



**Diocese of Little Rock  
Office of Catholic Schools**

**Policies and Procedures Manual**

**5.00 ADMINISTRATION**

	Page
5.01 Administrator	4
5.02 Arkansas Laws Pertaining to Private Education	4
5.08.2 Arkansas Non-Public School Accrediting Association (ANSAA)	5
5.40 Arrival/Departure Procedures	14
5.15 Athletic Programs	6
5.16 Before and After School and Summer Child Care Programs	7
5.45.2 Budget	17
5.42 Buses	15
5.42.1 Bus Driver Certification	15
5.42.3 Bus Passengers	15
5.42.4 Bus Safety	15
5.42.2 Bus Safety Equipment	15
5.04 Calendar	4
5.37 Child Abuse Investigations	13
5.42.5 Child Safety Alarms	16
5.38 Collections and Fundraising	14
5.20.1 Communicable Diseases	8
5.46 Complaints	17
5.21 Confidential Records	9
5.29.3 Crisis and Response Plan	12
5.07 Curriculum and Textbooks	4
5.03 <i>Diocesan Manual of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools</i>	4
5.25 Discontinuance of Schools	10
5.34 Drug-Free and Smoke-Free Workplace	13
5.19.3 Employee Personnel File	8
5.05 Faculty Handbook	4
5.41 Field Trip and Off-Campus Activities	14
5.41.1 Field Trip Purpose and Procedures	14

5.45	Finances	16
5.45.3	Financial Reporting	17
5.29.1	Fire Drills	12
5.27	Flag Regulations	11
5.20	Health	8
5.20.4	Height and Weight	9
5.44	Internet, Electronic Mail and Social Media Policy	16
5.31	Licensed Child Care Facilities	12
5.13	Local Consultative School Board	6
5.33	Loitering	13
5.08.1	National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA)	5
5.36	Non-Custodial Parents	13
5.24	Opening of Schools	10
5.45.1	Operating Account	16
5.14	Parent-Teacher Organization	6
5.18	Per Student Assessment	7
5.09	Principals' In-Service	5
5.41.2	Private Passenger Vehicles	15
5.08	Professional Organizations	5
5.19.4	Record Retention	8
5.29	Safety	11
5.19	School Records	7
5.17	School Reports to the Office of Catholic Schools	7
5.43	School Zone Wireless Telephone Use	16
5.20.2	Scoliosis Screening	9
5.39	Solicitors	13
5.10	Staff Development	5
5.30	Student Accidents/Injuries	12
5.12	Student Attendance	6
5.06	Student Handbook	4
5.19.1	Student Health Records	7
5.19.2	Student Permanent Records	7
5.28	Student Supervision	11
5.20.5	Students with Medically Complex Conditions	9
5.11	Teacher Code of Ethics	5
5.29.2	Tornado Drills	12
5.22	Transfer Students	10

## 5.00 ADMINISTRATION

5.32	Trespassing	13
5.20.3	Vision and Hearing Screening	9
5.35	Visitors/Parent(s) and/or Guardian(s)	13
5.26	Withdrawal of Religious Staff from a School	11
5.23	Withdrawal of Students	10

## **5.01 ADMINISTRATOR**

As the school's spiritual leader under the direction of the pastor, the principal must be able to maintain and strengthen the school's Catholic identity, practice, culture, and faith formation of students and staff.

The principal will ensure that all policies and procedures of the *Diocesan Manual of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools* are followed.

## **5.02 ARKANSAS LAWS PERTAINING TO PRIVATE EDUCATION**

All schools shall abide by the Arkansas laws pertaining to private education. The laws can be found on the Arkansas Non-Public School Accrediting Association (ANSAA) website.

## **5.03 DIOCESAN MANUAL OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

*The Diocesan Manual of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools* will govern all parochial and Diocesan schools in the Diocese of Little Rock.

- Copies of the policy manual are available through the Diocese of Little Rock Catholic Schools Office website.
- Pastors, principals, teachers, and school boards will be familiar with the sections pertaining to their areas of responsibility.
- Sections of the manual will be used for staff development throughout the school year.

## **5.04 CALENDAR**

The Office of Catholic Schools provides a school calendar which includes the required number of days established by the Arkansas Department of Education and Arkansas Non-Public Schools Accrediting Association (ANSAA). Any changes to a school's calendar must be approved by the superintendent.

## **5.05 FACULTY HANDBOOK**

All schools shall have a handbook for the faculty and staff containing the policies and procedures that pertain to them. The faculty and staff must sign a form to indicate that they have received, read, and agree to abide by the policies contained in the school's faculty handbook.

## **5.06 STUDENT HANDBOOK**

All schools shall have a handbook for students and parent(s) and/or guardian(s) containing the school's policies.

Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) and students must sign a form to indicate that they have received, read, and agree to abide by the policies contained in the school's student handbook.

## **5.07 CURRICULUM AND TEXTBOOKS**

All elementary schools in the Diocese of Little Rock will utilize the *In Spirit and Truth* curriculum guide using textbooks approved by the Office of Catholic Schools.

High schools will follow the Arkansas Department of Education's graduation course requirements.

All religion books used in the Catholic schools must be included in the Conformity Listing of Catechetical Texts and Series found on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) website.

## **5.08 PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Schools are encouraged to join professional organizations and subscribe to professional journals.

### **5.08.1 National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA)**

It is highly recommended by the Office of Catholic Schools that the schools in the Diocese have a membership with NCEA.

### **5.08.2 Arkansas Non-Public School Accrediting Association (ANSAA)**

The Office of Catholic Schools requires that the schools in the Diocese have an accredited or associate membership with ANSAA.

## **5.09 PRINCIPALS' IN-SERVICE**

The Office of Catholic Schools will provide support to the school administrators.

- All principals are required to attend the principals' retreat prior to the beginning of the school year, the Annual Catholic Schools Professional Day, and a mid-year in-service conducted by the Office of Catholic Schools.
- The Office of Catholic Schools will keep the principals informed of current professional information.

## **5.10 STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

- All new employees must attend an orientation.
- School administrators will schedule and offer staff development for their employees as needed and designated by the teacher's contract and Diocesan policy.
- All teachers will participate in the Annual Catholic Schools Professional Day provided by the Office of Catholic Schools.
- A record of an employee's professional development hours should be kept in the employee's personnel file.
- It is the employee's responsibility to submit his/her hours of professional development to the principal.

## **5.11 TEACHER CODE OF ETHICS**

All teachers holding a current Arkansas teacher's license are required to view the Code of Ethics PowerPoint presentation found on the Arkansas Department of Education website.

## 5.12 STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Students must attend school punctually and regularly and conform to the attendance policies established by the school. When students arrive late or depart before the close of the school day, they should report to the school office where a written record is to be kept including date, time, and reason for being tardy or departing early. Accurate records of student attendance must be kept and retained permanently.

## 5.13 LOCAL CONSULTATIVE SCHOOL BOARD

Each parochial and Diocesan school in the Diocese of Little Rock will have a consultative school board in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the *Diocesan Manual of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools*.

## 5.14 PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The Office of Catholic Schools recommends that each parochial and Diocesan school establish a parent-teacher organization. This organization will function in accordance with the following Diocesan regulations:

- Membership in the parent-teacher organization will consist of the pastor, principal, and parents and/or guardians of the students.
- Each organization will follow the constitution and bylaws based on guidelines furnished by the Office of Catholic Schools.
- Program needs will be determined based on the needs of the school as outlined by the principal, school board, and long-range plans. The principal and/or pastor have final approval of all programs and fundraising.

## 5.15 ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

Any athletic program or athletic support group must have explicit approval of the pastor and be under the direct supervision of the principal.

- A qualified person will be engaged to direct the athletic program.
- All adults (volunteers and employees) working with the students in the athletic program must complete the *VIRTUS Protecting God's Children For Adults* training, complete a background check, register and be current on VIRTUS Online, sign the Diocese of Little Rock Policy Statement on the Sexual Abuse of Minors, and sign the Laity Code of Conduct.
- The Diocesan Parent Permission Form must be completed and signed by a parent and/or guardian before a student is allowed to participate in competitive sports.
- A yearly physical examination or written statement from a licensed health care provider will be required before a student is allowed to participate in competitive sports.
- Adequate and safe equipment will be available and used for athletic activities.
- Competitive athletic activities on the secondary level will be conducted by a qualified coach and will conform to the regulations of the Arkansas Activities Association.
- Any elementary or secondary school with a cheerleading program must have a qualified person to supervise. All cheerleading programs must follow the rules and regulations from the National Cheerleading Association.

- In accordance with the fiscal responsibility mandated by Canon Law, booster clubs and other school organizations will practice good stewardship in the reporting and expenditures of funds and follow the guidelines in the *Diocesan Manual of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools*.

Schools may have other requirements for students to be allowed to participate in athletic programs and for parent(s) and/or guardian(s) to work with the students.

#### **5.16 BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL AND SUMMER CHILD CARE PROGRAMS**

The Office of Catholic Schools requires that all before and after school and summer child care programs be licensed and registered with the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education at the Department of Human Services.

#### **5.17 SCHOOL REPORTS TO THE OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

The principal is responsible for providing all information and reports that are required to the Office of Catholic Schools on or before September 15<sup>th</sup> of each school year including:

- NCEA Standard School Survey Form
- Annual Diocesan Report Forms and Teacher Licenses
- School Budget

#### **5.18 PER STUDENT ASSESSMENT**

Each Catholic school in the Diocese of Little Rock shall remit to the Diocesan Office of Finance the per student assessment for all students that is established annually by the Office of Catholic Schools in consultation with the Diocesan Board of Education.

#### **5.19 SCHOOL RECORDS**

Each school shall maintain records essential to effective school administration. These records will be available to the superintendent upon request.

##### **5.19.1 Student Health Records**

All schools are required to use the uniform Arkansas Immunization Health Record available from the Office of Catholic Schools to record immunizations and other health records for each student. The health records will transfer with the student if he/she transfers to another school.

##### **5.19.2 Student Permanent Records**

Schools are to maintain a cumulative permanent record for each student, including attendance, grades, standardized test results, and years that he/she attended the school. These records must be kept in a fireproof storage unit and never destroyed.

### **5.19.3 Employee Personnel File**

A personnel file for each employee will be kept in the school office. The file will include:

- Application
- Resume
- Reference documentation
- Job description
- Years of service (include all places where employee has worked)
- Timesheets for non-exempt employees
- Signed and dated evaluations/assessments and growth plans for current and past years
- Education verification (teaching licensure, college transcripts, etc.)
- Current contract or Summary of Employment
- Documentation that background check has been sent to Diocese of Little Rock
- Copy of state employee withholding tax form
- Copy of federal employee withholding tax form
- Copy of insurance enrollment forms
- Signed copy of acknowledgement of Sexual Abuse of Minors Policy form
- Signed copy of acknowledgement of Sexual Misconduct with Adults Policy form
- Catechist certification (if applicable)
- Record of in-service hours
- Deficiency removal plan (if applicable)
- Employee emergency contact form
- Employee change of benefit form (completed when person leaves)

Items to be kept in a separate file on each employee (if applicable):

- I-9 form
- Investigative records: discrimination complaint information, legal case data, accusations of policy/legal violation
- Security clearance investigation records: background investigation information, personal credit history, personal criminal or arrest records
- Workers' compensation forms and documents
- Medical records: physician records of examination, including drug screening and anything listed in HIPAA guidelines

### **5.19.4 Record Retention**

The record retention guidelines from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) will be used in determining the length of time for retaining specific records. If questions arise regarding record related issues contact the Office of Catholic Schools.

## **5.20 HEALTH**

### **5.20.1 Communicable Diseases**

Should a faculty member or student be suspected or confirmed of having a communicable disease as defined in the Arkansas Department of Health Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Reportable Disease, it should immediately be reported to the Arkansas Department of Health.



Designated school personnel will notify other parents and/or guardians and faculty only if necessary to contain the disease.

### **5.20.2 Scoliosis Screening**

All schools shall institute a continuing scoliosis screening program to be conducted in accordance with regulations promulgated by the State Board of Health. Screeners should be licensed physicians or individuals trained by a certified scoliosis instructor. (Ark. Code Ann. §20-15-802)

Girls in the sixth and boys and girls in the eighth grade shall receive a scoliosis screening each year.

Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) must complete and sign the scoliosis screening permission form.

### **5.20.3 Vision and Hearing Screening**

All schools are to institute a vision and hearing screening program for students. Qualified volunteers may be used to conduct this annual program. It is recommended that students in grades kindergarten, first, third, fifth, and seventh be screened for vision and hearing problems. The results of the screening are to be recorded on the student's health record. Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) are to be notified in writing if further evaluation is needed by a physician.

### **5.20.4 Height and Weight**

It is recommended that the height and weight of students in grades kindergarten, first, third, fifth, and seventh be recorded on the student's health card.

### **5.20.5 Students with Medically Complex Conditions**

Schools accepting students with a medically complex condition, defined as "a health condition that can put the child in danger of death during the school day or that requires close monitoring," will work with the family of the student and the health care professional to devise a plan of support.

This plan should include medications, medical supplies, and alternate foods, if necessary, to meet the student's needs. This individual health care plan must be developed, signed in collaboration with the student's parent(s) and/or guardian(s) and a health care professional, acceptable to the school, and within the resources of the school to provide. The plan shall be kept on file and updated annually.

## **5.21 CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS**

A student's records are confidential and will be open only to professional staff, the student if he/she has attained the age of eighteen (18), or the student's parent(s) and/or guardian(s) at a time mutually agreed upon with the principal.

- Both custodial and non-custodial parents may inspect their child's school records in the presence of the principal or designee, unless there is a court order or decree presented restraining a parent from such contact.

- Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) may sign a release to have student records forwarded to another school.
- Upon request, parent(s) and/or guardian(s) may be given a copy of the student's records to carry to another school.
- High school graduates' completed scholastic records will be mailed or emailed to his/her designated colleges.

## **5.22 TRANSFER STUDENTS**

- Permanent record/transcripts and immunization records are required for admission of transfer students. If records have not been received within thirty (30) days after accepting a transfer student, the school may dismiss the student.
- Students accepted are on probation, both academically and socially.
- Students transferring to secondary schools and participating in sports must follow the guidelines set forth by the Arkansas Activities Association (AAA).
- Permanent records and high school transcripts may be withheld by the principal in the event a student has not completed the withdrawal process and cleared financial accounts. Each school should have a policy regarding collection of unpaid fees and tuition in its student handbook.
- Schools will forward a student's educational records to other educational institutions that have requested records, provided all financial accounts have been cleared.

## **5.23 WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENTS**

All schools, public and private, must notify the Department of Finance and Administration when a student fourteen (14) years of age or older is no longer in school. (Ark. Code Ann. § 6-18-22)

## **5.24 OPENING OF SCHOOLS**

An elementary or secondary school, or any grade thereof, may be opened only with the expressed written permission of the Bishop of Little Rock.

- The discussion of opening a school or grade may be initiated on a parish or a Diocesan level.
- When initiated on a parish level, the request must be made in writing to the superintendent of schools, who will submit it to the Bishop along with recommendations.
- Preliminary studies will be conducted before any request is submitted.
- The decision to open will be announced no later than January of the current school year.

## **5.25 DISCONTINUANCE OF SCHOOLS**

An elementary or secondary school, or any grade level thereof, may be discontinued only with the expressed permission of the Bishop of Little Rock.

- The discussion of discontinuing a school or grade level may be initiated on a parish or Diocesan level.
- When initiated on a parish level, the request must be made in writing to the superintendent of schools, who will submit it to the Bishop along with recommendations.
- Preliminary studies will be conducted before any request is submitted.

- The decision to discontinue a grade or a school will be announced no later than February of the current school year unless there are extenuating circumstances.

### **5.26 WITHDRAWAL OF RELIGIOUS STAFF FROM A SCHOOL**

A religious community, after serious deliberations, finding it necessary to withdraw from a Diocesan or parish school or from a community-owned school, will make this decision known to the Bishop and the superintendent of schools.

- The announcement will be considered official only when it comes from the religious superior of the community.
- The religious superior shall notify the pastor and the school board at least one year prior to such withdrawal.
- Before withdrawing from the school, the religious community will cooperate with the pastor and school board to prepare for transfer of leadership of the school.

### **5.27 FLAG REGULATIONS**

It shall be the duty of the school authorities of every school, public or private, in the state to procure a suitable United States flag, flag staff, and the necessary appliances thereto, and to request that such flag be displayed with the proper courtesy upon, near or in the school buildings during the hours of session and at such other times as the said school authorities may direct. (Ark. Code Ann. §6-16-106)

### **5.28 STUDENT SUPERVISION**

The principal will inform the staff about the responsibility of supervising the students both within the classroom and outside the classroom. The fact that supervision is both mental (the person has to be paying attention to the students) and physical (the person is bodily present) should be stressed.

Rules and procedures should be in place for students to follow in the absence of the supervising staff.

### **5.29 SAFETY**

Proper measures will be taken to ensure the maximum protection of the personnel and students against all types of injuries which could occur in the school or on any part of the school property.

- Schools must submit the Annual Safety Inspection Report to the Office of Catholic Schools.
- First-aid supplies will be available in the school.
- Janitorial and other hazardous supplies must be stored in suitable areas.
- Regular checks for fire hazards will be made and any threats should be removed.
- Fire extinguishers and other means of fire control will be accessible and kept in working order.
- All exits will be noted with illuminated exit signs and exit doors will be equipped with crash bars.
- Evacuation plans are to be posted in each room near exit doors.
- Schools need to have all personnel and parent(s) and/or guardian(s) complete a form which includes emergency medical care information.

- Schools should establish a means of documenting, investigating, and reviewing accidents and injuries to help correct safety hazards and evaluate current safety practices and improve them, if necessary.
- Schools that serve lunches must have a current Food Establishment Permit from the Arkansas Department of Health.

#### **5.29.1 Fire Drills**

According to state law, all schools are to conduct one fire drill each month. (Ark. Code Ann. §6-10-110) The results of the fire drills are to be recorded and a copy of the results must be forwarded to the Office of Catholic Schools at the end of each school year.

#### **5.29.2 Tornado Drills**

Each school will conduct at least two tornado drills during the school year. Safe shelter areas should be designated on the ground floor and away from windows, if possible. The results of the drills are to be recorded and included in the fire drill record that is forwarded to the Office of Catholic Schools.

#### **5.29.3 Crisis and Response Plan**

Each school will develop a crisis and response plan for emergencies that might arise, including but not limited to fire, earthquake, tornado, intruder, abduction, and gas leak. Procedures for these emergencies should be reviewed and practiced on a regular basis.

In the event of a crisis, the principal will inform the Office of Catholic Schools and/or the Diocesan Chancellor for Administrative Affairs.

### **5.30 STUDENT ACCIDENTS/INJURIES**

Schools should establish a means to provide for basic first aid for students and staff who are injured during school hours.

All student accidents or injuries must be documented and reported to the parent(s) and/or guardian(s). Documentation must be kept on file. When communicating with the parent(s) and/or guardian(s), the schools are not to admit liability or make promises regarding payment of any medical bills.

If warranted, emergency personnel are contacted. If a child is transported to a hospital or other medical facility and a parent and/ or guardian cannot be reached, a member of the school staff must accompany the child until a parent and/or guardian arrives.

### **5.31 LICENSED CHILD CARE FACILITIES**

All licensed child care facilities are required to file a copy of the child care facility's floor plan with local offices of emergency management or inter-jurisdictional offices of emergency management. (Act 1159)

### **5.32 TRESPASSING**

Persons disturbing private schools by their conduct or trespassing on school grounds during recess or while school is in session are guilty of a misdemeanor. (Ark. Code Ann. § 6-21-606)

### **5.33 LOITERING**

Strangers are not permitted to loiter in or near a school building. A law enforcement officer should be called if a person persists after being asked to leave. A person commits the offense of loitering if he/she: lingers, remains, or prowls in or near a school building not having any reason or permission from anyone authorized to grant the same. (Ark. Code Ann. § 5-71-213, 6-21-607 and 6-21-606) Persons loitering on or near private school grounds during school hours or at any school-sponsored activities after regular school hours without any lawful purpose are guilty of a misdemeanor.

### **5.34 DRUG-FREE AND SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE**

All school buildings and campuses are declared drug-free and smoke-free. Appropriate action will be taken against anyone who violates this policy.

### **5.35 VISITORS/PARENT(S) AND/OR GUARDIAN(S)**

All visitors including parent(s) and/or guardian(s) are to sign in at the school office when entering the building for any purpose and sign out upon departure. Any visitor or parent and/or guardian wishing to observe a classroom must have approval from the principal prior to arriving at school for the visit.

### **5.36 NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

- It is required that the custodial parent provides the school with an official, updated copy of the court-ordered parenting and visiting rights plan to file in the office.
- Non-custodial parents are not to use the school as a meeting place to visit with their child(ren). The school will follow the rights for the non-custodial parent(s) that are outlined in the court order.
- If a school has on record a court order indicating that one parent has limited visitation rights or no visitation rights, and such parent makes application to volunteer in the school, the principal need not accept the volunteer services of that parent. If the principal determines that such parent is volunteering in order to increase contact with the child(ren), the principal should notify the custodial parent and have him/her settle the issue.
- The superintendent will assist principals and teachers as needed with child custody disputes.

### **5.37 CHILD ABUSE INVESTIGATIONS**

Law enforcement officials shall be allowed access to public and private school records during the course of a child abuse investigation. School officials cannot deny them access to a student's records. (Ark. Code Ann. §12-12-508)

### **5.38 COLLECTIONS AND FUNDRAISING**

Collections and fundraising must be authorized by the pastor and/or principal.

### **5.39 SOLICITORS**

No one is allowed in the school building or on the school property to solicit or request signatures for a petition unless authorized by the pastor and/or principal.

### **5.40 ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE PROCEDURES**

Schools should develop and implement a policy for safe arrival and departure procedures, including when students are supervised. These procedures should be evaluated and improved as needed.

### **5.41 FIELD TRIP AND OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES**

#### **5.41.1 Field Trip Purpose and Procedures**

- The principal is responsible for the coordination of all activities of the school, including student activities outside the school building or school day. If delegated, it should be clearly stated who responsibility is given for the event.
- The principal is responsible for establishing clearly defined procedures for collection and use of field trip funds. All funds must be deposited in the parish/school account.
- The principal must approve any school-sponsored activities. These activities must have a clear purpose, be carefully planned, and be well supervised by certified staff. For such activities, all the areas of responsibility should be clearly defined.
- The principal must ensure that adequate supervision is provided by at least one certified faculty member for all school-sponsored activities and field trips. In elementary schools, a ratio of not less than one adult for each group of 5 to 8 children should be arranged. The guideline is, the younger the students the greater the need for supervision.
- A field trip must have the enrichment of the curriculum as its core purpose and must be carefully planned as an extension of the classroom experience.
- The principal, as the responsible school administrator, must follow the established transportation policy, have drivers complete the Field Trip Driver Information Sheet, and keep these documents on file in the school office.
- Permission slips should be retained for one year after the trip. If a chartered bus is used for transportation, principals must keep a copy of the signed contract on file in the school office.
- Verbal permission to travel on a field trip is not permitted. Permission must be written on the field trip permission form required and approved by the Diocese. Completed permission slips received by fax or scanned email document are acceptable.
- The principal always reserves the right to exclude a student from participation in a field trip.
- The only children allowed to attend a field trip are those for which the field trip is planned.
- Further procedures to be observed when sponsoring field trips are available from the Office of Catholic Schools.

- All policies regarding VIRTUS, including background checks, Medical Release Form and Laity Code of Conduct, apply to attending adults.

The following forms must be retained in the school office:

- Field Trip Request Form
- Driver Information Form
- Original Parent/Guardian Liability Waiver and Consent Form
- Original Volunteer Medical Release Form

Copies of the following forms to be taken on the field trip include:

- Parent/Guardian Liability Waiver and Consent Form
- Volunteer Medical Release Form
- Incident Investigation Report Form

#### **5.41.2 Private Passenger Vehicles**

The following requirements must be met for all field trips and other school-sponsored events involving vehicles that are privately-owned and driven:

- The driver must be at least 21 years old.
- The driver must have a valid, non-probationary driver's license and no physical disability that could in any way impair his/her ability to drive the vehicle safely.
- The vehicle must have a valid and current registration and valid and current license plate.
- The vehicle must be insured by the driver at the minimum limits required by the Diocesan liability insurance: \$100,000 per person/\$300,000 per occurrence.
- The Driver Liability Form must be signed by any adult that will be driving and a copy of proof of insurance and driver's license obtained by the school.
- Students must wear seat belts at all times.
- Students under 6 years and/or 60 pounds must be strapped into approved booster seats.
- Teachers should not be drivers for field trips.

### **5.42 BUSES**

Prior to a school purchasing a bus, the principal shall consult with the Diocese of Little Rock concerning insurance.

#### **5.42.1 Bus Driver Certification**

A driver or operator of a school bus, either privately or publically owned, is required to pass a series of tests to determine physical fitness and driving ability. In addition, all school bus drivers will receive 24 hours of pre-in-service training and 3 hours of annual training in accordance with the regulations established by the Division of Public School Academic Facilities and Transportation. (Ark. Code Ann. §6-19-108)

#### **5.42.2 Bus Safety Equipment**

All buses operated by public or private schools must meet certain safety standards, including installation of a flashing white strobe light, a crossing gate, and appropriate mirrors. (Ark. Code Ann. §6-19-116 and 6-19-117)

**5.42.3 Bus Passengers**

All passengers are required to be seated while the school bus is in operation. (Ark. Code Ann. §6-19-119)

**5.42.4 Bus Safety**

- It is a Class B misdemeanor for anyone over the age of 18 to enter a school bus with criminal intent, disrupt the driver, or refuse to leave the bus. (Act-247)
- It is a Class A felony to possess a deadly weapon and seize control of a bus operated by a public or private school. (Ark. Code Ann. §5-11-107)
- It is against the law to possess a firearm on the property of any public or private school, on a school bus, or at a designated school bus stop. If a parent knows that a minor has possession of a firearm while at a public or private school-sponsored sporting event, the parent can be charged with a misdemeanor. (Ark. Code Ann. § 5-73-119)

**5.42.5 Child Safety Alarms**

All agencies or child care facilities licensed by the Department of Human Services (DHS) that transport children must have a child safety alarm device installed on vehicles designed or used to transport more than seven passengers and one driver. (Act 1979/SB 465)

**5.43 SCHOOL ZONE WIRELESS TELEPHONE USE**

A driver of a motor vehicle shall not use a handheld wireless telephone while operating a motor vehicle when passing a school building or school zone during school hours when children are present and outside the building, except for emergency purposes. (Ark. Code Ann. §27-51-1609)

**5.44 INTERNET, ELECTRONIC MAIL, AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

All schools will establish a policy for the use of the Internet, electronic mail, and social media for employees and students.

- Employees are required to sign the acceptable use form for employees.
- Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) are required to sign the acceptable use permission form.
- Students are required to sign the acceptable use form for students.

**5.45 FINANCES****5.45.1 Operating Account**

- School financial accounts should be kept separate from church finances so a full accounting can be determined on the cost of operating the school.
- A school, including all organizations that use the school's tax ID number, must maintain only one operating checking account.
- All schools must have a sound checks and balances process.



- Schools will utilize a software program with a chart of accounts to record all income and expenses. The program should allow the budgeted amount for each line item to be reported on the monthly financial statement.
- Separate accounting for any activity can be maintained by creating a sub-account of the main operating account in the school's financial program.
- Arkansas state law, requires that an entity must maintain a separate checking account for bingo and raffle activity. (Ark. Code Ann.§ 23-114-501)
- Capital campaign contributions, endowments, or other restricted gifts should be deposited into account separate from the operating account. Accounts for this purpose are available through the Diocesan Office of Finance which oversees the Parish Deposit and Loan Fund. If local accounts are used, adequate controls must be established for withdrawals from such accounts and all donor restrictions must be followed.
- The pastor must be a signatory on all school checking and investment accounts. At least one alternate signatory should be established and approved by the pastor. The alternate signatory should not have responsibility for preparing the checks or reconciling the accounts.
- The use of check signing machine or signature stamps is prohibited.

#### **5.45.2 Budget**

- Preparation of budgets should begin in January. In August, the budget should be reviewed and modified based on the current enrollment.
- The school board assists the principal in preparing the school budget and recommends tuition rates, fundraising, and parish subsidy.
- The parish subsidy request is presented to the pastor and the Parish Finance Council for approval.
- Final approval of the budget resides with the pastor.
- All schools will submit a budget to the Office of Catholic Schools with the annual reports in September. The budget should be balanced using realistic income and expense figures.
- In budgeting for scholarships, a third-party company will be used to assess student scholarship applications.

#### **5.45.3 Financial Reporting**

- A monthly financial report is to be presented at each school board meeting.
- A yearly financial report summarizing revenue and expenses is required by the Diocese and is part of the annual Parish Financial Report to the Diocesan Office of Finance. This report covers the fiscal year beginning July 1 and ending each June 30 and is due each year by September 1.

### **5.46 COMPLAINTS**

Any person feeling aggrieved concerning any matter connected with the school will contact the individual involved before discussing it with other patrons. School board members should not attempt to solve a problem, but should refer the aggrieved person to the appropriate person and contact the principal.

- If a person has a complaint about a teacher, the individual will go first to the teacher to seek a solution to the problem.
- If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, the person will contact the principal for an appointment.
- If the problem is still not resolved, the person will contact the pastor to discuss the matter.
- If no solution is found to the problem, the matter will be referred to the superintendent.