenical spirit Catholic schools welcome students of all faiths into the educational environment of the Catholic School.
- Although Catholic schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, it remains the primary purpose of Catholic schools to serve the Catholic members of the diocese.
- Regardless of the student's faith or religious background, all students in the Catholic school shall support, attend, and participate in school-sponsored Catholic liturgies, services, and/or retreats.
- All schools 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. Students and their parents are expected to live virtuous lives guided by Gospel values and the teaching of the Church.
- The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings, admit students of any sex, race, color, national and/or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities accorded to students.

2006 Students with Disabilities

- The Catholic School recognizes the special needs of students with disabilities and strives to provide for the educational services of all students, to the best of the school's abilities and resources.
- The Catholic school will attempt to meet the needs of all students, but cannot be expected to meet the learning, physical, and/or emotional needs of students with severe or extraordinary disabilities when the expertise and/or resources needed to appropriately and adequately educate the child surpass those of the Catholic school faculty and staff
- The Catholic school requires transparency on admission and full disclosure of any diagnosed or suspected disabilities.

2008 Parental Commitment to Purpose of Catholic Education

- The development of the whole person of the student – spiritually, intellectually, personally, socially and physically – is the focus of Catholic education.
- The Catholic school subscribes to the philosophy that parents are the primary educators of their children and that the Catholic school is an active partner in support of their parents.
- Accordingly, students are to be admitted into the Catholic Schools only if there is a parental commitment to the principle that religious formation is the foundation of Catholic education.

2008.1 Tuition Requirement

- The Catholic school shall provide educational services in consideration of the tuition, fees, and other charges declared by the school to be applicable during the period of enrollment for the above student.
- Parents and/or guardians agree to pay the tuition, fees, and other charges in a prompt and timely manner.
- Parents and/or guardians understand that non-payment or late payment of tuition, fees, and other charges may result in one of more of the following consequences:
 - o Late Fees as established by the school
 - o Exclusion from final exams, resulting in a transcript with grades of “Incomplete”
 - o Dismissal of the student from school
 - o Graduation penalties
 - o Withholding of the academic transcript
 - o Incomplete marks
- In the event of non-payment, parents are responsible for payment of all penalty costs and all costs of collection including reasonable attorney and collection fees incurred by the school.
- In all cases where the Catholic school has exhausted its ability to collect tuition, the delinquent account may be turned over to a third-party tuition collection agency.
- The Catholic school has the further right to refuse re-enrollment for the following school year until financial commitments have been met.
- Families who have past due tuition balances may not be eligible for tuition assistance.
- Families cannot enroll at a Catholic school until they have cleared balances at other Catholic schools

2010 Admission Policy

- By admitting a student into the Catholic school, the school agrees to provide that student with a safe and healthy environment that supports a total school experience with emphasis on academic excellence and Catholic spiritual formation.
- By accepting admission into a Catholic school, the parents and student(s) understand and support the school’s unique and academically rigorous curriculum, designed for strong students who are motivated to learn and grow in a Catholic community committed to developing young men and women who can live creatively, constructively, spiritually, and critically with the ambiguity of a rapidly changing world.
- By accepting admission into Catholic school, the parents and student(s) understand and agree that in accordance with teaching of the Church the student shall conduct themselves in accord with their biological sex at all times.

- By registering their children in the Catholic School, parents agree to comply with the programs and policies of the school, remunerate the assessed tuition, and cooperate with the school in fulfilling the goals stated in the school philosophy and mission.

2012 Admission Priority

- The Diocese recommends the following order of priority for admission into its schools:
 - Children enrolled in the Catholic School
 - Children with siblings currently enrolled
 - Children of Alumni or whose parents attended the Catholic school
 - First child now reaching school age
 - Children on an approved waiting list
 - Priority consideration:
 - Children of parents who are active and practicing members of a Catholic parish
 - Children of parents who are active, involved, and/or supportive of the local Catholic school

2014 General Admissions

- Students may apply for admissions into the Catholic School at any time, subject to the local Catholic school protocol.
- Normally, students are admitted (pending available space) in the Kindergarten (primary school entry level), Sixth Grade (middle school entry level), and Ninth Grade (high school entry level).
- Students applying at other grade levels are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

2014.1 Admissions Protocol

- Active and practicing Catholics always receive preference in admission.
- Students are not normally allowed to repeat a grade level.
- Foreign students applying for admission shall demonstrate proficiency in the English language as a requirement of admission.
- Transfer students and late applicants will be conditionally accepted pending receipt of final and official transcripts from the school they last attended. If the transfer student's transcript indicates one or more failing or incomplete grades, that student will be immediately placed on academic probation.

2016 Admission into Grade School

2016.1 Grade School Entrance Requirements

- A child entering Kindergarten is to be five (5) years of age by September 10.
- A child entering Grade One is to be six (6) years of age by September 10.
- Date of birth should be verified by either birth certificate and this information should be noted on the permanent record.

2016.2 Grade Placement

- When students apply for grades other than Kindergarten or Grade 1, the administration will arrange for the grade placement of the student according to records received.
- Admissions should be on a space available basis, according to admission criteria.

2016.3 Admissions Exceptions

- Though a child fulfills the age requirements, entrance into Kindergarten or Grade 1 may be delayed for a period of one year.
- Though a child may not fulfill the age requirement, entrance into Kindergarten or Grade 1 or placing the child in an advanced grade may be permitted if sufficient maturity can be demonstrated.
- Once all criteria have been applied and in the best interest of the child, the administration shall make the final determination of grade placement. In the case of early admission or advanced grade placement, the acceptance is always conditional, subject to review, and dependent upon the individual child's needs and performance.

2016.4 Transfer Students

- It is preferred that transfer students are accepted at the beginning of the semester
- The administration will make the final decision to accept new students following receipt of:
 - Transcripts from the student's former school.
 - Completed enrollment application
 - A conference / interview conducted by the administration with the student's parents
 - Immunization and health records
 - Completed request for transferring records
 - Completed tuition application
- Students transferring from a "home school" program are required to meet with prospective teachers and/or take a placement examination in the required core academic areas.

2018 Admission into High School

2018.1 Entrance Requirements

- Students who successfully earn a cumulative 2.5 GPA in their 7th and 8th grade years and graduate from a Catholic Grade School will receive an automatic admission into a Catholic High School.
- All other students shall apply to the Catholic High School for acceptance, contingent on a complete application form.
- Included in the application will be:
 - A student letter with reasons why he/she would like to attend the high school
 - Proof of immunization records
 - Two letters of recommendation

2018.3 Foreign Exchange Students

- Foreign students may be admitted to a Catholic school in accordance with the requirements of the United States Department of Homeland Security including certification of health insurance.
- Any student who is not a citizen/legal resident of the United States must have the complete legal documentation required by the Immigration Department in order to be admitted to school.
- The administration will make the final decision to accept a foreign exchange student following completion of the Transfer Student Policy and:
 - Interview with the administration, if possible

- o Verification of fluency in reading, writing, and speaking English
- o Agreement to pay the full “cost of education” and any / all school administrative fees
- o Foreign exchange students will be placed in the appropriate grade level, subject the student’s academic records

2020 Registration

- Through the registration process, the administration shall obtain from all families enrolling into the Catholic school, information to be used in establishing cumulative files and in seeking previous records.

2022 Student Immunization Requirements

Catholics have a “moral obligation to guarantee the vaccination coverage necessary for the safety of others..., especially safety of more vulnerable subjects such as pregnant women and those affected by immunodeficiency who cannot be vaccinated against these diseases,” according to a 2017 document on vaccines from the Pontifical Academy for Life. Bishop Michael Warfel reminds parents that “the decision to vaccinate comes down to a simple concern for life, dignity, and the common good, as do most of our decisions as Catholics.”

We recognize some parents maintain religious or philosophical objections to vaccinating and our schools offer a philosophical objection option for vaccinations.

- The Catholic Schools will comply with MCA § 20-5-403 that requires all students to be current with regard to immunizations prior to the first day of school.
- MT Catholic Schools-Great Falls Billings allows a properly filed medical exemption.
- MT Catholic Schools-Great Falls Billings may allow a filed exemption for philosophical objection. Students already enrolled under religious exemption may continue uninterrupted enrollment.
- For resources on the Catholic Church’s position on vaccinations, please consult the [National Catholic Bioethics Center](#)

2024 Student Attendance

- Catholic Schools recognize that school attendance has a direct impact on a student's level of academic achievement and therefore expect students to attend school, on time, every school day.
- Catholic schools qualify as nonpublic schools and thus offer the minimum amount of instructional hours

2024.2 Daily Attendance

- School attendance, according to the State of Montana, is ultimately the responsibility of the student and his/her family and the responsibility of the Catholic School is to provide, monitor, and adjust appropriate attendance procedures to enhance the curriculum and educational opportunities
- When a school is forced to engage in a remote learning curriculum, it will maintain records of student attendance and participation.
- Students should be absent only when necessary, as the classroom experience cannot be replaced in the home. The benefits of scholastic development are lost to those who are absent from school and daily classroom attendance is a vital key to student success.
- Catholic Schools support communication efforts between the school and family and therefore will notify the family of deficient attendance in an appropriate and timely manner.
- In the case of those students who repeatedly abuse the school's attendance requirements, the Catholic school will provide continual consequences that may ultimately end in a student dismissal.

2024.4 Maximum Allowable Absences

- In order to receive credit (high school) or move on to the next academic level (grade school) a student shall not miss more than 11% of the academic term
 - For a school year with 180 instructional days, the maximum allowable absences would be 10 missed days per semester or 20 days per year.
 - For a school with a "Block Schedule" or a "Modified Block Schedule", the maximum allowable absences would be no more than 11% of the total number of instructional minutes for each class, per academic term.
- If a high school student exceeds the maximum allowable absences for any given class/course for an academic grading term, he/she shall not receive credit for that class/course.
 - In these circumstances, the school will issue a No Credit (NC) grade on the student's transcript and the student will be required to take a comparable class/coursework as a credit recovery option, as approved by the Catholic school administration
 - If a grade school / middle school student exceeds the maximum allowable absences for the school year, he/she shall not be allowed to receive credit for having successfully completed / passed the grade level
 - In these circumstances, the Catholic school may deny the student admission into the next grade level at the Catholic school and/or require the student to successfully participate in summer school in order to advance to the next grade level.

- Extension Request: In the rare event when a student has exceeded the maximum allowable number of absences, his/her family may formally request an extension to this absence policy by contacting the school administration and following the protocol the school has established. Reasons for requesting an extension include extended illness or extenuating medical circumstance and/or extenuating personal or family circumstances.

2024.6 Daily Attendance Records

- Daily attendance records are required and will be taken by the teachers and submitted to the School Office in a timely manner.
- Attendance records are to remain in the school building at all times.
- Official attendance forms must be kept on file in each school in accordance with Montana State Law.
- A midterm summary of absences will be included on the midterm grade report.

2026 Required Residency with Parents or Guardians

- All students attending a Catholic school shall live with his/her parents or legal guardians. When a student does not live in the home of his/her parents / legal guardians, it restricts the ability of the Catholic school to meet this means of philosophy and thereby reduce the educational opportunities of the student.

2028 Conditional / Probationary Admission

- A Catholic school may decide to admit a student on a conditional or probationary basis if it has reason to believe any of the following apply:
 - Student history of poor attendance
 - Student history of poor academic performance
 - Any educational or physical disability which makes demands on the school which the school cannot meet (see 2006).
 - Student history of poor disciplinary performance
 - Student history of emotional instability
 - Midyear transfer
 - Parent or guardian history of poor financial responsibility
 - Other reasons as determined by the School administration on a case by case basis
- The written terms of the Probationary Agreement shall be determined by the administration and made available to the parents/guardians prior to the student's admission into school
 - By accepting the written document, parents/guardians signify that they support and are willing to cooperate with the probationary terms of admission.
- At the end of the probationary period, the administration shall either 1) cancel the student's probationary status or 2) extend the student's probationary status or 3) request the parents or guardians to remove the student from the school according to the terms of the Probationary Agreement,

2100 Student Guidelines

2102 Student Discipline

- All students are expected to act with respect and responsibility toward Catholic Schools' policies, personnel, property, visitors, students, and community.

- Intent of Student Discipline
 - A purpose of Catholic Education is to proclaim the mission of Jesus and His Church. Catholic Education is faith-based in the Gospel, communal and person-centered. Therefore, all disciplinary philosophies, procedures and actions must meet the following criteria:
 - Discipline shall be rooted in the Gospel.
 - Discipline shall promote the welfare of the school community.
 - Discipline shall care for the person of each individual student in the same manner, as would Jesus.
 - Discipline shall include appropriate parental involvement.
 - All student discipline and conduct codes shall aim for behavior proceeding from a positive self-concept and internalized conviction rather than proceeding from externally enforced controls. As well, it shall:
 - Promote a positive; orderly learning environment for all students
 - Further the intellectual and spiritual growth and development of the student.
- Guidelines for Student Discipline
 - Students shall learn to exercise self-discipline and strive to make good choices, taking personal responsibility for their behavior.
 - Discipline decisions will be based on the common good of the whole school community as well as the individual student.
 - The school will be consistent in applying the discipline process, while considering the individual student and circumstance.
 - The school reserves the right to implement discipline procedures for student behavior/actions that occur off campus, outside of school hours, and where student actions are determined to have harmed the good reputation of the school.
 - The school will work with and communicate with parents in disciplinary matters of affecting their child(ren).
 - By enrolling their child(ren) in the Catholic school, parents agree to comply with and support all school rules, as stated in Diocesan policy and the school handbook(s).
 - Corporal punishment is not allowed.
- Implementation of Discipline Codes
 - The Catholic school shall publish and make available its disciplinary code to all parents and all students.
 - Although its disciplinary code shall be published, the school administration retains the right to enforce student discipline as it deems necessary and based on the common good of the whole school community, as well as the individual student.

2102.2 Dismissal from School

Dismissing a student from the Catholic School shall meet one of the following criteria:

- Formal charges have been filed against the student for the commission of a crime
- The student's actions violate the expectations of Christian morality, the mission of the Catholic School, or Catholic doctrine

- o The student has been arrested or accused of criminal activity and/or immoral conduct, pending outcome of investigation or adjudication of innocence or guilt
- o Other avenues of remediation of the unacceptable behavior have been exhausted
- o The moral, emotional, mental, and/or physical wellbeing of the student, other students, and/or school community is at risk
- o The student in question exhibits prolonged and/or open disregard for Catholic doctrine, School policy, school personnel, or school property

2102.4 Dismissal Procedures

Each school shall define its own policies concerning dismissal which shall at a minimum include:

- o The administration shall notify in writing the student and the student's parents or guardian of the dismissal, of what behavior has led to the dismissal, and of the evidence upon which this assessment is based.
- o A conference shall be conducted by the administration regarding the dismissal.
 - The student, the student's parents or guardian, the administration, and appropriate school personnel shall be invited to this conference.
 - At this conference the student shall be afforded the opportunity to explain why he/she believes that dismissal is not warranted.
 - After the conference the student, the student's parents or guardian, and the Superintendent shall be informed in writing of the administration's decision and justification for dismissing or not dismissing the student.
- o Written Record: A written record of the procedures followed in the dismissal process shall be kept.
- o Right to Appeal: The student's parents/guardians or the student with parental permission may appeal the dismissal decision to the Superintendent in writing within three (3) school days of the dismissal conference.

2102.6 Voluntary Withdrawal

- Before the administration makes his/her formal decision regarding the possible dismissal of a student, the parents or guardian may voluntarily withdraw their child from the school.

2102.8 Required Withdrawal

- A Required Withdrawal is the school's decision to permanently remove a student from the school without the stigma of a formal dismissal.
- Reasons why a school may require the withdrawal of a student:
 - o The student will not profit from continued attendance (e.g. severe academic deficiency, emotional instability, inability of the school to reasonably meet a learning accommodation, etc.).
 - o In cases of severe academic deficiency, the school may impose the withdrawal after having previously placed the student on Academic Probation.
 - o The student's continued attendance will make demands upon the school that the school is unable to meet.
 - o The student's parents or guardian have failed to meet their obligations to the school that they accepted upon enrolling their child (e.g. failure to meet the tuition commitment as contracted with the school, the student's failure to meet the terms of his/her admissions agreement, etc.).

- The student's parents or guardian have failed to cooperate with the school staff and have not complied with the school's policies, practices, or programs (e.g. interfering with the school's administrative functions or disciplinary actions, etc. (see Diocesan Policy 1504 - "Parental Behavior").
- Required Withdrawal Procedures: The Required Withdrawal procedures shall be the same as the Dismissal Procedures (2102.4)

2102.10 Earned Return

Students who are dismissed from a Catholic school for disciplinary or academic reasons may be granted an "Earned Return" option.

- The administration has the discretion of offering the Earned Return option.
- If an Earned Return option is granted, at the time of the student dismissal, two letters will be sent home.
 - The first letter will state that the student has been dismissed from the Catholic school and the reasons for the dismissal.
 - The second letter will state the student has been granted an Earned Return option, and it will include the terms of the Earned Return as well as the process for re-admittance.
- At least 30 days before the student is eligible to apply for return to school, the student and parent/guardian(s) shall send a letter to the school indicating the student's intent to return.
 - If the school receives a request from the student to return to school, it shall send a response letter that will include an application for admission and a form for the student to complete that provides evidence that the conditions of the Earned Return have been met.
 - The student shall submit the application and evidence of meeting the conditions of the Earned Return no less than seven (7) days prior to the admission's date.
 - If the student does not return the application and evidence form as prescribed above, the student will be considered permanently dismissed from the Catholic school.

2102.12 Suspension

- A student may be suspended for any misconduct or violation of the student handbook policies.
- A student suspended from school loses the right to participate in any school activity on or off campus, except class retreats or Catholic liturgies/services
- A suspension may assume the following forms or a combination of them:
 - On campus: The student is required to report to a specific place on campus during school time. The student shall be assigned academic work to make up for the loss of class time.
 - Home suspension: The student may be sent home for part or the entire period of suspension. The student shall be assigned academic work to make up for the loss of class time.
 - Suspension Procedures

Each school shall define its own policies concerning suspension which shall at a minimum include:

 - Normal Suspension:

- The administration shall notify in writing the student and the student's parents or guardian of possible suspension, of what pattern of behavior has led the school to believe that suspension is appropriate, and of the evidence upon which this assessment is based
- A conference shall be conducted by the administration regarding the possible suspension. The student, the student's parents or guardian, the administration, the Pastor (if applicable), and appropriate school personnel shall be invited to this conference. At this conference, the student shall be afforded the opportunity to explain why he/she believes that suspension is not warranted.
- After the conference, the student and the student's parents or guardian shall be informed in writing of the administration's decision and justification for suspending or not suspending the student, the reason for the suspension, the length of the suspension, and any other disciplinary actions or requirements of the school including probation, restitution, etc.
- Emergency Suspension:
 - The administration may, without following the steps included in "Normal Suspension," impose an immediate suspension on a student when, in the judgment of the administration, such critical, emergency action is in the best immediate interest of the student, any other student, members of the school staff, visitors to the school, or the general good of the school. In "emergency suspension" situations, the procedures required in "Normal Suspension" shall be followed as soon as practical after the emergency condition has subsided.
- o Written Record:
 - A written record of the procedures followed in the suspension process shall be kept for reference should more serious disciplinary action become necessary.
- o Right to Appeal:
 - The student's parents or guardians or the student with parental permission may appeal the decision to the school administration for reconsideration within three (3) school days of the suspension date.

2102.14 School-Structured Discipline

A student may be required to follow the requirements of a school-structured discipline for minor misconduct

- o The discipline time shall not exceed a class period, which may be assigned before, during, or after school.
- o The parents shall be notified of the discipline
 - Parents of students in grades K-8 shall be notified in advance before a discipline is served after school
 - If parents are unable to arrange for transportation for their child to serve discipline after school, the administration shall arrange for the student to serve discipline during school hours.
 - Parents of students in grades 9-12 shall be notified of the discipline within a reasonable time frame.
- o A written record will be kept for each school-structured discipline that a student serves.

2110 Probationary Attendance

- A student may be placed on Probationary Attendance for either academic deficiency or misconduct.
- Each school shall define its own policies concerning probation which shall at a minimum include:
 - If probation is judged necessary by the school, the student and the student's parents or guardian shall be informed in writing of the reason for the probation, the length of the probationary period, and the conditions under which the probation will be lifted.
 - Efforts should be made to assist the student to forestall further sanctions.
 - A written record of the probationary attendance shall be kept for reference should more serious disciplinary action become necessary.

2112 Student Dress and Personal Appearance

2112.2 Personal Appearance

- The appearance of students attending a Catholic School will be neat, clean, and reflect due regard for legitimate sensibilities that support the mission of Catholic education.

2112.4 Dress Code

- Catholic school student attire will be clean, neat, practical, and modest. It will enhance the learning atmosphere.
- The local Catholic school will require a student dress code based on the following criteria:
 - School attire should demonstrate that the student has both a sense of personal dignity and a sense of what is appropriate for the Catholic School environment.
 - Appropriate attire takes into consideration Christian modesty, health, comfort, and pride in personal appearance, as well as avoidance of distracting influences.
 - Clothing and physical appearance should be an outward expression of the Catholic community and should exemplify the school's distinction from other schools, while allowing student freedoms as well as corresponding responsibilities.

2114 Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drugs

Catholic schools prohibit the use, possession, sale, or distribution of tobacco, alcohol, street drugs, and/or performance-enhancing substances (except as prescribed by a physician) by all students. Catholic Schools will use a cooperative approach between the school and family to eliminate student use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drug, non-controlled substances.

2114.2 Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drug Screening

Catholic high schools reserve the rights to screen its students for tobacco, alcohol, street drugs, and performance-enhancing substances as a condition of enrollment, participation in any co-curricular / extra-curricular activity, or attendance at any school-sponsored function.

- Catholic high schools that choose to screen its students for tobacco, alcohol, street drugs, and/or performance-enhancing substances shall use the Catholic School Drug Screening Protocol (2212). The intent of the drug-screening program is educational and not punitive in nature. The purpose of a drug-screening program is to provide students with a school environment that deters the use of tobacco, alcohol, street drugs, or performance-enhancing substances and to promote a healthy and drug-free lifestyle for students.

2118 Student Pregnancy

Pregnant students shall not be restricted from attending the Catholic School. In keeping with our Catholic philosophy regarding respect for human life:

- o A pregnant student shall be treated with dignity, compassion, and concern for her feelings and will not be restricted from attendance at school.
- o It is recommended that counseling be sought for the student and for her family, for the father of the child, and for the student's classmates, if deemed appropriate.
- o The counseling services of Montana Catholic Social Services shall be made available to the concerned parties.

2120 Chronic Infectious Conditions

- Students, administration, faculty, support staff, or volunteers having evidence of chronic infectious conditions will not be restricted from the school or the work setting unless recommended by a medical review.

2122 Hazing, Harassment, or Intimidation

2122.1 General Statement

- Catholic schools are committed to a positive and productive community environment free of harassment, hazing, and intimidation. It is the explicit policy of the Catholic school to prohibit harassment or intimidation whether committed by a student, employee, volunteer, and/or parent. The Catholic school will treat allegations of such seriously, and will review and investigate such matters in a timely manner.
- Furthermore, the Catholic school prohibits retaliation against any employee, student, or parent who has testified, assisted, or participated in the investigation report. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or adverse pressure.

2122.2 Definitions

- Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or a school environment that is hostile or intimidating because of the individual's race, creed, color, national origin, physical abilities, sex, age, or sexual orientation. Harassment can occur at any time during the school hours or during school related activities.
- Hazing occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment that is intentional or unintentionally meant to induce pain, embarrassment, humiliation, deprivation of rights or that creates physical or mental discomfort, and is directed against a student for the purpose of being initiated into, affiliated with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization, club, athletic team sponsored or supported by the Catholic school. It does not matter whether such hazing practices were mandatory or voluntarily entered into by any student or organization in question.
- Intimidation occurs when an individual is subject to verbal, physical or psychological action or implied action intended to cause harm or distress. A person subjected to intimidation has a difficult time defending him or herself. Intimidation may be carried out directly through physical or verbal means, or indirectly through relational means. When one person fears another because of real or implied threats or coercion that may result in harm to the individual, intimidation exists. Intimidation can also be called bullying or cyberbullying.
- Bullying is defined as an imbalance of power that is hurtful, threatening, or frightening to another individual or group. These REPEATED behaviors can be verbal, physical, social, psychological, or via social media channels.

- Harassment, hazing, and intimidation include but are not limited to any of the following:
 - Verbal: derogatory comments, jokes, or slurs. It can include belligerent or threatening words between individuals and may include offensive, negative remarks concerning an individual's gender, physical abilities, race, creed, and/or physical appearance. In addition, the willful or unintentional spreading of rumors and gossip is considered a form of harassment.
 - Non-Verbal: exclusion of another student from a team or group, unwelcomed gestures,
 - Physical: unwanted deliberate touching, pinching, pushing, spitting, bruising, or patting. Additionally, any deliberate attempts to impede or block one's movement (e.g. assaults of any nature), with normal activities
 - Visual: derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, novelties, or gestures
 - Sexual: sexually suggestive remarks, gestures, or jokes. Moreover, any unsolicited verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature (e.g. sexual assaults, etc.) will be regarded as harassment.
 - Cyber bullying: any unwelcome acts or gestures through the use of electronic communication. Cyber bullying includes but is not limited to harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or web site posting, including blogs, whether accessed on campus or off campus, during or after school hours.

2122.3 Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Catholic school to:

- Implement this policy and ensure that all students, employees, and volunteers understand the policy and its importance.
- Make all school employees, volunteers, students, and parents aware of this policy and the commitment of the school toward its strict enforcement
- Remain watchful for conditions that create or may lead to a hostile school environment
- Establish practices designed to create a school environment free from discrimination, intimidation, or harassment

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Conduct himself or herself in a manner which contributes to a positive school environment
- Avoid any activity that may be considered discriminatory, intimidating, or harassing.
- Not stand silently if he/she observe harassment, hazing, or intimidation
- Report all incidents of harassment to the administration
- If informed that he or she is perceived as engaging in intimidating, discriminatory, harassing, or unwelcome conduct, to discontinue that conduct immediately

2122.4 Reporting Process / Investigation Procedures

The student should first tell the individual causing the harassment, hazing, or intimidation that his/her conduct is offensive, unwelcome, and must stop. If the objectionable behavior does not cease immediately, the student shall report the incident to the administration or to an employee who will report it to the administration.

Should a report be filed that alleges harassment, hazing, or intimidation, the administration will immediately conduct a preliminary investigation of the complaint of harassment, hazing, or intimidation, involving only the necessary parties. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible. When there is sufficient evidence that harassment, hazing, or intimidation has occurred, the administration will immediately notify the Diocese and comply with the procedures as prescribed in the Diocesan Policy Regarding Abuse of Minors, Sexual Misconduct, and Sexual Harassment and Code of Pastoral Conduct.

Harassment, hazing, and intimidation can take the form of Adult-Student, Adult-Adult, Student-Student, and Student-Adult. The same procedures will be followed in each case.

2122.5 Corrective Action

A charge of harassment, hazing, or intimidation shall not, in and of itself, create the presumption of wrongdoing. However, individuals or groups with whom substantiated acts of harassment, hazing, or intimidation are found, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from school for students and personnel action for employees and adult volunteers.

Where appropriate, and at the discretion of the administration, the consequences of a violation of this policy may result in, but is not limited to any or all of the following:

- Educational assignment designed to increase awareness and sensitivity to the issue of harassment or intimidation
- Assignment to educate in the areas of impulse control and anger management
- Administrative family consequences
- After school penalty
- Referral to an outside agency
- Suspension or dismissal
- Referral to police or other law enforcement agency

2122.6 Prevention

The Catholic school shall provide regular in-service education about harassment, hazing, and intimidation for employees and students.

2122.7 False or Frivolous Reports

Students found to have filed false or frivolous charges of harassment, hazing, or intimidation will also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from school.

2124 Marriage and Cohabitation

- If a student is married and the marriage is recognized as valid by the Catholic Church, the administration will determine the enrollment status of the student on a case by case basis.
- Co-habitation and a marriage not recognized by the Catholic Church are causes for student dismissal.

2126 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.

- 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 the unborn child. In all circumstances, the mother of the unborn child must be treated with compassion and respect.

2128 Student Drivers

- The school shall not assign student drivers or make student drivers responsible to transport fellow students to or from school-sponsored activities.
 - Nothing precludes a student driver to transport family members to or from school-sponsored activities.

2200 Student Safety, Health, and Welfare

2202 School Environment

- In as much as possible, the Catholic School will provide a safe and healthy school environment, protecting the welfare and wellbeing of its students
- The Catholic school should commit to all requirements by the local health department, the Superintendent, or the CDC who all might recommend best practices
- If school and/or student safety is compromised by the actions of a Catholic School employee, student, or facility, the administration will take immediate action to rectify the situation or incident.
 - The administration will immediately inform the Superintendent of any event or circumstance where the school environment may be unsafe or unhealthy.
- All situations and/or incidents that compromise school/student safety will be documented, as well as the resolution as prescribed by the administration.

2204 Access to the Student

- For the purposes of this section, an official is anyone acting in his/her professional capacity, as a social worker, government attorney, or peace officer employed by a federal, state, county, or city agency.
- School counselors and administrators have access to students and will in the course of their functions conduct one-on-one meetings with students as long as Safe Environment protocols and Professional Ethics are followed.

2204.1 General Access

The Catholic School does not ordinarily allow access to the student(s) on school premises during school hours.

- General access to the student is defined as any contact with the student, during the school operation hours or during a school-sanctioned event. General access includes any contact or communication with the student, including face-to-face, telephone, text, email, note, card, gifts, etc.
- Parents responsible for a child's care may, with permission of the administration, have access to the child during school hours.

- In cases where a non-custodial parent, step-parent, member of the extended family, and/or another adult seeks access to the student or seeks to act on behalf of a natural, custodial/parent, written authorization from the natural, custodial parent or legal guardian is required.
- Parent(s) and/or parentally approved visitors are required to “check-in” with the school administration prior to contacting the student.
- Any gifts, cards, notes, etc. intended for the student shall be dropped off at the school office for delivery to the student by the school administrator. In cases where someone other than the parent(s) or legal guardian requests contact with the student through gifts, cards, notes, etc. the administration will seek permission from the parent(s) or guardian prior to delivery.
 - If student contact is sought by anyone other than parent(s)/guardian(s), the administration must first obtain parental / guardian consent.
 - The administration shall not allow students to be alone with anyone who is not the parent/guardian of the student or a school employee
- This does not include persons authorized by the parents / guardians or school employees as part of the regular curriculum or support program of the schools, nor those in a tutorial or diagnostic position.
 - Teachers shall not allow students to leave the classroom to speak to non-school personnel without the explicit permission of the administration.

2204.2 Parental Access – Divorce and/or Custody

Legal custody of a child, either solely or jointly, establishes the right of access to the child

- In cases where a non-custodial parent, step-parent or other adult seeks access to the student or seeks to act on behalf of a natural, custodial/parent, written authorization from the natural, custodial parent is required
- In cases of marital divorce and legal custody, when the school receives conflicting instructions or requests that the school clearly is not authorized to honor, the administration will request both parents to seek appropriate court instructions for the school. The school will respect and comply with lawful court orders.

2204.4 Access by Federal, State, County, or City Officials

Upon disclosure of proper identification, an official may interview a child at school if the official considers it necessary for the welfare of the child such as investigation of possible neglect and/or abuse.

- This interview may be conducted in the presence of a school representative ([MCA § 41-3-202\(3\)](#)).
- The administration shall document and report the matter to the Superintendent

2204.5 Investigation of possible criminal activity

- If student contact is sought by an official for the investigation of possible criminal activity, the school shall obtain parental / guardian consent for the official to contact the student and follow the directive as stated by the parent/guardian.
 - If the official provides a court order or other formal document that directs the administration NOT to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s), the administration shall follow the directive.
 - The administration shall document and report the matter to the Superintendent

2204.6 Removing a Student from School (Release of Custody)

The school will not release the custody of a student to anyone other than the parent(s)/guardian(s), or persons identified by the parent(s)/guardian(s) on the student's information form or by an official in the following circumstances:

- If the official produces a warrant or court order for the student's custody, the student shall be immediately surrendered to the official.
 - The administration will request authorization to contact the parents / guardian before the student is removed from the school.
 - The administration shall document and report the matter to the Superintendent
- If the official has reason to believe that the student is in immediate danger or harm, the official may immediately remove the student from school and place the student in a protective facility (MCA § 41-3-301).
 - The administration shall document and report the matter to the Superintendent.

2206 Protecting God's Children / Safe Environment

- In compliance with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, all employees and volunteers will comply with the parameters of the Safe Environment program, as required by the Diocese.
- All faculty, staff, and volunteers are mandatory reporters and are therefore responsible for making prompt reports to CPS and/or the police when abuse is suspected. See [MCA 41-3](#) for more information.
- The school curriculum will include the required Safe Environment lessons, as required by the Diocese.

2208 Student Information, Medication, Illness, and Emergencies

2208.1 Student Emergency Information

An emergency information file for each student shall be readily accessible to the administration.

- Information will include parent/guardian home and work phone numbers, alternative authorized contact person with home and work phone, special health information and if convenient, a recent photo.
- All parents of students attending a Catholic school shall make this information available to the administration.

2208.2 Student Injury/Illness

Should a student become seriously ill or suffer a severe injury, the school shall contact 911 to notify the local Emergency Medical Systems (EMS).

- Immediately after contacting EMS, the administration will contact the parents / guardians of the student.
 - Should a student become ill or suffer an injury, the school office shall contact the parents/guardians.
 - Ill or injured students will not leave the school unless accompanied by their parents and/or parent-approved person listed on the student's emergency information document (2208).
- Students are not to be released from school without explicit permission and/or knowledge of the school administration.

2208.3 Administration of Medication

As parents are the primary educators of their children, so too do they have the primary responsibility for the administration of medication to their children. In as much as possible, the school advocates the administration of all medication to students to take place after school hours. However, when this is not possible, parents may request the assistance of school employees through the administration.

As a means of normal protocol, school employees will not administer medication to students. Instead, they may assist the student in self-administration of over the counter or prescribed medications, as outlined in the Medication/Treatment Authorization Form.

There are two Medication/Treatment Authorization Forms:

- [Over-the-Counter Medication Form](#)
 - The Over the Counter Medication Form must be completed entirely and accompany the over the counter medication to be given to a student during in school.
 - Over the counter medications must arrive in the original, unopened store-issued container.
 - The container must be labeled with the child's full name and birth date and the date the parent sends the medication to school.
 - School employees will not be able to assist in the provision or self-administration of medication to children without this written consent.
- [Prescribed Medication Form](#)
 - The Prescribed Medication Form must be completed entirely and accompany the prescription to be given to a student in school.
 - Prescribed medications must arrive in a container with the original, unaltered prescription label attached. The label must display all legal information required for a pharmacist to dispense a prescription medication such as valid issue and expiration dates, the patient's name, the medication name and dosage instructions, and the doctor's name. The label information must match the physician's order
 - Both a parent/legal guardian and the prescribing doctor must sign the form for prescription medication.
 - School employees will not be able to assist in the provision or self-administration of medication to children without this written consent.

Medication that Requires Licensed Medical Personnel

- Parents should be aware that the administration of certain medications to children in school requires delegation by a licensed nurse pursuant to Montana law. In these cases, the parent is responsible for making the arrangements for a nurse to be present at the school to assist and/or administer the medication.

Asthma, Severe Allergy, or Anaphylaxis Medication

- Parents or a Physician may provide a student with the authorization for possession or self-administration of asthma, severe allergy, or anaphylaxis medication. The student must have a Prescribed Medication/Treatment Authorization Form on file in the school office for a student to be allowed to possess and/or self-administer asthma, severe allergy or anaphylaxis medication.

- [Food Allergy Action Plan Form](#)

End of the Year – Medication Disposal

- The school requests that parents pick up all medications for their children at the end of the school year, if the medication is discontinued, or if the medication has changed during the school year. All medications left at the school after the final day of the school year will be discarded.

2208.4 Student Safety and Supervision

All Catholic school employees are responsible for all Catholic school students during the school day and at school-sanctioned events.

- Administrations, teachers, program directors and personnel to whom authority has been delegated, are responsible for the supervision of students and shall endeavor to protect the safety of students enrolled in their schools or programs during the school day, during school-sponsored activities on or off the school premises, and during the periods of daily arrival and dismissal.

Grade school recess supervision

- During a normal grade school recess, a ratio of 1 adult supervisor for every 50 children is recommended.
 - When students leave campus as part of the school day or when representing the school for an activity, there should always be two supervisors and at least one of each gender—unless the students are all of one gender. In that case, there should be at least one chaperone of the same gender. The following ratio of adult supervisors to children is recommended
 - PK – K: One (1) adult for every eight (8) children
 - Grades 1 – 5: One (1) adult for every ten (10) students
 - Grades 6 – 8: One (1) adult for every fifteen (15) students
 - Grades 9 – 12: One (1) adults for every twenty-five (25) students

2208.6 Student Health Records and Services

- The Catholic school shall maintain health records for enrolled students
- If public health nurses are not available to the school through the public Local Education Agency (LEA) or local county health department, it is recommended that the Catholic school solicit nurse volunteer(s) from the community to provide orderly and effective delivery of student health services.

2208.8 Students with Food Allergies

- It is an acceptable practice for the Catholic school to deny enrollment if the food allergy cannot be reasonably accommodated by the school (Policy 2006).
- If the school accepts a student with a food allergy, the following guidelines provided by the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN) should be followed.
 - Family's Responsibility
 - Notify the school of the child's allergies.
 - Work with the school to develop a plan to accommodate the child's needs.

- Provide written medical documentation, instructions and medications as directed by the child's physician. Use the Food Allergy Action Plan as a guide (see Appendix).
 - Provide properly labeled medications and replace medications after use or when expired.
 - At the minimum, the parents shall provide the school with at least two (2) Epi-pens for school or student use.
 - Educate the child in the self-management of their food allergy. This would include: strategies for avoiding exposure; safe and unsafe foods; symptoms of allergic reactions; how to tell an adult when they are having allergy symptoms; how to read food labels (age appropriate).
 - Review food allergy reaction procedures with school personnel, the child's physician.
 - Provide up-to-date emergency contact information.
- o School's Responsibility
- Notify parents and the student that the school cannot guarantee an allergy-free environment.
 - Ensure that all staff understands food allergies; can recognize symptoms; knows what to do in case of an emergency; and works with other school staff to eliminate the use of allergens in the student's meals, education tools, arts and crafts projects, etc.
 - Review the Food Allergy Action Plan before an allergic reaction occurs to ensure the plan is efficient.
 - Ensure that medications are appropriately stored, and be sure that an emergency kit is available containing the physician's standing order for epinephrine.
 - If a student is seven years old, or older, the student may carry an Epi-pen on their person if properly trained.
 - Designate and properly train school personnel to administer medications.
 - If a student needs or has injected self with an Epi-pen, call 911, the parents and the student's doctor in that order.
 - Ensure a trained staff member is available during school operations..
 - Discuss field trips and other special activities with the family of the child to decide appropriate strategies for managing the food allergy.
 - Discourage children from "trading" food.
 - Ensure all surfaces such as tables and toys are washed clean of contaminating foods.
 - If needed, designate a specific table in the cafeteria for children with food allergies.
 - Encourage all students to wash hands after handling food.
- o Student's Responsibility
- Do not trade food with other students.
 - Do not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain the food allergen.
 - Be proactive in the care and management of food allergies and reactions (age appropriate).
 - Notify an adult immediately if they believe they have eaten or been exposed to the food allergen.

2210 Search and Student's Right to Privacy

- School personnel are responsible for protecting the health and safety of all students and promoting the effective school operation. Fulfillment of these duties may require a reasonable search of school and/or student property.
- When school officials carry out their duties, they will preserve a student's reasonable expectation of privacy.

2210.1 Search of School Property

- All property of the school, including desks and lockers as well as their contents may be searched or inspected at any time without notice.
 - o Authorized school personnel have an unrestricted right to search these structures, as well as any containers, book bags, purses, or articles of clothing left unattended on school property

2210.2 Searches of Student's Person and Personal Property

The search of a student's person or personal property upon the student's person or in his/her possession is permissible when there is any suspicion that the student may be carrying contraband.

- For the purpose of this policy, contraband shall be defined as any weapon, illegal paraphernalia, or other item, the possession of which is prohibited by law or school rules.
- The following procedures will be used when searching a person or personal property
 - o At least two school employees will be present, one of which will be a school administrator or his/her delegate. When possible, one employee will be the same gender as the student.
 - o If a weapon is suspected, law enforcement will be notified.
 - o If a weapon or illegal drug / paraphernalia are seized, the administration will notify the parents and law enforcement officials. The contraband will be secured until law enforcement arrives.
 - o If a student refuses to voluntarily be searched, empty pockets, empty book bag or purse, the student will be detained under supervision until the parents / guardians are contacted. In such cases, the student will be subject to the school's disciplinary code.
 - Strip searches are never permitted.
 - The school administration will notify the Superintendent when a search is conducted and contraband is seized.

2210.3 Vehicle Search

- The school administration regulates the use of school property and may regulate vehicles brought onto School, local Education Foundation, or Diocesan property used by the school. All vehicles located on this property are subject to search.
- A school official who has reasonable suspicion to believe that a search of a vehicle will turn up evidence of contraband, (e.g. alcoholic beverage, drugs, weapons, or stolen property) or other violations of the law or school rules, may inspect the vehicle and/or contact the title holder to the vehicle.
- If the driver of the vehicle fails to comply with the requests of the school authority, law enforcement shall be contacted.

- If contraband is found, it will be secured, law enforcement will be contacted, and the school authority will take reasonable measures to maintain a safe environment and proper control of the event, which may include disabling the vehicle until law enforcement or parents / guardians can be summoned.

2210.4 Canine Searches

- Catholic schools are encouraged to employ an agency or independent contractor for having the school facilities, structures, and grounds searched by use of a specially trained canine.
- At the beginning of the school year, all students and parents/guardians will be notified that the school will be conducting unannounced canine searches during the course of the year.

2212 High School Student Drug-Screening Program

- Catholic schools prohibit the use, possession, sale, or distribution of tobacco, alcohol, street drugs, and/or performance-enhancing substances (except as prescribed by a physician) by all students.

2212.2 Intent

Catholic schools are dedicated to maintaining a Catholic school atmosphere and activities program as safe and secure educational environments. This commitment requires a clear policy and supportive programs relating to detection, treatment, and prevention of substance use and/or abuse by all students.

2212.4 Drug Screening Regulation

Catholic schools reserve the rights to screen its students for tobacco, alcohol, street drugs, and performance-enhancing substances as a condition of enrollment in the school or participation in any co-curricular / extra-curricular activity.

2212.6 Purpose

This drug-screening program is not intended to be disciplinary or punitive in nature. Rather, it is to provide students with a school environment that deters the use of tobacco, alcohol, street drugs, or performance-enhancing substances. It is also to promote a healthy and drug-free lifestyle for our students, present them with reasons to avoid use of these substances, and to prevent them from participating in co-curricular and/or extra-curricular activities while they have any unlawful and/or performance enhancing substances in their bodies.

2212.8 Scope

- **Condition of Enrollment:** As a condition of enrolling in a Catholic school, students may be required to provide a drug screen, resulting from a random selection and/or a reasonable suspicion, as articulated by the school administration.
- **Condition of Participation in School-Sponsored Activities:** Students wishing to participate in a school sponsored co-curricular and/or extra-curricular activity may be required to submit evidence of a clean drug screen before the first practice of the season.
 - For Fall Activities, the drug screen should take place in the month of August
 - For Winter Activities, the drug screen should take place in the month of November
 - For Spring Activities, the drug screen should take place in the month of March
- **Random Drug Screening**
The Catholic school may randomly screen students throughout the calendar year
- **Reasonable Suspicion**

If the school administration has reason to suspect a student may have tobacco, alcohol, street drugs, and/or performance-enhancing substances in his/her system; the administrator may require the student to submit a drug screen before re-admission into school or school-sponsored activity

2212.10 Screening Protocol

- The school will notify the parent/guardian of the student that is randomly drawn or with whom there is reasonable suspicion and provide the name and location of the school-designated laboratory that will conduct the screen
- The student will have up to twenty-four (24) hours to report to the laboratory and provide the required sample

2212.12 Screening Procedures

- All drug screens will be conducted by the school-approved and designated laboratory, in the laboratory's facilities, using the laboratory's equipment
- The laboratory that conducts the drug screen will follow the standards set by the Department of Health and Human Services. It must be certified under the auspices of the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act (CLIA) and the Joint Commission of Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)
- Before the laboratory screens the sample, the student and/or parents/guardian will agree to fill out, sign, and date any required form, including all pre-screening and post-screening information. All information submitted on this form will remain confidential
- Students will comply with the standards of protocol for providing a sample (urine, hair, etc.), per the directions of the laboratory official
- If it is proven that tampering or cheating has occurred during the collection, the student will be suspended from school until he/she obtains a clean and valid drug screen
- Any absences from class due in direct result to random selection and/or providing a sample will be school sponsored and not count against the school's attendance policy
- Each specimen will be screened for tobacco, alcohol, street drugs (which may include all drugs listed as controlled substances under the laws of the State of Montana), and performance-enhancing substances
- Under no circumstances shall Catholic school personnel handle, screen, or collect samples for screening

2212.14 Screen Results

- The drug screen results will be mailed to the school administration
- The school administrator will immediately communicate the results to the parent/guardian
- If the screen is positive:
 - The school administration will meet with the student and his/her parent/guardian at the school
 - The student will be subject to the school's Tobacco / Alcohol / Drug (T.A.D.) disciplinary procedures
 - The student will be suspended from participation in co-curricular / extra-curricular activities until he/she has a clean follow-up screening and he/she has fulfilled the disciplinary measures, outlined in the school's T.A.D. procedures

2212.16 Appeals

- The parent/guardians may appeal the drug screen results by:
 - Providing documented evidence that a prescribed drug caused the screen to be positive
 - Providing documented evidence from the student's physician that explains the positive screen
 - Requesting a follow-up drug screen
 - The follow-up drug screen shall be conducted at a school-approved laboratory, following the same procedures as outlined above.
 - The student will be prevented from participating in any student activity until after the follow-up screen results are reported.

2212.18 Confidentiality

- Any information regarding drug screen results are strictly confidential.
- All drug screen evidence and documentation will be destroyed upon the graduation date of the student or his/her cohort.

2212.20 Financial Responsibility

- The Catholic school will pay for drug screens that result from random selection and from the reasonable suspicion that a student may have tobacco, alcohol, and/or drugs in his/her system.
- The students' parents/legal guardian will pay for drug screen(s) included with the student's medical release (physical) for co-curricular / extra-curricular participation.
- The students' parents/legal guardian will pay for all follow up and/or appealed drug screens.

2212.22 Consent Form

As a condition of enrollment in the Diocesan Catholic school the student and his/her parent/guardian(s) may be required to sign and return the [Drug Screening Consent Form](#) to the school office

2300 School Emergency Procedures

2302 Employee Responsibilities

- The school administrative staff is responsible for planning, communicating, and executing emergency procedures in the event of fire, earthquake, inclement weather, civil or natural catastrophe, etc.
- The school maintenance staff is responsible for the safe and orderly maintenance of the school facilities.
 - In the event of an unsafe or hazardous facility condition, the maintenance staff will immediately communicate the matter to the administration.
 - The school maintenance staff is responsible to establish and maintain a building maintenance manual.
 - The manual should include a section dedicated to emergency procedures particular to the building, including all emergency utility shutoff switches, valves, etc.
 - Each school office will keep an updated building maintenance manual on file.
 - The school maintenance staff will annually inspect or schedule inspections for the servicing of all fire extinguishers.

- The school faculty and support staff personnel will immediately communicate any hazardous conditions or suspicion thereof to the administration.

2304 Emergency Procedures Manual

- An Emergency Procedure Manual will be made available to school employees at the beginning of each school year.
- The school will annually update the Emergency Procedures Manual.
- Specific guidelines for emergency procedures may be obtained from local and/or state civil defense offices and from local fire departments.

2306 First Aid Training

- Catholic school employees are encouraged and when possible provided opportunities to learn First Aid and CPR.
- First aid supplies will be available and accessible in the school offices, kitchens, science labs, and maintenance rooms.

2308 Emergency Drills

- Emergency drills are to be held regularly according to [Montana Law](#).
- Emergency evacuation procedures will be posted in every classroom and place where students assemble.
- Fire exits shall be clearly marked; fire extinguishers in working order, and, fire doors closed and unlocked during school hours.
- Some of the duties related to drills may be delegated to faculty members or to the building custodian; however, the administration is ultimately responsible for the welfare and safety of all students, at all times.
- A written record detailing date, time, circumstances, action taken, and witnesses should be recorded with the school office.

2310 Emergency School Closure

- When the safety and welfare of students in the school building or on the school campus is subject to compromise, the administration may suspend school operations for the day.
- Catholic schools will follow the directives of the governor and/or local health departments regarding longer closures related to health emergencies and pandemics

2310.1 Weather

- When travel is unsafe due to adverse weather, the Catholic school will officially suspend school operations for the day.
- The School will make efforts to notify parents by phone and through the local media.
- If the local public school system closes school for the day, due to inclement weather, it is recommended that the Catholic school do the same.

2400 Facility Insurance and Inventory

2402 Facility (Multi-Peril) Insurance

- All Catholic school facilities shall be insured as prescribed by the Diocese.

- Annual premium payments for such coverage shall be included in the annual school budget.

2404 Insurance Inspection

- All school buildings will be inspected by the Diocesan insurance company.
- Recommendations of insurance inspectors should be acted upon as rapidly as is financially feasible.

2406 Insurance Inventory

- Annually, the school administration will establish an updated inventory of all contents of the school building with a value of \$500.00 or more.
 - The inventory will list the item, its estimated replacement cost, and its serial number.
 - New purchases with a value of \$500.00 or more will be added to the inventory as soon as the merchandise is in the building.
- Items on the inventory list that are sold, destroyed, given away or stolen will be reported in a timely manner.

2500 School Operations - Instruction

2502 Spiritual Activities

2502.2 Catholic Liturgies

- All students and employees shall participate in regularly scheduled celebrations of Eucharist.
- All students and employees shall have the opportunity for periodic reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Liturgy may be for classes, grades, departments, or the entire school; small or large groups; celebrated in churches, classrooms or other appropriate places where students may be gathered.
- All-school liturgies may be celebrated weekly, monthly, seasonal, or for specific dates of local importance, but will be scheduled no less than once each month.

2502.4 Student Retreats

- Annual retreats shall be scheduled for high school students each of the four years of school.
- It is also recommended the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Grade students have an annual retreat.

2502.6 Display of Crucifix/Religious Icons

- The Catholic school shall appropriately display Catholic Icons (statues, pictures, bible, etc.) throughout the building, placing special emphasis on their importance and influence on the spiritual environment and life of the school.
- A crucifix shall be present in every classroom

2502.8 Classroom Prayer

- Formal and spontaneous prayer shall be an integral part of each school day.
- All classrooms shall begin each school day with a prayer.
- Prayer is recommended for all classrooms to conclude the school day.

2504 Academic Activities

2504.1 Remote Instruction

- When a school has suspended face-to-face instruction, it will announce either a temporary closure or the commencement of its remote instruction program
- During remote instruction, the same expectations for attendance and participation (for teachers and students) exist, although each school will develop its own attendance processes dependent on grade level
- While it is impossible for an administrative official to supervise all faculty-student communication, administration must endeavor to supervise communication.
 - When it is possible to keep records (such as texting services), those records should be available for review
 - Administrators should have an open invitation/subscription to all channel of faculty-student communication
 - Faculty members should work to minimize one-on-one virtual communication with students
- Recordings
 - Recordings and visual representations of students should not be made available to the public without permission of school administration
 - Faculty members should consult with school administrators to ensure parental approval before posting videos which include students
 - At all times, schools should avoid posting identifying information of students online

2504.8 Community Service Programs

- Participation in community service programs (visits to and/or volunteer work at nursing homes, shelters, food pantries, etc.) enhances the standard program of the school. These programs are encouraged and can be required.
- Such programs should be age-appropriate and provide a balanced view of and experience in community service.

2506 Homework

- Homework may be a useful part of the school's academic program. It may enable students to form desirable, independent study habits and is an outgrowth of the student's interest in the regular classroom work.
- The purpose of homework is to provide essential practice in needed skills; to train students in good work habits; to afford opportunities for increasing self-direction; to teach students to budget time and to promote growth in responsibility.
- When homework is assigned, the following recommendations will be taken into account:
 - Students in Kindergarten through Second Grade are expected to spend an average of fifteen (15) to thirty (30) minutes a night on homework. Ordinarily, homework is not assigned over weekends or holiday periods.
 - Students in Third Grade through Fifth Grade are expected to spend an average of thirty (30) to forty-five (45) minutes on homework. Rarely will homework be assigned over weekends or holiday periods.
 - Students in Sixth Grade through Eighth Grade are expected to spend an average of one (1) hour on their home assignments. On occasion, homework may be assigned over weekends or holiday periods.

- In high school, homework can be vital to student academic success. The nature and duration of assignments will depend on the particular student's academic program and professional judgment of the instructor. Ordinarily, high school students are expected to spend at least one (1) hour but not exceed three (3) hours on home assignments.

2508 Use of Instructional Materials / Duplications and Photocopies

All schools shall comply with applicable federal law regarding the photocopying of educational materials for educational uses.

2509 Use of Supplemental Instructional Material (Videos & Guest Speakers)

- Instructional materials that supplement the approved curriculum resources (i.e. text, workbooks, etc.) may be used for instructional purposes when they are part of the teaching lesson plan and approved curriculum.
- All instructional materials will be age-appropriate.
 - When the age of the student and the instructional material might be suspect, teachers will receive parental approval prior to using the material.

2509.1 Videos

- Any video shown in the Catholic school shall supplement the school's curriculum or classroom instruction.
- Any video shown in the classroom shall be approved by the school administration

2509.2 Guest Speakers

- The Catholic school shall not honor those who act in defiance of the fundamental principles of the Catholic faith by providing them with a platform to speak to students in any manner that might suggest support for their beliefs and/or actions that are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Any guest speaker invited into the classroom and/or school shall be pre-approved by the school administration.

2510 Local Field Trips

2510.1 Definition

- A local field trip is any travel where students are taken out of a regularly scheduled class to continue the curriculum content outside the standard classroom setting.
- A local field trip shall take into account all travel within 500 miles of the school.

2510.2 Field Trip Forms

- Diocesan approved **Field Trip Forms** can be found on the Diocesan website. These forms will be completed and returned to the school administration prior to the field trip departure.
 - [Field Trip Form](#)
- All field trips will have the completed and required paperwork submitted prior to students departing the school.

2510.3 Policy

- The importance and value of trips for educational field study is recognized, as are visits to places of cultural or educational significance to further enrich the lessons of the classroom.
- All field trips shall be approved by the school administrations in advance.

- The following should be taken into consideration when any field trips are being planned:
 - Active supervision by two trained and Safe Environment-certified adults, including one or more employees of the Diocese and/or school (See 2516). Preferably, there will be one chaperone of each gender.
 - Completed Field Trip Forms
 - Inclusion of a proper first aid kit and other emergency material.
 - To insure the desired educational outcome of such field trips, teachers will prepare the students for the place to be visited and the effects to be seen and heard. Additionally, the teacher should make an advance visit to the site of the field trip so that all unforeseen circumstances, situations, and/or events could be properly planned for, to minimize difficulties.

2510.4 Student Attendance

- It is expected that all students in the classroom will join the field trip as an extension to the classroom learning environment
- All students using school transportation for a school-sponsored activity and/or field trip must return in the same vehicle unless there are signed and pre-arranged agreements made with the school office, teacher, and parent.
- When a student is unable to join the class on the field trip, the teacher will leave instruction for the student to meet the educational objectives of the field trip while the class is away. Students who cannot attend the field trip will be responsible for its educational objectives.

2510.5 Field Trip Supervision

- The ratio of adults to students for supervision during a field trip shall conform to Policy 2511.7.
- Safe Environment trained and background checked parents will be invited to assist in supervision, acting as chaperones for such activities.

2511 Distant Field Trips

- The importance and value of trips for educational field study is recognized, as are visits to places of cultural or educational significance to further enrich the lessons of the classroom
- If overnight accommodations are necessary, the school will provide active supervision of students including school-adopted protocols for bed checks and hallway monitoring and care for students who become ill.
- The Diocese will not endorse an overseas excursion into remote areas and into areas where there is no reliable communication access, provision for emergency medical treatment and evacuation, or where the United States government has issued a travel advisory warning for the period of the overseas excursion.
- The Catholic school bears no financial responsibility to subsidize a Distant Field Trip. All funds for these events are borne by participating and attending students and their families.

2511.1 Definition

- A distant field trip is any travel where students are taken out of a regularly scheduled class to continue the curriculum content outside the standard classroom setting.
- A distant field trip shall take into account all travel outside of Montana, beyond 500 miles of the school, or into a foreign country.

2511.5 Administration's Responsibility

- It is the responsibility of the administration to ensure and verify that:
 - The major learning outcomes and relevance to the curriculum.
 - Number and grade level of students.
 - Number of accompanying staff and other adults.
 - Risk analysis.
 - Copies of information to parents including medical form, consent form, proposed itinerary, accommodation arrangement and costing.

2511.6 Faculty Coordinator's Responsibility:

- The faculty member coordinating the distant field trip shall provide evidence of the following, to the administration, one month prior to departure:
 - All participants have adequate medical insurance.
 - All participants have adequate travel insurance.
 - An adequate number of accompanying adults hold first aid qualifications and an appropriate first aid kit is carried with the group.
 - All participating employees know and understand the policies of the school and the Diocese will remain while on the trip. School employees and accompanying adults may not drink alcohol while on duty during the trip.
 - The school office has copies of all emergency contacts and procedures.
 - All accompanying adults are appropriately qualified and/or experienced and are advised of their responsibilities, relevant school and diocesan policies and safety procedures.
 - All travelers are briefed on the customs, cultural differences, behavior, and dress expectations while on tour.

2511.7 Minimum Supervision Requirements

- Ensure boys and girls are not accommodated in the same rooms.
- For groups over 20 students, a supervisory ratio of one teacher to ten (10) students is required.
- Accompanying adults may be used to meet supervision requirements if the administration is satisfied there are sufficient teachers to maintain adequate control of the whole excursion, and to control each activity. Additional adults should accompany excursions when extra care is considered necessary for the safety and welfare of students. Teachers must comprise at least half the accompanying adults.
- Gender balance
 - For mixed groups of boys and girls, a male and a female teacher must accompany the group.
 - For groups of either all boys or all girls, there must be at least one teacher of the same gender as the students.
 - For all overseas excursions, there must be at least two teachers, preferably one male and one female.

2512 Calendars, Schedules, Holidays, and Dismissals

2512.1 School Calendar

Each school shall submit the pending school calendar to the superintendent on or before May 1st each year.

2512.2 Standard School Day

- The Catholic schools will comply with the Office of Public Instruction's requirement for the Standard School Day.
- A school day of pupil instruction shall be
 - At least 2 hours for kindergarten
 - At least 4 hours for grades 1 through 3
 - At least 6 hours for grades 4 through 12.
- The number of hours in any one school day may be reduced at the discretion of the Administrator if the total number of pupil instruction hours in the school year is not less than the minimum aggregate hours
 - Lunchtime may not be counted toward meeting the standard school day nor minimum aggregate hours required.

2512.3 Standard School Year

- The Catholic schools will comply with the Montana Codes Annotated 20-1-301 regarding the required aggregate hours of instruction to count as an academic year. If a school needs to implement a hybrid or remote schedule, this could impact the number of hours. It is assumed that a waiver will be given.
- The minimum aggregate hours required by grade are:
 - 360 aggregate hours for Kindergarten
 - 720 aggregate hours for grades 1 through 3
 - 1,080 aggregate hours for grades 4 through 12
 - 1,050 aggregate hours for graduating seniors may be sufficient

2512.4 Early Dismissal

If the Catholic school is dismissed for any reason at a time that is earlier than the published dismissal time, procedures for notification of parents shall be observed to ensure that students have proper and safe supervision.

2512.5 Professional Development Dismissal

Catholic Schools are to have a regularly scheduled day where class is dismissed early for the purpose of professional development of the Catholic school employees.

- The Professional Development Dismissal will be on the school calendar and parents will be notified in advance.
- The Professional Development Dismissal shall occur at least monthly but not more than weekly.

2512.6 Holy Days of Obligation

- Some of the traditional Holy Days of Obligation that occur with the school year can be celebrated in school by scheduling an appropriate liturgy for students.
- Classroom activities that celebrate the feast day are strongly encouraged.

2514 Class Size

It is recommended that class sizes be in accordance with the levels established by the Administrative Regulations of Montana and/or Montana Codes Annotated.

2514.1 Grade School

- In single grade rooms, the recommended maximum class size shall be:
 - No more than 20 students in kindergarten and grades 1 and 2
 - No more than 28 students in grades 3 and 4
 - No more than 30 students in grades 5 through 8
- In multi-grade classrooms, the recommended maximum class size shall be:
 - no more than 20 students in grades K, 1, 2, and 3
 - no more than 24 students in grades 4, 5, and 6
 - no more than 26 students in grades 7 and 8
- Multi-grade classrooms that cross grade level boundaries (e.g., 3-4, 6-7) shall use the recommended maximum of the lower grade.
- Instructional aides are recommended when class size or teacher load exceed the recommendations.
- The instructional aide will be employed in a ratio of 0.20 FTE per student exceeding the classroom capacity but shall not exceed 1.0 FTE.

2514.2 High School and Middle Schools with a High School-Type Schedule

- In addition to the administration, the school shall employ a sufficient number of certified FTEs to allow for varying instructional patterns including, but not limited to teaming, core curriculum and departmentalization.
- Each program offered shall have properly endorsed FTE(s).
- Individual class size shall not exceed 30 students.
 - Class size limits do not apply to instrumental music or choral groups.
 - Laboratory /studio class size shall be limited for safety purposes. The number of students shall be determined through consultation with the teacher, considering the number, size and use of laboratory stations.
- The number of students assigned a teacher per day shall not exceed 150.
 - Student limits do not apply to instrumental music or choral groups or study halls.
- Teachers with a significant writing program, as determined by the local board of trustees, shall have a maximum load of 100 students.

2516 Student Supervision

2516.1 On Campus Supervision

- The administration is responsible for the supervision of students when the students are on the school campus and during the school hours or during school-sponsored / school-sanctioned events.
- In the absence of the school administration, the school will have a chain of command for authority and supervision that is available to all school personnel.
- The administration may delegate supervisory authority to another school employee for on-campus student supervision during school-sponsored and/or school-sanctioned events.
 - The administration or delegate (including teachers and paid or volunteer aides assigned for duty) shall be oriented to supervisory responsibilities.
- Student supervision details and expectations shall be stated in the parent handbook and shall include:
 - No student or students should ever be in a classroom without supervision.

- o Students are never to be sent on errands off the school campus without parental permission.
- o Students may be released from school only at the verified written request of the parent or guardian.
- All students transported by the school to school sponsored events shall have the written permission of the parent or guardian using the school's "Parent Permission Form".

2516.2 Off Campus - School-Sponsored / School-Sanctioned Events - Supervision

- The administration is responsible for the supervision of students during school-sponsored and/or school-sanctioned events
- The administration and/or delegate shall attend all school-sponsored and/or school-sanctioned events for the purpose of student supervision. The delegate shall be an employee of the school. When possible, the primary delegate shall be the Activities Director
- In the event the administration's delegate is a teacher, the school shall make accommodations for the delegate to have a substitute during the absence of the administration.
 - o Unless there is a qualified emergency and/or unless it cannot be avoided, when the school employs more than one licensed school administrator, one administrator shall always be responsible to supervise students in the school building, during school hours.
 - o School employees who come into contact with students at school-sponsored events are in a de facto supervisory capacity. Therefore, school employees must not imbibe alcohol before or during these events. An exception can be made for school or Diocesan fundraisers where students volunteer to serve food, provided that the direct supervision of students is done by teachers or parents who are not themselves consuming alcohol and that students do not in any way handle alcohol or alcoholic beverages.
 - o At times when a large percentage of the student body is absent from school to attend a school-sponsored or school-sanctioned event, e.g. athletic tournament, the following protocol shall take place:
 - The administration shall be responsible for student supervision where there is more than 50% of the student body.
 - The administration or delegate shall be responsible for student supervision where there is less than 50% of the student body.
 - Example: If more than 50% of the student body attends an off-campus event, the administration shall also attend the event to supervise the students. The administration's delegate or Assistant administration shall remain at school to supervise the students not attending the event.

2600 School Operations - Non-Instruction

2602 Administration of Federal Government Programs

- All federal government programs and services are provided directly to the individual student attending the Catholic School and are generally administered through the Local Education Agency (LEA) in which the Catholic school operates.

- It is the responsibility of the Catholic school administration to be knowledgeable about the requirements for each government program, to plan for and administer these programs with the school, and to meet the deadlines for evaluation and application for these services.
- It is expected that the Catholic school will take advantage of all federal programs available to their students.
- The acceptance of and involvement in these entitlements rest with the school administration.

2602.2 School Breakfast, Lunch and/or Milk Program

The administration or delegated official must be aware of and carefully follow the state and federal guidelines for meal and/or milk programs, especially the detailed stipulations about costs, charges, and anonymity of recipients where these exist.

2603 Prohibition of Firearms

- All firearms are prohibited on school grounds with the exception of active duty law enforcement personnel

2604 Facility Appearance

- An effective educational program requires clean, safe, and attractive physical facilities.
- The administration is responsible for assuring the custodial staff has a work schedule that will ensure a school building and campus that is clean, neat, organized, and presentable every school day.

2605 Display of American Flag

- The **Confederate flag** should not be displayed in any form at Catholic schools
- The American Flag shall be displayed outside the building, weather permitting, whenever school is in session.
 - The flag shall be raised at the beginning and taken down at the close of each school day.
 - The American Flag shall be appropriately hung in every classroom.

2606 Plant Safety and Maintenance

- There shall be regularly scheduled inspections of all buildings, equipment, playgrounds, and playground apparatus to discover conditions that might be dangerous to the health, safety, and comfort of the students or personnel.
- The administration shall make arrangements for the annual programs of safety inspection, renewal, replacement, and refurbishing for the school and its grounds.
- All personnel shall be responsible for the proper use of buildings, grounds, and equipment in the school.
- All personnel shall immediately report to the administration any defects in building, furniture or equipment that might prove injurious to the comfort, health or safety of teachers, students or other persons.
- Anyone retained to perform school repairs that is not a school employee, must provide status as an independent contractor by giving the license number and showing the certificate or liability insurance to the administration or his/her delegate.
 - Additionally, the independent contractor must provide a federal identification or social security number to facilitate reporting at year-end on form 1099.
- All maintenance work completed by paid or volunteer help is under the jurisdiction of the administration (Pastor, if applicable) who is responsible for compliance with the regulations of the Diocesan Building Committee and all local codes and regulations.

2606.2 Asbestos

- The Catholic school is required to maintain an approved and updated **Asbestos 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 Catholic Schools Office.
 - Copies of the notices must also be sent to the Catholic Schools Office.

- The cost of the compliance inspections is to be borne by the school and should be included in budget deliberations for the school year.

2608 Use of School Facilities

To guarantee the proper use of all school facilities, guidelines and procedures that respect both the primary character of the school as an educational institution and the legitimate needs of the local Catholic community shall be developed by the administration in conjunction with the School Council / Board.

2610 Posting of School Facilities

All school facilities must be clearly and visibly posted as private property to limit civil liability.

2612 Security of Building and Grounds

- All personnel shall assume responsibility for ensuring that the plant is secure from vandalism, burglary, fire hazard, and faulty equipment.
- It is recommended that all schools have a security system that includes an alarm and notification of law enforcement.
- Buildings constitute one of the greatest investments of the diocese. It is expected that all Catholic school facilities shall be secured when not in use to:
 - Minimize hazards
 - Reduce the probability of faulty equipment
 - Guard against the chance of electrical shock
 - Protect from natural hazards and elements
 - Protect from community elements such as traffic
 - Keep records and funds in a safe place
 - Protect against vandalism and burglary
 - Protect for intrusion by unauthorized persons
- The administration in consultation with the School Council / Board is directed to establish such rules and regulations as may be needed to provide for security in the sense outlined above.
 - In addition, the administration shall acquaint him/herself with all local fire regulations relating to security. The use, in buildings and on grounds, of padlocks, chains, and other security measures must be in accordance with safety and fire regulations.

2614 Keys

- All keys or fobs used in a school shall be the responsibility of the administration.
- Requests for permanent issuance of the keys shall be granted only when the employee regularly needs the key to carry out normal work activities.
 - When the need for a key is temporary, the key shall be issued on that basis.
- Keys shall be used only by authorized employees and shall never be lent to pupils.

2616 Vandalism and Theft

- In the event of illegal entry, theft, vandalism, or damage to school property for which insurance claims in excess of \$100 will be filed, school administrators shall follow these procedures:

- o Call the police to investigate the incident and to file a police report.
- o File the claim and report as directed by the Diocesan Insurance Administrator.
- o Mail a copy of the police report and all claims to the insurance carrier.
- o In the event of significant damage or loss, call the Superintendent immediately.
- The diocesan claim investigator may wish to visit the school during the police investigation

2618 General Safety

- All personnel shall report to the administration any defects in building, furniture or equipment that might prove injurious to the comfort, health or safety of teachers, students or other persons.
- All directives issued by the Occupational Safety and Health administration (OSHA) which apply to schools shall be followed. Difficulties in implementing this policy should be brought to the attention of the administration.
 - o Such compliance with OSHA directives shall be the responsibility of the administration.
- Interior and exterior walking surfaces and school parking lots shall be illuminated and maintained in order to ensure the safety of school employees, students, and parents.
- Seating stands and all furniture shall be inspected and maintained in a safe condition.

2620.3 Construction, Remodel, Renovation, Furnishing

No project of any size over an estimated cost of \$5,000.00 may be initiated without prior presentation to the Diocesan Building Committee. This refers to site work, building, remodeling, renovation, furnishings or major maintenance. When there is proposed an expenditure of \$5,000.00 or more the following procedures must be followed:

- A request, in writing, must be sent to the Diocesan Building Committee briefly describing the situation with proposals for the choice of an architect, or contractor, or engineer, etc., according to the nature of the work to be done.
- When upon the recommendation of the Diocesan Building Committee, the permission of the Bishop has been obtained in writing; the administration (Pastor, if applicable) may notify the architect, contractor, or engineer who has been approved for the project.

2622 Transportation

- Schools are encouraged to reduce diocesan vehicle use and the transportation of students to a minimum.
- Whenever possible, schools should use chartered transportation for field trips and student activities.

2622.1 Diocesan-Owned Vehicles

Only screened and designated school employees may drive diocesan-owned vehicles for a school-sponsored function. Before a school directs an employee to use a diocesan-owned or personal vehicle for any reason including transporting students, employees, or volunteers, the school shall submit that driver's name and social security number to the Diocesan Human Resource Director for a driving history background check

- If the driver has a clean driving record, the school shall annually obtain the necessary insurance documentation prior to authorizing the driver to operate a diocesan owned vehicle.
- Annual background checks may be conducted for all drivers of diocesan-owned vehicles.
- Under no circumstances shall alcohol be allowed on or in a Diocesan vehicle.

2622.2 Chartered Transportation

- The diocesan preferred method of transporting students for field trips and student activities is a properly certified chartered or a public transportation system. Only licensed chartered bus companies (common carriers) may be used.
- Under no circumstances shall the school rent or “borrow” a bus and provide a driver.
- Under no circumstances shall alcohol be allowed on a chartered transportation that includes student passengers.

2624 Student Fundraising and Collection

- Whenever a school engages in a fundraising activity, it must be done in such a way:
 - that students do not become promoters of commercial enterprises or carriers of commercial advertising, either directly or indirectly
 - that students are not involved in public solicitation, house-to-house selling, or other activities which would jeopardize their safety
- The School Council / Board, working with administration will establish criteria for a minimum of fundraising activities that will not interfere with the educational program of the student.
- All fundraising in a school is subject to the approval of the administration (Pastor, if applicable).

2626 Communication - Suggestions, Concerns, or Complaints

- As people in a Catholic environment, we have the responsibility to be “Christ-like” with each other, treating all fellow people with dignity, respect, and trust. In order to facilitate productive communication and trust among us, when there is a suggestion, concern, or complaint – take it immediately to the person(s) involved. If a concern or complaint has been communicated to the involved person(s) and there is not a satisfactory dialogue or resolution, please present the concern or complaint to the next level of administration.
- The levels of Administration are as follows:
 - Faculty, School Support Staff, and Other School Employees
 - School Building Administrator
 - Local Chief Administrator, i.e. President or Board Chair, if applicable
 - Parish Pastor (for matters concerning parish, spiritual, Catholic identity, etc.) if applicable
 - Diocese superintendent (for matters concerning legal, personnel, finance, curriculum, etc.)
- A helpful reminder that all communication is best offered and received in the appropriate time and place. “Drop In” conferences and dialogue that occurs in the “heat of battle” are rarely productive and tend to cause further harm. Please show courtesy by scheduling a conference and communicating with respect.

2626.1 Formal Communication Problem Resolution (Due Process)

The Diocese is committed to providing a communication process between parents and the school, where any problem, complaint, suggestion, or questions receives timely response from school employees.

Application

- If a parent disagrees with established rules of conduct, policies, or practices, or if a situation occurs when a parent has knowledge that a decision is negatively affecting a child's education, the parent is encouraged to engage the following communication protocol.
 1. Within five (5) calendar days of the incident occurrence, the parent will present the problem to the school employee responsible for the decision or action.
 2. If, in the opinion of the parent, the employee's initial resolution is unsatisfactory, the parent may request a re-evaluation of the resolution by formally requesting (in writing) a re-evaluation.
 3. The employee will formally respond to the parent and submit a copy of this response to the next level of administration.
 4. If, in the opinion of the parent, the employee's re-evaluation of the matter is unsatisfactory, he/she may formally present the matter to the next level of administration.
 5. After receipt of the written documentation from the parent, the next level of administration will review the matter, and submit his/her decision in writing, to the parent and employee.
 6. This process continues until the next level of administration is the Superintendent. After receipt of the written documentation from the parent and employee(s), the Superintendent will render a decision, stating findings of fact, and present his/her decision, in writing, to all involved parties.
 7. The Superintendent's decision is final, except as stipulated by canon or state law.

2700 Student / Parent Handbooks

2702 Requirement

- All schools shall publish a handbook for students and parents containing school policies and annual schedule.
- The Student / Parent Handbook will be updated annually and shall reflect the policies established by the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools.
- Parents / Guardians of students attending the Catholic School will sign a receipt for the Student / Parent Handbook.
- A copy of the Parent / Student Handbook will be sent to the Superintendent each year for review prior to publication.

2704 Recommended Topics for the Student / Parent Handbook

- Mission Statement and Handbook Purpose
- Administration Right to Amend
- Admission Procedure
- Academic Information and Policies
- Attendance Policies
- Communication Procedure
- Confidentiality
- Crisis / Emergency Plan
- Discipline Code
- Field Trip Policies

- Medication
- Non-discrimination policy--REQUIRED
- Parent Service to School
- School-Sponsored Athletics / Activities
- Student Service Programs
- Technology and Internet Policies
- Use of School Campus and Facilities
- Use of Student Information