

ADMISSION

All Catholic preschools and elementary schools are open to students who sincerely seek a Catholic education and meet the requirements listed below.

- A. No person should be admitted as a student in any Catholic school unless that person and his/her parent(s) subscribe to the school's philosophy and agree to abide by the educational policies and regulations of the school and the Diocese of Pueblo.

Whether Catholic or non-Catholic, the student must agree to attend religious classes and the religious activities conducted in the school.

- B. Students should not be denied admission to a Diocesan school because of a disability unless this disability seriously impairs the student's ability to complete successfully the school's academic program, or unless the school cannot provide sufficient care or make reasonable accommodation for the disabled child.
- C. A birth certificate as proof of age must be presented to the school prior to admission. A baptismal certificate should be required of all baptized Catholic students. The information on birth and baptism should be entered on the permanent office record in the proper place, but only when verified by the official document.
- D. A child entering kindergarten must meet the age requirements as defined by the local school policy.
- E. Each Catholic school retains the right to set local admissions standards, policies and procedures in addition to those specified by the Diocese. The admission policy should be made public and clearly stated in the local parent/student handbook.
- F. A copy of the parent/student handbook should be given to new applicants.

IMMUNIZATION

The principal shall implement the immunization requirements of the State of Colorado.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

The State of Colorado provides by law for compulsory school attendance of all children between the ages of seven and sixteen years.

The responsibility for compliance with this law belongs to the parents. The school must notify parents if there appears to be a problem with attendance.

The school is obliged to keep an accurate record of daily attendance. This record is to be placed in the pupil's permanent record and kept on file indefinitely. Any recurring pattern of tardiness/absences requires administrative intervention. Excessive tardies and/or absences may be cause for retention or request for withdrawal. The parent/student handbook should contain a statement of local school policy regarding attendance and excessive absence/tardiness.

Truancy is a violation of Colorado law.

CHILD CUSTODY ISSUES

Custodial parents/legal guardians should be recognized by the school as the primary decision-makers for their children. Legal documentation regarding custody and visitation should be provided to the school by the custodial parent(s)/legal guardians(s) at the time of registration. The school must be notified immediately regarding any changes to custodial provisions.

Non-custodial parents shall have access to school records, conferences, and information unless otherwise restricted by court order. It is the obligation of parents to properly inform the school of limit of access to children, records or other information.

Non-custodial parents may not use the school for the purpose of circumventing custody orders or visitation rights.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Students must be supervised by an adult at all times during the regularly scheduled school day, on school sponsored field trips, during school sponsored co-curricular activities and at any other times during which the school accepts responsibility for supervision.

Supervision requires both physical presence and attention to students. Since emergencies will occur, it is not always possible for a teacher to be physically present to all students. It is important, therefore, that teachers inform students what they are to do if a teacher is not present.

Personnel charged with supervising students outside the classroom are to be provided with information relating to student supervision. This information may include the following:

- A basic or local in-service update on emergency procedures
- A written list of all procedures and rules to be followed relating to the conduct of students in the schoolyard.
- A specific diagram of the yard where appropriate, to assist in stationing of supervisory personnel.

It is the responsibility of the principal to insure that adequate supervision of students is provided.

Supervisors shall be present and actively supervising students in a reasonable and prudent manner appropriate to the activities/classes to which they have been assigned.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

Colorado law (19-3-304 (1), (2), (2.5) 19-3-311) requires the reporting by school personnel of known or suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the appropriate county department or local law enforcement agency.

The information which should be included in the initial report of suspected abuse is:

1. Name, address, age, sex, race of child
2. Name and address of parent or guardian
3. Nature and extent of child's injuries or neglect
4. Name and address of person(s) suspected of abuse or neglect
5. Family composition
6. Source of information
7. Person making the report
8. Any action taken by the reporting source
9. Any other helpful information
10. Name of the agency and official to whom the report was made

In cases where the suspected abuse involves parish or school personnel, the procedure for reporting is followed in accord with the Sexual Misconduct Policy for the Diocese of Pueblo.

In cases that do not involve parish or school personnel, the procedure for reporting is as follows:

1. Any person who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect including sexual assault or sexual molestation by any person, other than parish/school personnel, shall immediately make an oral report of this to the appropriate county department or local law enforcement agency.
2. In no case should the person make the report without notifying the principal/director.
3. If the reporting party is the principal/director, s/he shall then notify immediately the pastor if the school is a parish school. If the report is made by someone other than the principal/director, the employee shall notify the principal/director prior to the report, and then notify the pastor. All information pertaining to the matter should be treated as confidential.
4. The individual making the oral report indicated in paragraph one (1) shall report same in writing to the agency to whom the oral report was made and to the principal within twenty-four hours of the oral report being made.

5. The school principal/director shall keep one copy of the written report and forward a copy marked "CONFIDENTIAL" to the pastor, if the school is a parish school.
6. School personnel shall carefully consider all recommendations of the county department or law enforcement agency in handling the situation at school and with the parents.
7. The school shall keep this report on file indefinitely. This report is a confidential one and is not to be made part of the student's permanent cumulative record. Copies of this report may not be transferred to another school.
8. The parents should be contacted only at the direction of the agency, police or superintendent.

ACCIDENTS AND ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

Principals, directors, teachers and other school personnel are responsible for the handling of accidents and sudden illness occurring at school and during school-sponsored activities.

The procedure for responding to acute illness or injury is:

1. Call 911 and give the student immediate and temporary first aid care if necessary.
2. Notify the child's parent or guardian. In all cases where it is possible to do so, wait for instructions from the parent or guardian before proceeding further. The school's responsibility to give treatment should be limited to immediate first aid which will protect the life of the individual until professional treatment can be secured.
3. The school shall have "Child Emergency Cards" delegating permission to take action in cases in which parents/guardians cannot be reached. The card should include family physician and/or emergency center.
4. School personnel should not transport seriously injured or ill students to medical treatment unless there is an emergency need to do so. If the parent cannot provide transportation, an ambulance should be called.
5. If a child is seriously injured or ill at the end of a school day, s/he should not be allowed to go home unless accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other parent delegate.
6. After a serious accident or emergency illness of any sort, a record of the incident and the procedures taken should be made and filed in the school office.
7. The school reserves the right to act as deemed necessary by the principal/director or principal's/director's designee in a life-threatening situation.

A universal form that addresses a variety of allergy, medical, and emergency situations has been prepared by the Diocesan lawyer. This form is intended to be used as a reference as schools prepare their own forms for use with students at their local school. (See **Appendix C**)

MEDICATIONS GIVEN AT SCHOOL

No medication including aspirin, cough-and-cold medication, decongestants, or other over the counter or prescription medications should be administered by any school personnel, including a nurse. When situations require an exception to this policy, the *Medical Supervision/Administration of Medicines*, found in **Appendix C** should be followed.

Essential first aid supplies should be available at all times. First aid kits should be taken on all field trips. Rubber gloves should be included and worn when there is a possibility of exposure to blood or body fluids while administering first aid.

SUBJECT: MEDICATIONS GIVEN AT SCHOOL

No medication, including aspirin, cough-and-cold medication, decongestants, or other over the counter or prescription medications shall be administered by any school personnel, including a nurse, except under the following conditions:

A. Written orders from a physician shall be on file at the school, stating:

1. Child's name
2. Name of drug
3. Dosage
4. Purpose of medication
5. Time of day/circumstances in which medication is to be given
6. Anticipated number of days it must be given
7. Possible side effects
8. Storage instructions

B. Whenever possible, the parent is requested to be present to administer the medication.

C. If the parent is unable to be present, only the principal or principal's designee may administer the medication according to the physician's written instructions. In such a case, the parent must submit a written request to the school to provide the medication. (See Appendix I, Authorization to Administer Medication)

D. The medication must be brought in a container appropriately labeled by a pharmacy or physician. These medications shall be safeguarded at school to avoid ingestion by the wrong child.

Medications must be kept in a secure place to which students do not have access.

E. The person designated by the principal to administer medication is to keep a log of medicine administered. Individual records of such medications administered by school personnel shall be kept indefinitely.

F. If a student has a condition that might require medication on an emergency basis (e.g., in the case of a child's allergic reaction, asthma attack, etc.), the student's family shall provide all necessary information and training or instruction to the school personnel who might be responsible for administering such medication or carrying out such medical procedures.

G. Any student, who requires an inhaler may keep such inhaler on his/her person, provided the proper physicians orders and documentation are kept on file.

POLICY NO. 2240 (Continued)

- H. Essential first aid supplies shall be available at all times First aid kits must be taken on all field trips. First aid kits may be purchased or developed using typical first aid supplies. Rubber gloves must be included and worn when there is a possibility of exposure to blood or body fluids while administering first aid.
- I. The school principal shall organize a practical plan to accomplish the above. This plan shall be kept on file and made known to all staff.

August, 2002

Archdiocese of Denver

CONTACT WITH STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Persons (other than custodial parents/legal guardians), agencies, or organizations desiring to contact individual students during the school day **MUST FIRST** receive permission from the principal/director. The following guidelines are important to remember if situations occur:

- A. If contact is sought by a police officer or Social Services personnel, the principal/director must obtain prior parental consent when the student is a minor, except if the police or Social services direct the principal/director not to contact the parents. In such cases, the school shall follow the directives of the police or Social Services, and the principal/director shall obtain information regarding when the parents will be notified of the contact and by whom. A written summary of the directives and information shall be made by the principal/director and placed in the school files. The principal/director shall notify the pastor and/or the Superintendent of Schools.
- B. If contact is sought by anyone other than a police officer, Social Services or a custodial parent/legal guardian, the principal/director must first obtain parental consent.
- C. The principal/director should never allow students to be alone with anyone who is not a legal guardian or school employee, even if the visitor is a law enforcement official, Social Services worker or medical or counseling person not employed by the school. This does not include persons authorized by parents/legal guardians or principal/director as part of the regular curriculum or support programs of the school, nor those in a tutorial or diagnostic position such as Child Find.
- D. Teachers should not allow pupils to leave classrooms to speak to non-school personnel, without the explicit permission of the principal/director or his/her designee.
- E. The school may not be used by a non-custodial parent for the purpose of circumventing custody orders or visitation rights.
- F. No organization, agency, or person (excluding police officers and Social Services personnel) may be allowed to assume custody of any student on school premises during school hours or immediately before or after school, unless explicitly authorized in writing by the parent or guardian.
- G. The following procedures must be followed when custody of a pupil is requested by a police officer:
 - a. Examination of police credentials. If the police officer is unknown to the principal, the officer shall be asked to produce his/her credentials.

- b. Should a police officer produce a warrant for the arrest of a pupil, the pupil shall be immediately surrendered to the officer. The principal should request that the police officer allow the principal time to notify parents before removing the pupil from the premises. In all cases, the parents/legal guardians should be notified by the principal.
- c. In instances not involving a warrant, parents/legal guardians may give telephone authorization to surrender the pupil to the police officer. The principal/director shall make a written notation of the time and a summary of the conversation and retain the notation in a secured office file. The principal/director may then surrender the pupil to the police officer. If the parent/legal guardian refuses authorization, then the school shall not release the child without a warrant or other court order.
- d. Whenever custody of a pupil is requested by a police officer, the principal/director shall notify the pastor and/or Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

H. The following procedures should be followed when custody of a pupil is requested by Social Services:

- a. Examine and photocopy the official identification/credentials of the Social Services representative.
- b. Should the Social Services person request that the pupil be removed from the school, prior to notification of the parents, the principal shall:
 - 1. obtain a copy of authorization from an appropriate court or other legal authority;
 - 2. request information regarding when the parents will be notified and by whom;
 - 3. obtain all pertinent information from the Social Services person regarding where the child will be taken and how the parents can reach the caseworker;
 - 4. immediately make a written summary of the event and place it in a secured office file; and
 - 5. whenever custody of a pupil is requested by Social Services, the principal/director shall notify the pastor and or the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

SEARCHES OF STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS

A student assigned a locker or desk has use of, but not proprietary right to the locker or desk. Lockers and desks are school property. The Principal, Pastor or Superintendent of Catholic Schools may conduct a search of the school plant and every aperture thereof, including lockers and desks. School searches must be reasonable and related to the school official's responsibilities.

Normally, inspection of personal property, e.g. pockets, handbags, book bags, etc. should not be conducted without the student's permission. If permission is given, the search should be made in the presence of at least two school officials. If permission is not given, but the school official has reasonable suspicion that such an inspection will reveal possession of objects or any substance which is prohibited on school property, then the inspection may be conducted in the presence of two school officials.

To facilitate compliance with this policy, schools should publish in the school handbook a policy stating inspection rights when there is a suspicion of a threat to the health, welfare, or safety of students.

STUDENT FILES

Student education files shall contain, but not be limited to the following:

- Identifying data
- Academic work — level of achievement (grades, standardized tests and aptitude)
- Health data
- Attendance
- Family information

Cumulative records of students are to be kept permanently in a locked, fireproof file.

An emergency information form should be kept in a location designated by the principal.

ACCESS TO STUDENT FILES

All materials in the cumulative record shall be treated as confidential. Files

shall be locked when not in use.

Information from disciplinary or counseling files should not be available to unauthorized persons within the school or to any person outside the school without the express consent of the parent or legal guardian.

Behavioral records are to be destroyed when the student withdraws, transfers, or graduates from the school.

A legal guardian or parent should have access to the student's records. A parent not having custody of a child, but having the right of visitation, has a right commensurate with the parent having custody to examine the school record of the child. In order to establish visitation rights, parents must provide a notarized copy of the most recent court order.

Students in foster homes may have been placed in a school by court order and frequently are supervised by a child placement agency. It is advisable to consult with the agency regarding the parent's request for and legal right to information.

Access to Student Permanent Records shall be made available to diocesan officials, teachers, and clerical staff and other persons who have a legitimate educational purpose.

A sample document describing educational records and parental rights has been provided by the Diocesan lawyer and can be found in **Appendix D**.

RELEASE OF STUDENT PERMANENT FILES

Upon written request, schools shall release official transcripts to another school in which the student intends to enroll or in compliance with a court order to release information concerning a student. Unless the parent has initiated the request, a reasonable attempt must be made to notify the parent of the request for records.

All other requests for release of Student Permanent Records may be granted only with the written authorization of the parents or the student if 18 years of age or older.

All Student Permanent Records must be kept in perpetuity by the school or by the parish if the school closes.

SUPOENA OF RECORDS

When a subpoena requesting records or testimony is served, the principal should notify the Superintendent immediately and proceed according to instructions. A lawyer requesting to investigate school records without a subpoena may not be allowed to see the records, nor should the lawyer be allowed to obtain information from teachers.

MEDIA POLICY

Before the use of name or likeness of a student, including voice and features with or without name of student for any promotional purposes involving the diocese, parish, or school, news or feature stories in any media or other purpose whatsoever, written permission for publication of this information must be secured from parents. This permission shall be kept on file for the length of the time the student is at the school.

See **Appendix E** for several sample forms.

RELEASE OF STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Before printing student directories, written permission for publication of this information should be secured from parents. Names and addresses of students and faculty should not be made available to anyone outside the school. This permission should be kept on file for the school year.

DISCIPLINE

Each school should develop written standards of conduct which are published in the parent/student handbook and which encourage self-discipline and create an atmosphere conducive to learning. At all times, discipline is to be conducted according to gospel values and with the dignity of the student and the general welfare of the school community in mind.

The principal/director should ensure that teachers exercise vigilance over the students to prevent the development of discipline problems

As a general rule, the teacher should manage discipline problems of the students under the teacher's supervision and enlist the help of the principal/director only in cases involving serious or repeated misbehavior.

Corporal punishment is not allowed in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Pueblo. Even in the event parents give permission for such action and/or the state sanctions its use, corporal punishment, which may be defined as any punitive touching, shall not be permitted under any circumstances.

School personnel may use and apply **ONLY** such amounts of force as is reasonable and necessary within the scope of their employment:

- To quell a disturbance that threatens physical injury to others;
- To obtain possession of a weapon, other dangerous objects or objects that are being used in a dangerous or threatening manner upon the person or within the control of a student;
- To exercise self-defense;
- To protect persons or property.

In these circumstances, such acts are not considered corporal punishment.

SUSPENSION

Suspension is defined as a temporary dismissal of a student from the school. Suspension is a drastic consequence that should be used rarely and only in response to an action of a very serious nature or after other remedial measures, as defined in the school handbook, have been employed without success.

Grounds for suspension in local schools should be published in the parent/student handbook. The list may include, but is not limited to:

- Serious and willful destruction of property
- Repeated and open disrespect for teachers or other school authorities
- Repeated disobedience of school rules after sufficient warning to students and parents
- Moral or legal infractions injurious to oneself or others
- Possession, use, sale, or transfer of alcohol or other drugs
- Serious and/or repeated theft
- Cheating
- Smoking on school property
- Late or non-payment of tuition
- Threatening or harassing conduct to other students or teachers

A written statement by the principal of the reason for, the duration and conditions of a suspension should be given to the parent at the time of the suspension. Procedures to follow should be included in the parent/student handbook.

EXPULSION

The permanent dismissal of a student from school is an extreme measure to be taken only as a last resort: a) after all other efforts of motivation and counseling have failed; or b) where circumstances of crime, scandal, immorality or disruption constitute a threat to the physical or moral welfare of other persons; or c) as set forth in Policy related to student withdrawal on grounds of parental behavior.

Local schools should publish in their parent/student handbook a non-exclusive list of those actions that may constitute expulsion. This list may include, but is not limited to:

- Moral and physical danger to another person
- Prolonged and open disregard for school authority
- Sustained misconduct which interrupts the learning environment
- Vandalism
- Repeated harassment or threatening conduct to fellow students, teachers, or other school authorities
- Possession, use, sale, or transfer of alcohol or other drugs
- Continued non-payment of tuition and school fees after warning

A record should be kept of previous measures of remediation, counseling, and/or suspensions. This documentation should include written communication between the school and the family. In the case of serious circumstances, the student should be immediately suspended until the process described in the school handbook can be completed.

Procedures to follow should be included in the parent/student handbook. They should include, but are not limited to:

- A conference with parents, student, principal/director, and if appropriate, teachers at which time the grounds for dismissal will be presented and discussed.
- Written notification of the decision should be sent to the parents, and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools should be notified about the incident and the student being expelled.

STUDENT HARASSMENT

Each diocesan school shall develop and disseminate a policy, in the context of the school mission and Catholic identity that addresses student-to-student bullying and harassment. This policy should state that it prohibits any verbal, physical, or visual conduct on the part of students that has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive education environment.

In addition to this statement, the policy should contain the following: descriptive behaviors; procedures for reporting; investigative procedures; consequences and penalties; discretion statement that allows the principal/director and pastor to review individual situations and waive any or all penalties. The policy should also state if the school provides a bullying/harassment prevention program for staff, students, and parents and how individuals may access that program.

TOBACCO, ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

Possession and/or use of tobacco, possession, use or being under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs, is prohibited on school premises and at all school sponsored activities. The possession, use, sale or attempted sale of tobacco, alcohol or illicit drugs may result in expulsion from the school and notification of the proper authorities.

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL

After the school has made attempts to meet their individual needs, students clearly unable to profit from the school by reason of academic and/or behavioral problems or emotional difficulties may be required to withdraw from school.

STUDENT TRANSFER ON GROUNDS OF PARENTAL BEHAVIOR

Normally a child is not to be deprived of a Catholic education or otherwise penalized for actions of parents. However, in rare instances, parents may so persistently and overtly refuse to cooperate with school staff, policies, regulations, or programs, or may so seriously interfere in matters of school administration or discipline as to reduce significantly the school's ability to serve the parents own or other children.

In such cases, reasonable effort to elicit the minimum requisite parental cooperation shall be made and documented. If such effort does not correct the situation, after appropriate consultation with the pastor or Board, the principal may recommend to the parents that they transfer their child. Documentation of the basis for this action and of all consultation with the parents on the matter must be retained on file.

If the parents refuse to accept the recommended transfer, the procedures for (a) notification, (b) conferencing, (c) written documentation, shall be followed as in cases for disciplinary expulsion. The superintendent should be notified prior to the actual expulsion and informed as to the procedure that was followed.

OFF-CAMPUS MISCONDUCT

The May 2006 *School Superintendent's Insider* offered the following as a possible policy to cover off-campus misconduct:

1. **Application of disciplinary code to off-campus misconduct.** The Student Disciplinary Code and all penalties shall apply to conduct off school grounds that may endanger the health, or safety of students within the school district or adversely affect the educative process.
2. **Examples of off-campus misconduct subject to discipline.** Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to: illegal activity, threats of violence, alcohol use, fighting, hazing, drug possession or sales, firearm possession, violent offenses, robbery, burglary, arson, and sexual assaults.
3. **Full-range of disciplinary penalties.** Students may be subject to the full range of disciplinary penalties for off-campus misconduct, including, but not limited to: suspensions, expulsions, detentions, as well as removal from participation in extracurricular activities, such as interscholastic sports teams, club sports, student government positions, class trips, class proms, and graduation ceremonies.