

INSTRUCTION: School Calendar

The annual term for a diocesan school consists of at least the following:

1. 174 instructional days in session;
2. A minimum of 1044 hours of instruction;
3. Three (3) scheduled instructional make-up days;
4. At least eight (8) in-service days for the faculty including diocesan sponsored days.

A minimum of 185 days are to be included in the school calendar. Local public school calendars should be a guide for determining days that school is in session, but they are not to be considered for final determinations.

Instructional time that extends significantly beyond the required six hours may not substitute for the required number of student attendance days but may be proposed as additional instructional "make-up" time for a small number of school days beyond the required three days.

INSTRUCTION: School Calendar

All Catholic School Office calendar dates must be incorporated into the local calendar, and a copy of the local calendar placed on the required diocesan calendar form and sent to the Catholic School Office.

INSTRUCTION: Length of School Day

The schedule of each school provides six hours of instruction per day. In compliance with the accreditation standards, time set aside for lunch and recess are in addition to these six hours. If any school is dismissed because of inclement weather after school has been in session for four or more hours, that day counts as a full day. If school has been in session for two hours or more, but less than four hours, that session counts as one-half day.

INSTRUCTION: Holy Days of Obligation

Holy Days of Obligation are to be observed and respected in a special way in Catholic schools. A Mass for the entire student body is to be celebrated during regular school hours on holy days. In addition, the day should be made special with special activities, observances, etc.

INSTRUCTION: Crisis Management Plan

Each school must have a Crisis Management Plan developed in consultation with local authorities. The school administrator/principal is responsible for the planning and execution of emergency procedures in the event of fire, tornado, earthquake, inclement weather, civil defense, violent acts, prison breaks, shootings, and/or other such emergency situations. To insure safety measures, the planning must include the following:

1. A warning system;
2. A place of safety to which students will be directed;
3. Practice drills at irregular intervals;
4. Adequate instruction of personnel;
5. Accounting for all students and personnel.

Nothing in the crisis management plan is to conflict with advice and direction provided by the Diocese of Jefferson City.

INSTRUCTION: Crisis Management Plan

A current copy of the Crisis Management Plan must be on file at the Catholic School Office.

The plan is to be updated annually and reviewed with the faculty and staff.

**INSTRUCTION: Fire, Earthquake, and Tornado Drills**

Fire, earthquake, and tornado drills are to be held regularly according to procedures specified by the local civil defense agency and fire department. Some of the duties included in the procedures may be delegated to another member of the faculty or to the custodian, but the school administrator/principal is ultimately responsible. If the locality has monthly testing of the tornado alert system, the school may consider correlating its drills with that testing.

INSTRUCTION: Bomb Threats

The health, safety, and well being of students and staff is always the primary concern. If a school receives a telephone or written bomb threat, the following procedures are recommended.

1. Evacuate the school, unless directed otherwise by local law officials.
2. Inform the police (or sheriff's) department and the superintendent of Catholic schools immediately.
3. Allow police authorities to direct the course of action.
4. School employees are not to be involved in the search for bombs, except to provide information.
5. Student conveyance of a false threat is grounds for suspension and/or expulsion.

Revised August 12, 2008

May 7, 2004

INSTRUCTION: Regulation of Behavior for Safety

School administrators/principals, teachers, or drivers to whom authority has been delegated, have a responsibility to the safety and welfare of pupils enrolled in their schools during the time pupils are en-route to or returning from school, while they are on the school premises, and/or during school sponsored events.

INSTRUCTION: Emergencies - Inclement Weather and the Closing of School

Catholic schools should work with the public school district's inclement weather procedures to determine their own policy. While schools may follow the local district's policy, it is not required to do so.

Processes and procedures should be clearly communicated to parents.

**INSTRUCTION: Philosophy, Mission, Goals and Objectives**

The educational mission of the church is an integrated ministry embracing four interlocking dimensions: message, community, service and worship. In addition to being a means for safeguarding faith and virtue, Catholic schools are an avenue through which parents and teachers collaborate in giving children a complete Catholic education. The doctrines and instructions of the Catholic Church are integral for Catholic school instruction. Catholic school programs strive to create a Christian environment within which students receive formal instruction and are also encouraged to observe and emulate in their personal lives the philosophy of Catholic education as exemplified by the professional and personal lives of their instructors.

The organizational plan for each school program should be one that fosters the achievement of the religious and academic goals, objectives, and programs of both the Diocese of Jefferson City and the school and considers the individual needs of the students, and incorporates the ecclesiastical teachings of the Catholic Church.

The school administrator/principal of each school shall ensure that the school has a current statement of the schools' educational mission statement where its objectives are reflected in a long-range plan. The statements must be based on the following:

1. They must reflect the diocesan statement of educational mission (no school statement, policy, or regulation may contradict these diocesan policies).
2. They must be developed by representatives of the faculty, clergy, school board, parents, and students.
3. They must influence all aspects of the school - spirituality, personnel, curriculum, evaluation, self-discipline, etc.
4. They must be annually reviewed and evaluated, with revision, if needed.
5. They must be utilized when recruiting and interviewing potential teachers and students.
6. They must be made known to the parish community in appropriate ways.

A brief description of each statement follows:

The statement of the school's educational mission includes the most important elements of the school's philosophy of education (what the school community believes about Catholic education) and the school's mission (what this particular school is called to be and do).

Objectives are specific means to reach stated goals. Following its regular self-study, every school formulates specific objectives to address any unmet criteria, to further implement the school's educational mission, and to effect any other desired improvements.

**INSTRUCTION: Local Curriculum Development**

Development of the curriculum in accord with the diocesan curriculum guidelines, including selection and adaptation of instructional materials, is the responsibility of the school administrator/principal and faculty. These decisions consider students needs, the school's organizational pattern, faculty strengths, ratings of diocesan review committees, national and state standards, and available educational research. Special attention is given to integrating Gospel values and principles of Catholicity wherever appropriate throughout the curriculum.

Diocesan curriculum guidelines are to be made available to each teacher. Mastery of identified objectives at each grade level insures a sound instructional progression.

The school administrator/principal and faculty evaluate the curriculum yearly to determine whether it is helping to achieve its stated educational mission and objectives. Annual plans are designed to address curriculum concerns or standardized test data. If, after study and discussion, a faculty should wish to depart significantly from the diocesan curriculum guidelines, a prospectus of the curricular adaptation is to be sent to the associate superintendent with a request for review and approval.

INSTRUCTION: Religious Instruction

Guidelines, including texts and resource selections, for the religious education program should be in accordance with established diocesan policy religious education guidelines. (cf: A Catechetical Manual for Catholic Schools.)

**INSTRUCTION: Education in Human Sexuality and Teaching Touching Safety**

All religious education programs in the diocese, including school programs, incorporate some form of education in human sexuality. A local group studies the diocesan guidelines, decides the approach that is best for the students, then implements a suitable program according to the guidelines.

In addition to a program on human sexuality, each school is to provide instruction in grades k – 12 for at least a period a year on Teaching Touching Safety, and using the program required by the diocese or approved by the review administrator. All parents are to have the option of choosing that their children not attend the program. Schools are required to distribute to all parents of children in their schools a copy of the parent guide “Protecting God’s Children Teaching Touching Safety” developed by VIRTUS. An annual report is to be given to the diocesan review administrator (assistant to the chancellor) indicating that the instruction has been completed.

Revised August 12, 2008

May 7, 2004

INSTRUCTION: Substance Education

Schools are to establish and implement a substance education program that is within the context of a holistic wellness program. All students are given the opportunity to learn about the sacredness of body and mind, and their decision-making abilities and responsibilities. Against this background, they study substances, their impact on persons and society, and their own responsibilities in deciding use or non-use of substances with corresponding consequences.

INSTRUCTION: Instructional Time

Diocesan schools use a variety of learning models and school organizational patterns. Although suggested time guidelines are included in Appendix #6220, it is neither possible nor advisable to have a uniform pattern for time distribution in every diocesan school. For that reason, every school is to develop classroom time schedules compatible with its organizational pattern. Where appropriate, areas may be combined; e.g., science and health. The schedule is prominently displayed in every classroom. The time distribution schedule demonstrates the educational priorities of the school and needs of the students.

Kindergarten students may have either half- or full-day classes. Where transportation is not available for half-day students, schools may develop alternate plans such as a kindergarten session of three full days per week.

Teachers are to meet frequently with the school administrator/principal and with one another to evaluate the effectiveness of the time distribution and to examine possible revisions.

INSTRUCTION: Class Size

Maximum class size should not exceed thirty (30) students. In areas where the majority of students have learning difficulties or are in preschool, kindergarten, primary classes, or double-graded classes, it is recommended that the maximum class size not exceed twenty (20) students. When implementing any related school policy, the school administrator/principal considers the many factors that affect class size: teacher experience and expertise, student ability, size of classroom, available assistance, etc.

INSTRUCTION: Learning Materials

A variety of learning materials is to be available to faculty and students. The selection of textbooks, learning materials, and equipment, is done jointly by the school administrator/principal and faculty members. Guidelines for the selection are the school's objectives and organizational pattern, the needs of the individual students, the financial resources of the school, and the directives from the diocesan school office.

To assist faculties in their selections, the Catholic School Office issues annotated lists of approved textbooks. If a faculty should have reason to use books which are not on this list, they must consult with and request approval from the associate superintendent.

Textbooks, workbooks, review books, and prepared notes may be helpful tools for teaching, but can never substitute for teachers' instruction, which is planned to meet the individual needs of their students.

INSTRUCTION: Courses in Constitutions of the United States and Missouri

170.011. 1. Regular courses of instruction in the Constitution of the United States and of the state of Missouri and in American history and institutions shall be given in all public and private schools in the state of Missouri, except privately operated trade schools, and shall begin not later than the seventh grade and continue in high school to an extent determined by the state commissioner of education, and shall continue in college and university courses to an extent determined by the state commissioner of higher education. In the 1990-91 school year and each year thereafter, local school districts maintaining high schools shall comply with the provisions of this section by offering in grade nine, ten, eleven, or twelve a course of instruction in the institutions, branches and functions of the government of the state of Missouri, including local governments, and of the government of the United States, and in the electoral process. A local school district maintaining such a high school shall require that prior to the completion of the twelfth grade each pupil, who receives a high school diploma or certificate of graduation on or after January 1, 1994, shall satisfactorily complete such a course of study. Such course shall be of at least one semester in length and may be two semesters in length. The department of elementary and secondary education may provide assistance in developing such a course if the district requests assistance.

INSTRUCTION: Changes in Organizational Pattern

Any major change in class or school organization may be undertaken only after appropriate study, consultation with, and approval of, the superintendent of Catholic schools, and then adequate in-service training of the faculty, and effective communication with the parents and students.

Revised August 12, 2008

May 7, 2004

INSTRUCTION: Non-Catholic Student Participation

Non-Catholic students enrolled in a Catholic school are required to participate to the same extent in all school activities (both curricular and extra-curricular) and courses of study as Catholic students, provided such activity is permitted by Catholic Church law.

INSTRUCTION: Homework Assignments

Home assignments are to be educationally sound - applying previously learned material, correlating past and present learning, and promoting supplementary reading. Departmental structures will require some coordination of assignments to balance them with time for completion. Assignments which may require specialized resources or in any way disrupt the home are to be avoided; those which help develop family communication are encouraged. The local school can consider a policy which limits regular homework to weeknights, leaving weekends free for family activities.

INSTRUCTION: Educational Outings, Field Trips, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Trips

Field trips and outings are to be learning experiences; they are also privileges. Each teacher or moderator, in advance, explains to the school administrator/principal the proposed field trip, including student preparation, plans for supervision and transportation, and student follow-up activities. If approved, the teacher follows the local procedures for the distribution and return of the field trip forms with parental signatures.

A school may, but is not required to, sponsor an end of year 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip. If it does, then the school must be ultimately responsible for the planning and implementation, including the assigning of chaperones and the establishment of rules. In addition, school personnel must be on the trip. If the school does not sponsor the trip, then DSP 6306 is to be followed, in which case the school must isolate itself from the planning, distribution of any information, and fundraising. If any fundraising is done, then the school name is not to be used. The school tax identification number is not to be used in any way for this trip, and any contracts are not to use the school name.

Revised August 12, 2008

May 7, 2004

INSTRUCTION: Educational Outings, Field Trips, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Trips

All field trips and outings must be pre-approved by the local school administrator/principal. The written consent of parents must be obtained for every child participating in a field trip or outing. The consent is to include the basic information on the trip, such as where they are going, times, chaperones and mode of transportation.

No student may participate unless a signed parental permission slip for the specific event is on file with the school administrator/principal. The Diocese of Jefferson City sample Field Trip Permission Slip is included in Appendix #6301.

Revised August 12, 2008

May 7, 2004

**INSTRUCTION: Chaperones and Drivers for Field Trips [Educational Outings]**

An adequate number of responsible adult chaperones are to accompany the students. Ordinarily at least one adult will accompany every five students in the lower grades and every 10 in the upper grades - but some situations or younger students may require more. Trips involving a great deal of travel should be discouraged.

Transportation for field trips shall be provided by licensed public carrier or by insured private vehicles. Bus drivers must have a valid commercial drivers license and a valid school bus status. Drivers of private vehicles must be either a parent or guardian and at least 25 years of age. The school does not carry insurance to cover the use of private cars. Therefore, parent volunteer drivers and teachers/school personnel who use their own cars are to furnish proof of insurance and proof of a valid driver's license prior to departure on the field trip. Appendix #6305 provides a form that must be completed by anyone providing transportation for a school-sponsored event.

INSTRUCTION: Chaperones and Drivers for Field Trips [Educational Outings]

All regular chaperones and drivers must complete the Protecting God's Children program.

INSTRUCTION: Non-School Sponsored Trips

School employees, as employees, shall not participate in, organize, or assume any responsibilities for student activities that are not school sponsored. Non-school sponsored activities, fund-raising activities, etc., are not to use the school name.

For such trips, neither students nor parents are covered under diocesan liability.

INSTRUCTION: School Visitors

Each school should safeguard that only authorized persons enter the school.

INSTRUCTION: School Visitors

Every Catholic school is to have written procedures regarding visitors, including parents, to the school and include these procedures in staff, parent, and student handbooks.

These written procedures are to direct that persons first report to the school office or school administrator.

Teachers shall be informed of approved visitors to the school other than parents.

Teachers are to refer any unrecognized or unauthorized persons to the office immediately and should notify the office immediately of their presence.

A sign in the main entrance of the school should direct persons to immediately report to the school office. Also, the sign is to indicate where the main office is located.

INSTRUCTION: Assemblies

Because of the broad scope of opportunities they provide, assemblies are recommended as a regular part of the school program. Scheduling and planning assemblies is done early in the year by a representative group, including the students as much as possible.

INSTRUCTION: Flag Display

When a school is in session, the American flag is to be on display outside the building, weather permitting. The flag is raised before the morning session begins and taken down at the close of the school day.

Related observances are determined locally:

1. Display of the American flag in each classroom;
2. Flying the Missouri flag (on the same pole immediately below the American flag);
3. Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

INSTRUCTION: Speakers, Outside Programs, AV Materials (including Movies and Videos), and Literature

All outside speakers, programs, AV material and literature used in the school are to have the prior approval of the school administrator. Care should be taken to see that movies, videos, and literature are appropriate for the grade level and age of the student, and the values of Catholic schools.

The USCC movie-rating guide is to be followed for all movies and videos shown in schools or viewed by students in another location or those recommended by school personnel. If the rating of a movie or video cannot be found, the Catholic School Office should be called to find out the rating. For purposes of classification, an adult is considered to be 18 years and older.

INSTRUCTION: Diocesan Schools Technology Committee

The Diocesan Schools Technology Committee (DSTC) is set up to share responsibility for empowering administrators, teachers, and students to become self-directed, continuous learners, and ethical, responsible citizens prepared to meet the increasing challenges of a global, technological society.

INSTRUCTION: Student Internet, E-mail and Other Technology Use

All schools allowing students to have access to the Internet, e-mail and other technology are to have a written policy regarding usage in their student and parent handbooks. This policy is to include at least the following:

1. Internet, e-mail and other technology access and use in school is a privilege, not a right.
2. The use is always to be consistent with Catholic teaching, doctrine, morality and values.
3. Users shall not use the Internet, e-mail or other technology for the purpose of transmitting or receiving illegal, illicit or obscene materials, or other materials in conflict with our Christian mission.
4. Users shall not use the Internet, e-mail or other technology for the purpose of violating copyright law. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted software, text, graphics or music. Such action will be considered theft and is in violation of Christian and legal standards.
5. Users shall not use the Internet, e-mail or other technology for the purpose of plagiarism.
6. Users shall not attempt to gain access to resources belonging to others. This includes, but is not limited to: passwords, e-mail, personal files, and restricted or secure Internet sites. This will also be considered theft and in violation of Christian and legal standards.
7. Users shall not use the Internet, e-mail or other technology to transmit information about the school or the school-governed facilities, other than their own e-mail address. This includes, but is not limited to school personnel names and addresses.
8. The school reserves the right to review any materials (e-mail, files, other correspondence) sent or received via the Internet, e-mail or other technology for their appropriateness in light of legal, ethical and Christian standards.
9. Any violation of this policy is also considered a violation of the general school discipline code and is subject to school disciplinary action.
10. The privilege of the Internet, e-mail or other technology use can be suspended or revoked at any time.

In addition to the above, the school and/or diocese can take disciplinary action against any student who, either within or outside school hours and/or on or off school grounds, uses technology to defame, bully, or assault the character or being of the school, diocese, any of its employees and/or students. This includes any such negative postings, verbal or pictorial, on such websites as *MySpace*, *Facebook*, *YouTube*, etc. This includes any activity that would violate DSP 5305, Catholic Faith and Moral Standard.

Revised August 12, 2008  
Revised August 9, 2007

May 7, 2004

**INSTRUCTION: School Library and Resource Center**

Every school is to maintain an instructional materials center. The school normally is consistent with the American Library Association standards in its collection of books, periodicals, audio-visual materials and other necessary equipment. The book and periodical collection is available to students throughout the school day.

Audio-visual materials and equipment should be available for classroom loan. A member of the staff or a designated volunteer should have the responsibility of cataloging materials and for the operation of an effective system of distribution return, and proper maintenance. Whenever possible, a professional school librarian should take care of the center with the aid of paraprofessionals or volunteers.

The instructional materials center should also contain enrichment materials appropriate to the curricular needs of the local school. A section of the school library is usually reserved as a teacher reference section.

All materials are to be consistent with Catholic principles.

INSTRUCTION: Research and Observation

Written permission from the parents/guardians and the superintendent of Catholic schools as well as approval of the school administrator/principal is required before any faculty member may provide student data to or allow observation of students by anyone conducting research, or for videotaping students for purposes of improving instruction.

INSTRUCTION: Standardized Testing

All schools are to participate in the fall in the diocesan standardized testing of students' cognitive ability and academic achievement in grades 2-8, maintain testing records of classes and individual students in each subject area tested, and apply the findings to instructional planning and priorities. Parents and students are to be apprised of testing results, with appropriate explanations and printed student profiles. Standardized testing for kindergarten is not recommended. Schools may test students in other grades and at other times of the year at their option.

All elementary schools are also to participate in the Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education (ACRE) in grades five and eight and apply the findings to instructional planning and priorities.

Revised August 12, 2005

May 7, 2004

INSTRUCTION: Readiness Testing

Prior to kindergarten or first grade, student readiness is assessed. The results assist in determining individual readiness for the instructional program, suggest parental assistance with home activities to promote readiness, and guide teachers in developing an appropriate, effective program.

INSTRUCTION: Self-Study

The school administrator/principal provides leadership in the ongoing evaluation of the school, specifically in assessing its effectiveness in meeting its educational mission and objectives.

Every school is to conduct an in-depth self-study on a regular basis according to diocesan guidelines, ordinarily every six (6) years. Following its regular self-study, every school is to formulate objectives to address any unmet criteria, to further implement the school's educational mission, and to effect any other desired improvements.

INSTRUCTION: Visiting Team

Each school is to undergo validation by an external visiting team, appointed by the superintendent of Catholic schools and/or associate superintendent.

A school principal is to serve on a visiting team the year before the school he or she is in charge of is going through a self-study.

Revised August 12, 2008

May 7, 2004

INSTRUCTION: Accreditation

Schools are required to be accredited by an appropriate external agency.

INSTRUCTION: Accreditation

Schools in the Diocese of Jefferson City are to be accredited by the Missouri Chapter of the Non-Public School State Accrediting Association. The standards for accreditation are found in Series 9000.

INSTRUCTION: Co-Curricular Activity Availability

Depending on local needs and circumstances, the school may offer co-curricular activities. Balance and variety are essential to meet the varied needs and interests of students. The school can formulate guidelines about the extent of such activities.

INSTRUCTION: Diocesan Sponsored Student Activities

The Catholic School Office offers to all schools the opportunity to participate in student events which include, but are not limited to, the Aquinas Academy, the Bellarmine Speech League, Music Enrichment Day, Science Fair, and Sketch Day.

INSTRUCTION: Eligibility for Co-Curricular Activities

The school should set norms for eligibility of students to participate in school-sponsored activities, e.g., that attendance in school is required for participation in co-curricular activities on the day of the activity. Physical examinations are required for participation in strenuous athletic activity.

INSTRUCTION: Values of Athletic Program

The athletic program teaches self-discipline, good sportsmanship, and fairness, and instills in students Christian values and behavior. Especially at the elementary level, participation, skill development, and teamwork are emphasized more than competition.

The school formulates policies that ensure adequate academic standing and satisfactory behavioral norms for participants, as well as reasonable requirements concerning practice time.

The school may establish norms for spectators which reflect the Catholic principles of the school.

INSTRUCTION: Athletics

Athletics should enhance and complement the school's educational program. Athletics are student activities which provide experiences to help boys and girls develop a Christian attitude toward cooperation and competition as well as to develop physically, mentally, and emotionally. The element of competition and winning, though it exists, should always be secondary to striving to create a Christian environment which is exemplified by the instructor. Principles of Christian sportsmanship must prevail at all times to enhance the educational values of contests.

Participation in athletics, both as a player and a student spectator, is an integral part of the student's education experience. Participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, to the team, to the student body, to the community, and to the student himself/herself. In play and conduct, he/she is representing skills and emotional patterns that he/she possesses, thereby making him/her a better Christian and citizen.

Each school shall have written policies, guidelines, and regulations regarding participation in athletics and these are to be published to the students and parents.

All athletic programs are under the general supervision and authority of the school administrator. Everything possible should be done to keep time and distance of travel to a minimum on evenings prior to school days.

The school can also establish norms for spectators which reflect the Catholic principles of the school.

INSTRUCTION: Easter Triduum Athletic Activities

In view of the respect for and sanctity of the Easter Triduum, the following regulations are to be observed.

On Holy Thursday, all athletic games/practices/activities are to end so that students can leave their home school at least one hour prior to the start of the earliest Holy Thursday evening service in that locale.

There are to be no scheduled athletic games/practices/activities on Good Friday.

On Holy Saturday, all athletic games/practices/activities are to end so that students can leave their home school no later than 5:00 PM.

INSTRUCTION: Social Activities

Ordinarily there is a school-sponsored party. It is held for a brief period of time during or immediately following the school day. Any other school-sponsored social activities must be appropriate to the age of the student and approved explicitly by the school administrator/principal and/or pastor. If warranted by local circumstances, the local school can formulate policies within these diocesan guidelines.

INSTRUCTION: Guidance

The Catholic school has many guidance opportunities available for all students: value-oriented lessons, individual attention, meaningful liturgical celebrations, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, frequent affirmation, and the consistent application of Catholic principles. The program is designed to help all students develop wholesome self-concepts, integrate important values within their lives, and reach their God-given potential.