

Policy 5000

Privilege of a Catholic Education

Effective: August 1971

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Catholic schools exist to collaborate with parent(s)/guardian(s) to foster spiritual growth and the educational development of each child. Catholic schools also serve the community, particularly the Catholic community of the diocese.

Catholic schools of the Diocese of Columbus shall be open to children of parent(s)/guardian(s) who seek the religiously oriented education which Catholic schools can provide. Schools shall recruit and admit students of any race, color, gender (except those schools supporting a single gender according to their mission) or ethnicity to all its rights, privileges, programs, and activities. In addition, the school shall not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, English proficiency, or disability (medical or academic) in the administration of its educational programs and extra-curricular activities.

Preference shall be given to members of Catholic parishes. Others shall be welcomed on the basis of availability of space at the discretion of the pastor and/or principal.

Pastors and principals shall exercise discretion in judging admission of pupils. Pastors and principals must refuse admittance to anyone who, in their opinion, seeks to enroll for the purpose of circumventing the law.

Catholic schools are schools of choice. Any parent who wishes to have a Catholic education for his/her child agrees that the parent and child will abide by the policies and regulations of the school.

If the policies and/or regulations are not adhered to, or if the school determines that attendance by a student will not be continued, the family may be asked by the principal and/or pastor at the elementary level and the principal and/or superintendent at the high school level to leave the school.

Policy 5010

☐ Elementary

Participation of Full-Time Students

Effective: March 1999 as Policy 5110.1

Revised: July 2025

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Only full-time students as defined in the local school handbook (which may include a combination of CCP, career center, and homeschool courses) may participate in the academic, athletic, and social activities at Diocesan schools.

Schools may not permit students enrolled in full-time homeschool programs to participate in extracurricular activities. This includes athletics if the program is school-based, such as at the high school level or some elementary schools. In contrast, the CYO Athletic Program is a parish-based program and open to all parishioners according to the CYO Charter and Bylaws.

Policy 5100

Admission

Effective: August 2006 as Policies 5119.1, 5115.0, and 5112.0

Revised: February 2026

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

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

1. No person shall be admitted as a student in any Catholic school unless that person and his/her parent subscribe to the school's philosophy and agree to abide by the educational policies and regulations of the school and of the Diocese.
2. Whether the student is Catholic or non-Catholic, the student must agree to attend religious classes and the religious activities conducted in the school.
3. No student shall be admitted to any Catholic school unless he/she is deemed to have reasonable hope of successfully completing the school's program. In doubtful cases, students may be admitted on a probationary basis with dates and criteria of evaluation clearly established in writing.
4. A Catholic education should be made available to as many students as possible, but the school must consider whether it has sufficient resources to meet the educational and financial needs of all applicants. Decisions on enrollment may be made based on these constraints.
5. No student shall be admitted to a Catholic school if there is a financial debt of any amount owed to another Catholic school, inclusive of schools within the Diocese of Columbus and schools in other dioceses.
6. Students shall not be denied admission to a 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.
7. A birth certificate as proof of age must be presented to the school prior to admission. A baptismal certificate shall be required of all baptized Catholics students. The information on the birth and baptismal certificates shall be entered on the permanent office record in the proper place, but only when verified by the official document.
8. A child entering kindergarten must be five years old on or before August 30. However, exceptions may be granted by the local school based on a locally determined readiness evaluation.
9. A student entering first grade must be six years old on or before August 30. No child shall be admitted to first grade who has not successfully completed kindergarten. A waiver from this requirement may be granted only by the receiving school and will be based on a locally determined readiness evaluation.
10. 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 for each school should be made public and clearly stated in the local Family Handbook.

11. A copy of the Family Handbook is given to new applicants, either in physical or digital form. Parents are to acknowledge in writing (in either physical or digital form) that they have read and agree to adhere to the policies and regulations therein.
12. Annually, the pastor and/or principal shall review each student's continued eligibility for re-enrollment in the school.

Priorities for Acceptance – Elementary Schools

In the acceptance of students to elementary schools, the priority shall be as follows:

1. Children from families registered at and actively involved in the sponsoring parish(es)
 - a. children with siblings currently/previously enrolled,
 - b. children now reaching school age,
 - c. children from families newly moved into the parish whose children have been in Catholic schools where such were available.
2. Children from non-participating, Catholic families residing in the parish boundaries with siblings currently or previously enrolled in the school.
3. Students whose families are active, practicing members of Eastern Rite Catholic Churches that are in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church (for example, the Maronite, Syro-Malabar, Ge'ez, Chaldean, and Byzantine Catholic Churches).
4. Children transferring from other Catholic schools:
 - a. from parish schools that are closing
 - b. from parishes not offering full K-8 programs
 - c. schools with a waiting list
5. Children of other, non-Catholic faith traditions.

Priority for Acceptance – High Schools

In the acceptance of students to high schools, the priority shall be as follows:

1. Incoming students as follows:
 - a. students whose siblings are already enrolled in or graduated from the high school;
 - b. students who graduated from elementary schools designated as feeder schools; or
 - c. students from parishes without an eighth grade whose families have traditionally chosen Catholic schools.
 - d. granted an attendance waiver through the Diocesan process.
2. Students whose families are active, practicing members of Eastern Rite Catholic Churches that are in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church (for example, the Maronite, Syro-Malabar, Ge'ez, Chaldean, and Byzantine Catholic Churches) and live within the applicable boundary area.
3. Students from Catholic families relocating from other communities, who have been attending Catholic schools, and live within the applicable boundary area.
4. Other Catholic students who have not graduated from Catholic elementary schools may be admitted if, on the basis of a personal interview, the principal or his/her designated authority judges the intent and motivation to be in accord with the highest ideals of Catholic education, and the family resides within the applicable boundary area.
5. Students of other, non-Catholic faith traditions living within the applicable boundary area

Policy 5103

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

School Attendance Areas

Effective: March 1978 as Policy 5117.0

Revised: July 2024

High school attendance areas are defined by diocesan criteria for both elementary and high schools.

Criteria for Elementary Schools

1. A student shall attend the school of the parish in which the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) are registered members. As stated in policy, if the parish school is full, the student may attend another parish school if the student's pastor and the pastor of the chosen school concur.

In the case of a consolidation, a number of parishes shall be assigned to a particular school.

2. If a parish has no school, the student may attend a nearby parochial school.

High School Criteria

High schools in the Diocese are partnered with particular feeder schools and have defined attendance boundaries. The following priorities are used to determine the assigned high school for a student.

1. Inside Franklin County, if the student has attended a Catholic elementary school whose geographic boundaries are listed under two high schools (examples: St. Brendan, St. Mary Columbus, St. Matthew, and St. Michael) for at least the last three school years, then that student may attend either of the high schools partnered with the student's Catholic elementary school of attendance.
2. Otherwise, the location of the residence of the student's legal guardian is used to determine the assigned high school. This is defined by the specific street address, not the general ZIP code area.
3. Boys may also attend St. Charles Preparatory School.

Waiver Requests

For waiver requests regarding this policy, refer to Policy 5104

Secondary School Attendance Areas – Franklin County

Bishop Hartley High School Area

Christ the King, Holy Spirit, Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Canal Winchester/Groveport), Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, St. Catharine, St. Patrick, St. Pius X (Reynoldsburg), St. Thomas the Apostle, Seton Parish (Pickerington), St. Matthew* (Gahanna), St. Dominic*, St. Mary* (German Village), St. Joseph Cathedral and Holy Cross*, Pickaway County*

Bishop Ready High School Area

Holy Family, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Our Lady of Victory, St. Agnes, St. Aloysius, St. Cecilia, St. Christopher/Trinity School, St. Colman (Washington Courthouse), St. Joseph (Plain City), St. Margaret of Cortona, St. Patrick (London), St. Mary Magdalene, Sts. Simon and Jude (West Jefferson), St. Stephen, St. Brendan* (Hilliard), St. Dominic*, St. Mary* (German Village), St. Joseph Cathedral and Holy Cross*, Pickaway County*

Bishop Watterson High School Area

Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of Guadalupe Star the New Evangelization, Our Lady of Peace, Sacred Heart, St. Agatha, St. Andrew, St. Francis, St. John the Baptist, St. Peter-St. Joan of Arc, St. Timothy, St. Brigid of Kildare, St. Mary (Delaware), St. Brendan* (Hilliard), St. Michael* (Worthington).

St. Francis DeSales High School Area

St. Augustine and Gabriel, St. James the Less, St. Josephine Bakhita, St. Paul (Westerville), St. John Neumann (Sunbury), Resurrection (New Albany), St. Matthew* (Gahanna), St. Michael* (Worthington).

Secondary School Attendance Areas – Outside Franklin County

Area for Fisher Catholic High School – Lancaster

Fairfield, Hocking, Ross, Perry*, and Pickaway* Counties

Area for Newark Catholic High School – Newark

Licking and Knox Counties

Area for Tuscarawas Central Catholic High School – New Philadelphia

Tuscarawas, Holmes, and Coshocton Counties

Area for Notre Dame High School – Portsmouth

Scioto, Pike, Vinton, and Jackson Counties

Area for Bishop Rosecrans High School – Zanesville

Muskingum and Perry* Counties

Please note: An asterisk (*) designates that the parish/school is listed under two high schools.

Policy 5104

High School Waivers

Effective: January 2000 as Policy 5117.5

Revised: October 2026

☐ Elementary

☒ Secondary

☐ Both

A waiver may be granted for a student to attend a Catholic high school outside the residence of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) at the discretion of the superintendent after consultation with both school principals. A waiver may be granted for the following reasons:

1. A sibling or siblings have attended the requested school;
2. A parent or guardian attended the requested school;
3. The parent or guardian is a full-time employee of the requested school; or
4. After a family visits and discusses enrollment with the assigned school, the principal of the assigned school feels that it would be in the student's best interest to attend the requested school. In this case, a detailed, written statement addressing the rationale and confirming a school visit and discussion is provided with the waiver request.

No waiver will be granted for reasons related to participation in athletics or extracurriculars.

High School Waiver Procedure

If the reason for the waiver is siblings or parents who have attended the requested school, or the parent or guardian is a full-time employee of the school, the principal of the requested school signs the waiver form first, then contacts the principal of the assigned school to notify him/her, and then forwards the waiver to the assigned school principal for signature. The form is then sent to the superintendent for final review and approval.

For any other reason, the following procedure must be followed:

1. The parent contacts the assigned high school and requests a waiver form from the assigned high school.
2. The parent(s)/guardian(s) arrange a visit and meeting with the principal (and/or his/her designee) of the assigned school.
3. If, after the visit, the family would still like to request a waiver, the family must provide a written statement of rationale to the assigned school.
4. After the visit takes place and written rationale is reviewed, if the assigned school principal agrees that the criteria for a waiver have been met, he/she will sign the waiver, contact the principal of the requested school, and forward the waiver to the requested school principal for signature. If either principal opts not to grant the waiver for any reason, the waiver request is denied.
5. The completed form is sent to the Superintendent for final review and approval.

Policy 5106

Admission – Child Custody

Effective: May 1990 as Policy 5119.2

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

The custodial parent is required to provide the principal or the person in charge of admission with the most current certified copy of any child custody order or decree pertaining to the student through the registration process or upon acceptance.

Any child custody order or decree changes pertaining to a student's enrollment must be provided to the school, in hard copy, within two weeks of a court's decision. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school of any change in custody status and to provide documentation promptly.

Policy 5107

Admission – Transfer Students

Effective: August 1996 as Policy 5119.3

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☒ Secondary

☐ Both

Local schools shall develop a policy and procedure to determine the internal process for the admission of transfer students which include the following:

1. A permanent record or transcript from a school chartered by the State of Ohio is required for all Ohio transfer students.
2. A permanent record or transcripts from a school recognized by the state of origin. These are subject to review by the principal prior to admission and placement.
3. Within twenty-four hours of the student's entry into the school, a school official shall request the student's official records from the elementary or secondary school the student most recently attended. If the school the student claims to have most recently attended indicates that it has no records of the student's attendance or the records are not received within fourteen days of the date of request, or the student does not present a certification of birth or comparable certificate or certification from another state, territory, possession, or nation, the principal or his/her designee shall notify the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction in the area where the student resides of this fact and of the possibility that the student may, be a missing child, as this term is defined in Section 2901.30 of the Ohio Revised Code.
4. The schools of the Diocese of Columbus do not grant credit for home-schooled students. Therefore, the student must first be evaluated by the public school district to determine grade placement prior to admission.
5. Students from outside the schools of the Diocese shall be assessed through the STAR screening process in math and in reading prior to admittance. Students transferring from another school in the Diocese shall have their STAR records available to the receiving school for assessment.

Policy 5108

Admission – Non-Catholic Students

Effective: May 1983 as Policy 5110.5

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Recognizing the unique role of the Catholic school as an agency for carrying out the educational mission of the Church, Catholic schools are designed for Catholic students whose parents express a desire for the Catholic school's program and environment. However, the Diocese recognizes that schools are open to students of other faith traditions.

In accepting students of other faith traditions, Catholic schools shall be directed by the guidelines for admission contained within diocesan regulation. Since the Catholic school is defined by its religious character, enrollment in a Catholic school assumes involvement in the religious life of the school. Therefore, students of other faith traditions shall participate in religion classes, attend liturgical and prayer services, and take part in the school's program of service. However, such participation shall not belie the fundamental religious principle of the individual person's freedom and dignity. Students shall participate in the religious life of the school. How they will participate, must be made especially clear to parent(s)/guardian(s) and students at the time of registration. During the pre-admission interview, parent(s)/guardian(s) and students should be informed about the school's mission, beliefs, programs, and expectations for parent(s)/guardian(s) and students.

Policy 5109

Admission – English Language Learners

Effective: August 2008 as Policy 5110.4

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

A principal shall evaluate on a case-by-case basis whether or not the Catholic school can successfully meet the needs of children who are English Language Learners. If the school can offer education to meet the language needs of the student, then the school should offer the opportunity of a Catholic education. The student should be considered for admission to school on the same basis as any other student applying for admission.

Upon admission, the student should be:

- Screened/assessed to determine language proficiency
- Assessed for Title III support services
- Appropriate instruction
- Textbook support
- Follow TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages) strategies

An English Language Learner's instruction should follow the Ohio English Language Proficiency Standards for Limited English Proficient Students document as adopted by the Office of Catholic Schools.

Policy 5110

☐ Elementary

Admission – Students with Special Needs

☐ Secondary

Effective: August 2007 as Policy 5110.3 and 5110.2

Revised: July 2023

☒ Both

Parent(s)/guardian(s) who have a child with a disability should be afforded the opportunity to have a Catholic education for their child. A principal shall evaluate on a case-by-case basis whether or not the Catholic school can meet the needs of the student. If the school can make reasonable accommodations to meet the student's needs, then the school should offer the child the opportunity of a Catholic school education.

"A person with a disability is any person, who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment or is regarded as having such impairment." (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990).

Protocol for Transitioning Special Needs Students from Elementary to High School

In order for special needs students to have as seamless a transition from a Catholic elementary school to a Catholic high school as possible, the Office of Catholic Schools has established a timeline that will ensure a timely transfer of information and records concerning students with special needs. All schools are to follow the timeline.

By November 30th of each year

- The elementary school acquires parent's/guardian('s) signature on the agreement to share Special Needs information with the diocesan high school.
- The diocesan high school schedules a meeting with each feeder school to review files of potential incoming freshmen with Special Needs/plans.
- The elementary school presents information to the Diocesan high school about students on any plan (services, written, academic support) and identifies priority students who have significant Special Needs.

By January 30th

- The Diocesan high school schedules meetings with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of incoming freshmen with significant Special Needs (service plans/IEPs) to discuss parents/student's expectations of the high school. The Diocesan high school explains the services it can provide to the student and discusses Jon Peterson/Autism Scholarship options (if available) with the parents.

By April 15th of each year

- The Diocesan high school notifies the parent(s)/guardian(s) of any incoming freshman with Special Needs if able or not able to adequately serve and meet the needs of the student.

From April 15th to May 15th of each year

- The Diocesan high school convenes meetings of the Academic Team (parent(s)/guardian(s), student, elementary personnel, and a public school representative) to discuss plans (services, written, academic support) for all incoming Special Needs students for the following school year.
- The Diocesan high school contacts the Office of Catholic Schools with dates/times if they would like representation at the meetings.

By June 30th of Each Year

- The elementary school sends records of special needs students to Diocesan high schools, including the most recent evaluation (if applicable) and the most recent plan. This is in addition to the records that are normally transferred to the Diocesan high school such as health record, last progress report, and copy of the permanent record card.
- English Language Learners records should also be sent to the Diocesan high schools, including the student's Academic Support Plan and level of English proficiency.

By August 15th of each year

- All high school teachers with Special Needs students on plans (service, written, academic support) will receive a copy of the plan, which they are required to implement throughout the following school year.
- Meetings will be held with teachers and a high school designee (Intervention Specialist/counselor/psychologist) to answer and clarify questions about the implementation of any student plan.

Policy 5200

Attendance, Absences, and Excuses

Effective: August 1971 as Policy 5113.0 and 5142.0

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

A record of attendance and tardiness shall be maintained for every student. The law requires that this be retained as part of the permanent record of the student.

According to the law of Ohio, primary responsibility for seeing that students attend school for the full time that school is in session rests with the parent(s)/guardian(s). When a student is absent from school, the parent/guardian is to contact the school, within the time frame designated by the school, to report the absence. A representative from the school will attempt to notify the student's parent/guardian if the absence has not been reported.

A student who is absent must, upon his/her return to school, present a note bearing the reason for absence, the date(s) of absence, and the signature of a parent or legal guardian. When it is unknown if a student is legitimately absent, all efforts to contact the parent and/or legal guardian must be made. A decision can be made to contact local authorities regarding the inability to reach parents or in the case of chronic or excessive absences.

Only the principal can give permission for absence or early dismissal.

In case of emergency, the principal may send a student home only after the parent or guardian has been notified.

Any pupil showing symptoms of a communicable disease shall be dismissed from school by the principal after notification of the parent(s)/guardian(s).

Missing Children Act

When a student enrolls in a Catholic school, the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall present the school with a copy of the student's birth certificate and the name and address of the school which the student most recently has attended. Within 24 hours, the enrolling school shall initiate contact with the sending school in order to obtain the student's records. If records are not received within 14 calendar days of the student's admission, the enrolling school shall notify the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction for the area of the pupil's residence.

Any school may initiate a program for fingerprinting students. If initiated, such a program shall be developed with the assistance of the law enforcement agency in the area. Participation of individuals is voluntary.

Policy 5201

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Consequences of Excessive Absences

Effective: May 1974 as Policy 5113.1

Revised: July 2023

A school is justified in refusing credit to any student who misses 28 or more days in a school year. At the discretion of the principal, the number of absences and possible consequences, including unenrollment from the school, will be discussed with the student parent(s)/guardian(s).

An exception to the above would be the case of a student who is hospitalized or has an extended illness or injury and is able to make up the work through tutoring or some other type of instruction approved by the principal.

Definitions – HB 410 (2017)

	Consecutive Hours	Hours per School Month	Hours per School Year
Habitual Truancy	30 without legitimate excuse	42 without legitimate excuse	72 without legitimate excuse
Excessive Absences	--	38 with or without legitimate excuse	65 with or without legitimate excuse
Chronic Absenteeism	--	--	10% with or without legitimate excuse

Policy 5202

Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA)

Eligibility Criteria

Effective: August 2005 as Policy 5124.2

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☒ Secondary

☐ Both

An eighth grade student who receives all “Ns” or an “F” in a curricular area during the last quarter of the school year will be classified as not passing that curricular area during the fourth quarter. Any student who falls into that category must have the entire fourth quarter’s marks evaluated to determine athletic eligibility. The number of curricular areas that qualify as a failure should be divided by the total number of curricular areas evaluated during the fourth quarter. The failure total must be less than or equal to 25% for the student to be considered eligible for Fall sports in high school.

Schools using traditional grades will use the local grading school to determine the 75% passing rate.

Policy 5203

☐ Elementary

Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL)

☒ Secondary

Effective: January 2026

☐ Both

Revised:

This policy establishes additional expectations for Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) activities within the Catholic high schools of the Diocese of Columbus. Its purpose is to protect student-athletes, uphold amateur status, ensure competitive fairness, and maintain compliance with all Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) bylaws. Because the mission of Catholic education extends beyond athletics, these expectations also ensure that NIL participation supports rather than diminishes our Catholic identity, culture, and moral formation. In every school of the Diocese, Catholic culture remains the primary concern and guiding principle.

Catholic Moral Framework

All NIL activity must reflect the values integral to Catholic education. Schools, families, and student-athletes share responsibility for promoting ethical behavior, personal integrity, stewardship of gifts, and the holistic development of each young person. To that end, the Diocese emphasizes the following expectations:

- NIL participation must cultivate honesty, fairness, and responsible stewardship.
- NIL opportunities may never compromise a student's academic responsibilities, faith life, or moral character. In addition to the prohibited categories listed in the OHSAA policy, no NIL agreements may conflict with a Catholic worldview or with Catholic doctrine or teachings. Failure to comply with this expectation may result in disciplinary consequences including removal from a team or discontinued enrollment in a Catholic school. Principals are empowered to enforce this provision within their school communities.
- Students and parents/guardians should consider the broader impact of NIL agreements on their school community and their personal witness to the faith.
- Honesty and full transparency in disclosures to the school and to the OHSAA are essential moral requirements.
- Students and parents/guardians should engage in prayerful discernment, using their God-given talents in ways that reflect humility and virtue.
- Students and parents/guardians should practice stewardship, charity, and service in financial and public-facing decisions related to NIL opportunities.
- Schools and personnel will conduct all NIL monitoring and review activities with fairness, compassion, and a commitment to moral accountability.
- All members of the school community must work to maintain a culture of trust, transparency, and ethical responsibility.

Recruitment and Transfer Expectations

In accordance with OHSAA regulations, NIL benefits may not be used to recruit student-athletes. All transfers into diocesan high schools will be monitored for potential NIL-related inducements. If a transfer appears to be connected to NIL agreements or incentives, the school must promptly report the matter to OHSAA.

The Diocese of Columbus operates under a boundary system (see Policies 5103 and 5104), which outlines the only permissible conditions for enrollment or waiver requests. NIL activity may not be used to circumvent these boundaries.

Compliance and Penalties

Non-compliance with OHSA bylaws or Diocesan NIL expectations will result in penalties. Families should consult OHSA Bylaw 11 for a complete description of NIL violations and consequences. If a violation is alleged, the student-athlete may be temporarily suspended from participation while the investigation is ongoing. Schools will administer discipline fairly and consistently, with an emphasis on learning and growth.

Revision History:

Policy 5210

Child Custody Issues

Effective: July 2023

Revised:

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Custodial parents and/or legal guardians shall be recognized by the school as the primary decision makers for their children. Legal documentation regarding custody and visitation shall be provided to the school by the custodial parent(s)/legal guardian(s) at the time of registration. The school shall 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, as determined by the school administrator.

School administrators are not to offer to testify on behalf of one parent or another in situations of divorce, child custody matters, etc. Administrators are to take a neutral position in all conflicts of this nature. If a school official receives a subpoena to testify, contact the Office of Catholic Schools, which will then work with Diocesan legal counsel.

Policy 5220

Contact with Students During School Hours

Effective: August 1971 as Policy 5139.0

Revised:

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

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.

The following shall apply to such situations:

1. If contact is sought by a police officer or by social services personnel, the principal must obtain parental prior parental consent when the student is a minor, except if the police or social services direct the principal not to contact the parents. In such cases, the school shall follow the directives of the police or social services, and the principal 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 and placed in the school files. The principal shall notify the pastor at parochial schools or the superintendent at diocesan schools.
2. If contact is sought by anyone other than a police officer, social services, or a custodial parent/legal guardian, the principal must first obtain parental consent.
3. The principal shall 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 provider not employed by the school. This does not include persons authorized by parents/guardians or the principal or administrators as part of the regular curriculum or support programs of the school, including disciplinary situations and enforcement of school policies and procedures.
4. Teachers shall not allow students to leave classrooms to speak with non-school personnel without the explicit permission of the principal or his/her designee.
5. The school may not be used by a non-custodial parent for the purpose of circumventing custody orders or visitation rights, as determined by the school principal.
6. 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.
7. The following procedures must be followed when custody of a student 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 student, the student 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 student from the premises. In all cases, the parents/guardians should be notified by the principal.

- c. In instances not involving a warrant, parents/guardians may give telephone authorization to surrender the student to the police officer. The principal shall make a written notation at the time and a summary of the conversation and retain the notation in a secured office file. The principal may then surrender the student to the police officer. If the parent/guardian refuses authorization, then the school shall not release the child without a warrant or other court order.
 - d. Whenever custody of a student is requested by a police officer, the principal shall notify the Office of Catholic Schools and the pastor at parochial schools.
8. The following procedures must be followed when custody of a student is requested by social services:
- a. Examine and photocopy the official identification/credentials of the social services representative.
 - b. Should the social services representative request that the student be removed from the school, prior to notification of the parents, the principal shall:
 - i. Obtain a copy of authorization form an appropriate court or other legal authority.
 - ii. Request information regarded when the parents will be notified and by whom.
 - iii. Obtain all pertinent information from the social services representative regarding where the child will be taken and how the parents can reach the caseworker.
 - iv. Immediately make a written summary of the event and place it in a secured office file.
 - v. Whenever custody or a student is requested by social services, the principal shall notify the Office of Catholic Schools and the pastor at parochial schools as soon as possible.

Policy 5300

Reporting Student Progress

Effective: August 2001 as Policy 5124.1

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Each elementary school shall use the diocesan system for reporting pupil progress. This should include: progress reports, interim reports, Life Skills Reports or an equivalent means of student formation feedback (such as the virtue based, Disciple of Christ Reports).

1. Reports of pupil progress should be based on evidence from multiple assessments that demonstrate a student's understanding of the different academic content standards, teacher observations, and life skills Reports, or similar feedback, when appropriate.
 2. An evaluation must be provided for each of the following curricular areas:
 - a. religion
 - b. language arts
 - c. mathematics
 - d. social studies
 - e. science
 - f. health
 - g. art
 - h. music
 - i. physical education
 3. Provisions must be made for the doctrinal, liturgical, spiritual, and moral education of the child. However, the subject of religion must be evaluated and interpreted as indicating mastery of vocabulary and concepts.
 4. The standards of each curricular area are listed on the progress report.
1. Because of the differences among primary, intermediate, and middle school levels, there are some variations in the wording of the standards for the various curricular areas.
 2. Progress reports will reflect student attendance.

3. Progress reports must be furnished to the parent(s)/guardian(s) four times a year at schools using quarters and three times a year for schools using trimesters.
4. Interim reports are sent to parent(s)/guardian(s) between report periods when a child's work does not meet academic standards; to indicate improvement in a standard or standards; or to recognize outstanding academic contributions.
5. Life Skills Reports, which indicate negative behaviors or deficient study skills, may be sent as needed to alert parent(s)/guardian(s) to problems that are developing. Alternate reports or means of providing feedback on student formation is also permitted, such as the virtue-based Disciple of Christ - Education in Virtue model. This parent/guardian communication should initiate early intervention to resolve a problem before the academic subjects are impacted in a negative way.

Policy 5310

Parent Teacher Conferences

Effective: July 2023

Revised:

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

The teacher is expected to meet periodically with the parents of each student for the purpose of discussing the student's development and progress in school. The student may be present for all or part of the conferences at the discretion of the teacher.

Conferences should take place at the designated school conference times and at other times deemed necessary by the teacher or parent.

Unless specifically prohibited by a court order, the non-custodial parent has the right to the same information and opportunities for conferences provided for the custodial parent.

Policy 5320

Promotion, Graduation, and Retention – Elementary School

Effective: June 1979 as Policy 5123.0

Revised: July 2023

☒ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☐ Both

Promotion

The promotion of students shall be based on completion of academic work and mastery of academic skills. Credit for courses shall not be given solely on the basis of class attendance.

Graduation

Eighth grade graduates shall not be dismissed for summer vacation before the rest of the student body.

Retention

It shall be mandatory to consider various factors when making a retention determination. Of primary consideration is whether or not a second year in the same grade will enable the student to gain the skills and knowledge not learned in the first year. Other factors that must be considered are academic progress, knowledge of the English language, possible learning disabilities, and social and emotional maturity. When reviewing academic progress, multiple indicators should be used including daily work, assessments, progress reports, standardized testing, Academic Support Plans, Services Plans/IEPs, and Written Plans.

A student who has not met a significant number of benchmarks in language arts and/or mathematics (primary grades) OR language arts, mathematics, religion, social studies, and science (Grades 4-8) should be considered as a possible candidate for retention.

Certain issues concerning retention apply to all grade levels. Although the elementary school principal makes the ultimate decision about promotion or retention, below are essential procedures to follow when considering retention of a student:

1. The student's lack of progress must be clearly documented and communicated to the parent(s)/guardian(s) by the teacher.
2. Lack of student progress toward meeting a significant number of the benchmarks must lead to an intervention process, based on the flow chart in the Diocesan binder "Procedures for Identifying Special Needs Students."
3. A meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers, and school administration at the beginning of the third quarter should address student progress in meeting the benchmarks. The intervention plan should be reviewed at this time to determine if the plan has been followed and if retention should be considered as an intervention.

4. A meeting with the parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers, and school administration is required by the interim of fourth quarter to determine if retention is the appropriate intervention at this time. School requirements for summer intervention should also be made at this meeting.

Policy 5321

Promotion, Graduation, and Retention – High School

Effective: August 1996 as Policy 5123.1, 5128.0, 5123.15, and 6120.0

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☒ Secondary

☐ Both

Each high school shall publish annually in the Family Handbook:

1. The number of credits that students need to acquire each year.
2. The number of credits necessary for graduation and any other school requirements for graduation.
3. Requirements for promotion and graduation.
4. Consequences for lack of credits, course failures, meeting school requirements and disciplinary violations.
5. Procedures for filing appeals or complaints concerning retention or graduation requirements.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of students whose status is in jeopardy shall be notified in writing at the end of the first quarter for semester courses and no later than the end of the third quarter for yearlong courses.

Graduation

The Catholic high schools in the Diocese of Columbus shall not permit any student to graduate ahead of his/her class. Additionally, no senior class will graduate more than three school days prior to the end of the school year.

In the rare exception of a health complication of the student or the student's immediate family, the principal, working with the Office of Catholic Schools, can offer an exemption to graduate ahead of his/her class.

Granting of Diplomas

All students who successfully complete the required courses, with or without the assistance of a services, written, or academic support plan, shall be granted a diploma.

Official transcripts from high schools or permanent records from elementary schools shall accurately document the level and amount of course work completed.

Ohio Graduation Requirements

Students must meet the following requirements for graduation:

- Pass the minimum course requirements for graduation as stated by Ohio law. Diocesan schools may have requirements that exceed the state minimums.
- Have a written graduation plan that is reviewed annually.
- Pass the assessment requirements for graduation.
- Receive instruction in economics and financial literacy* (in high school) and complete at least two semesters of fine arts** (during grades 7-12).

- Earn a total of 1 credit (2 semesters) of Physical Education. This credit must be earned through either a summer course offered by a diocesan high school or by a regular physical education class offered during the school year.*** The physical education requirement is met by addressing the objectives outlined in the Physical Education Course of Study.

* Beginning with students who enter 9th grade after July 1, 2022, students will need ½ credit of financial literacy.

**Fine arts may not be required for students in career-tech programs unless it is a component of local course requirements.

*** The governing authority for each high school, the principal, shall have the final decision concerning accepting the high school credit for Physical Education brought to the diocesan high school by a transfer student or by a student from a non-feeder elementary school.

Core Course Requirements

Ohio law outlines the course requirements all students must complete to earn a diploma. Diocesan students must earn a minimum of 20 course units in specified subject areas. Schools may elect to have requirements that exceed the minimum.

General Course Requirements	State Minimum
English Language Arts	4 credits
Health	½ credit
Mathematics*	4 credits
Physical education	½ credit
Science**	3 credits
Social studies***	3 credits
Electives****	5 credits

*Must include one unit of Algebra 2 or the equivalent of Algebra 2 (see Ohio's High School Mathematics Pathways for a list of courses that are equivalent to Algebra 2). One unit of Advanced Computer Science can be applied to satisfy one unit of Algebra 2.

**Must include one unit of physical sciences, one unit of life sciences and one unit of advanced study in one or more of the following: chemistry, physics or other physical science; advanced biology or other life science; astronomy, physical geology or other earth or space science. One unit of Advanced Computer Science can be applied to satisfy one unit of advanced science (excluding biology or life sciences).

***Must include ½ unit of American history, ½ unit of American government, and ½ unit in world history and civilizations.

****Elective units must include one or any combination of world language, fine arts, business, career-technical education, family and consumer sciences, technology, agricultural education or English language arts, mathematics, science or social studies courses not otherwise required.

Graduation Plan

Diocesan schools are required to follow Ohio Law as it relates to graduation requirements for students attending chartered nonpublic schools. Specifically,

- Per Ohio Revised Code Section 3313.617, beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, each high school shall develop a graduation plan for each student enrolled in grades 9 through 12.
 - This plan will include the individual student's pathway to meet the defined curriculum requirements and satisfy the applicable graduation requirements as provided under Ohio law. The plan shall document a student's progress and/or deficiency in meeting the graduation plan's terms and will be used as a criterion and a procedure for identifying at-risk students of not qualifying for a high school diploma.
 - A student's Individualized Service Plan (ISP) or a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) may be used in place of the graduation plan when the ISP or IEP contains academic goals substantively similar to that of the graduation plan.
 - Each plan shall be developed jointly by the student and a representative of the school and updated each school year. The school shall invite a student's parent or guardian to assist in developing and updating the plan.

Policy 5322

Identifying Students At-Risk of Not Qualifying for High School Diploma

Effective: September 2020 as Policy 5120.0 and 5120.5

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☒ Secondary

☐ Both

Criteria for Identifying At-Risk Students

The high school shall use the following criteria for identifying at-risk students. A student will be deemed at-risk using one or more of the following criteria:

1. A student is not on grade level based on the current number of credits earned.
2. A student is on grade level based on earned credits but does not make satisfactory progress in fulfilling the student's graduation plan.
3. A student has failed any year-long course during the first year of high school.
4. A student's Grade Point Average falls below 2.0.
5. A student is excessively absent from school.
6. A student who does not meet the competency score in Algebra I and ELA II on an approved alternative assessment as stipulated by Ohio Law (ORC 3313.678(D)).

Procedures to Identify Students who are At-Risk of not Qualifying for a High School Diploma

At the beginning of each school year (or once a student enrolls if it is after the beginning of the school year), the school shall review credits earned for each student in grades 9 through 12. The school will establish a plan for credit attainment and develop a graduation plan based on applicable graduation requirements and options.

Notification Process

Each school year, the high school will provide written notification to an at-risk student's parent or guardian. The notification shall include:

- A statement that the student is at-risk of not qualifying for a high school diploma.
- A description of the school's curriculum requirements, the student's individualized service plan or individualized education plan (if applicable), and the student's graduation pathway options.
- A description of any instructional or support services available to the student through the school.

Instructional or Support Services

The school shall provide additional instructional or support services to each student determined to be at-risk of not qualifying for a high school diploma. The interventions and supports will be selected to assist the student in qualifying for a diploma. These services may include, but are not limited to, the following as appropriate for each student's needs:

1. Mentoring programs
2. Tutoring programs

3. Credit through demonstrations of subject area competency (credit flexibility)
4. Adjusted curriculum options
5. Career-technical programs
6. Mental health services
7. Physical health care services
8. Family engagement and support services

Policy 5330

Ohio Assessment Requirements (Secondary)

Effective: August 2004 as Policy 5121, 5121.2, 5121.3, 5121.4, 5121.5, 5121.6

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☒ Secondary

☐ Both

All students in Diocesan high schools, including students with disabilities and those whose primary language is not English (EL students), must take an alternative assessment approved by the Ohio Department of Education.

- The Columbus Diocese has chosen the Riverside Iowa series as the alternative assessment to the Ohio state tests for the high schools. Schools can choose to administer it in an online or paper format.
- Schools need to administer it according the practices outlined in the Riverside [Planning and Implementation Guide](#).
- Students must take the Social Studies (American Government and American History) and Science (Biology) sections of an alternative assessment approved by the Ohio Department of Education once during the high school years.
- Students must meet the competency score set by the Ohio Department of Education in Math (Algebra I) and total ELA (English Language Arts II) sections of an alternative assessment approved by the Ohio Department of Education once during the high school years.
- A student is not required to retake any part of the Iowa Social Studies or Science sections where the student did not pass the proficiency cut score.
- A student is required to retake the Iowa Math and total ELA sections where the student did not pass the competency score. There are no limits to the number of times that a student can be retested; however, interventions must occur between retakes.

Transfers

Students transferring between any school, public to nonpublic or nonpublic to public, can use the scores of the assessment they took (Ohio EOC or approved alternative) to apply to the graduation requirements at their new school through a conversion chart provided by ODE.

Accommodations

Schools must follow the guidance in the [Riverside Iowa Assessments E/F/G Product Guide v6](#) in providing accommodations to students with disabilities and those with limited English speaking proficiency.

Requirements for the Alternate Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (AASCD)

A student must have a Services Plan or IEP that specifies that he/she will fulfill the state's requirement for graduation through Ohio's Alternate Assessment. In order to have this included as part of their Services Plan/ or IEP, a student must demonstrate all of the following conditions:

1. have been identified as having a disability based on a multi-factored evaluation conducted in accordance with section §3323 .03 of the Ohio Revised Code;
2. have a disability that presents "unique and significant" challenges to participation in district and state assessments regardless of the accommodations allowed;
3. have severe motor, sensory, cognitive or emotional disabilities;
4. require substantial modifications to the Diocesan curriculum in form and substance;
5. require instruction focused on the application of state standards through essential life skills;
6. require instruction multiple levels below age/grade level; and
7. be unlikely to provide valid and reliable measures of proficiency in content area via a standardized assessment even with accommodations.

Since Ohio's Alternate Assessment is designed for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, the high school must have documentation to validate the conditions listed above. Additionally, the school must provide the type of education required by this student on a day-to-day basis. The determination that the student qualifies for an Alternate Assessment must be made on a yearly basis.

Waiver

A waiver can be granted if a student has missed both the fall and spring administrations of Ohio's State Tests or the Alternative Assessment either due to a serious illness or another valid reason. A school will send documentation to the Office of Catholic Schools annually by April 1 for any student who was required, but who did not take, one or more parts of Ohio's State Tests or the Alternative Assessment in either October or March of a school year. The superintendent will then request a waiver for these students from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. A student who is granted a waiver must still meet the competency score in the Math and ELA portions of either the Ohio State Tests or the Alternative Assessment to be eligible for a diploma from a Diocese of Columbus high school.

Intervention for Students Failing Section(s)

Each Diocesan high school is required to provide remediation and interventions to any student that fails the Math and/or ELA sections of the assessment and retest them. Each high school shall have a written policy outlining the intervention services (ORC. §3313.6012), which will be available to students who have not passed one or more sections of the Alternative Assessment. The high schools also must use data to determine whether the intervention provided is effective in assisting the students to meet the necessary standards.

Records

An individual student's records of Ohio's State Tests or alternative assessment results shall be maintained on/in the cumulative record folder. The following information must be included: test taken, attainment of designated level of performance, score received. Additionally, the date each test was passed must appear on each student's transcript and on his/her graduation plan. Access to an individual student's assessment results will be granted to the student if he/she is 18 years of age or to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) (if the student is under 18), certified personnel within the school, and classified personnel whose job description includes tasks that would make access necessary. Release shall be governed by OCS Records Release policy.

Revision History: 07/23, 08/06, 08/04

Policy 5340

Ohio Assessment Requirements (Elementary)

Effective: August 2004 as Policy 5121, 5121.2, 5121.3, 5121.4, 5121.5, 5121.6

Revised: July 2023

☒ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☐ Both

As prescribed by prescribed by division (A) of section 3301.0710 of the Ohio Revised Code, chartered nonpublic schools are required to administer elementary state assessments or acceptable alternative assessments. The Diocese of Columbus has chosen Renaissance STAR assessments as the approved alternative. This assessment must be given three times during the school year in windows set by the Office of Catholic Schools. Schools may test more than the three scheduled assessments if they choose. Kindergarten students must take the STAR Early Literacy at least twice during the school year.

Scholarship Students

Any grade 3-8 student who is a recipient of an Ohio EdChoice (Traditional or Expansion), Jon Peterson or Autism Scholarship is required to take annual approved assessments in Math and Reading. Students in grades 5 and 8 must take an approved assessment in science. Renaissance STAR has been approved as an acceptable alternative for Math and Reading by ODE.

Students in grades 5 and 8 must take the Ohio state assessment in science during the windows set by the Department of Education.

All assessment data must be uploaded and reported through the Scholarship Application system

Policy 5350

Third Grade Reading Guarantee

Effective: July 2016 as Policy 5122 and 5122.05

Revised: July 2023

☒ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☐ Both

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE THIRD GRADE READING GUARANTEE- State Scholarship Students Only.

All schools must follow the provisions of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee as specified in the Third Grade Reading Guarantee Guidance Manual for any EdChoice, EdChoice Expansion, Jon Peterson or Autism Scholarship recipients. Specifically, they must

- Give a diagnostic assessment to all K-3 state scholarship students,
- Notify parents within 30 days of on track/off track status,
- Provide students not reading proficiently intervention services,
- Retain 3rd grade students who do not attain the promotion reading score designated under division (A)(3) of O.R.C. 3301.0710 on Ohio's Third Grade English Language Arts (ELA) Test or approved alternative assessment*
- Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, a student's parent or guardian, in consultation with the student's reading teacher and principal, may request that a student be promoted to fourth grade regardless of the student's score on Ohio's State Test for grade 3 English language arts or acceptable alternative assessment. Students promoted to fourth grade through this exemption must continue to receive intensive reading instruction until the student is able to read at grade level.

*Jon Peterson and Autism Scholarship students are exempt from the retention provision if stated in the student's IEP.

Diagnostic Assessment

The Columbus Diocese has chosen Star Early Literacy and STAR Reading from the approved vendor assessment list as the annual reading diagnostic assessment.

1. Diagnostic assessments in reading, as approved by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), shall be given by September 30th of each year for 1st, 2nd, or 3rd Grade and November 1 for Kindergarten, with the exception of students with significant cognitive disabilities or other disabilities as authorized by the ODE on a case-by-case basis.
2. Per O.R.C. §3301.071 I(k)(l)(a) each school for which at least 65% of its total enrollment is made up of students who are participating in state scholarship programs (EdChoice, Jon Peterson) shall administer the state tests to ALL its students.
3. Diagnostic assessment results shall be translated to ODE's definition of "on track" and "not on track". The school shall make the final determination regarding whether a student is "on track" or "not on track".
4. Each school subject to O.R.C. §3301.163 annually shall report to the ODE, through the Scholarship Applications System, the "On Track, Not on Track" status for K-3 students.

5. The school shall administer each applicable diagnostic assessment to any state scholarship student who transfers into a new school who did not take a diagnostic assessment at the previous school within thirty (30) days of transfer.

Definitions:

"On track" means any student who is reading at or above the 20th percentile on the STAR reading or STAR Early Literacy assessment by September 30th.

"Not on track" means any student who is below the 20th percentile on the STAR reading or STAR Early Literacy by September 30th.

Notification Requirement

For students identified as off track, the school must:

1. Notify the parents, in writing, that the student has been identified as having a deficiency in reading;
2. Notify the parents, in writing, that if the student does not attain the promotion reading score designated under division (A)(3) of O.R.C. 3301.0710 on Ohio's Third Grade English Language Arts (ELA) Test or approved alternative assessment, the student shall be retained unless the student is exempt;
3. Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, districts must include a statement that connects the child's proficiency level in reading to long-term outcomes of success related to proficiency in reading.

Reading Interventions

1. Schools must provide intensive reading instruction services, as determined appropriate by the school, to each student identified as reading below grade level. The Diocesan Reading and Monitoring plan can be used to track these interventions.
2. Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, chartered nonpublic schools must provide the following for EdChoice Scholarship students not reading proficiently but promoted to fourth grade:
 - High-dosage tutoring opportunities aligned with the student's classroom instruction through either a state-approved vendor or locally approved opportunity that aligns with high-dosage tutoring best practices. High-dosage tutoring must include additional instruction time either:
 - Three days per week, or
 - At least 50 hours over 36 weeks.
 - Intervention services aligned to the science of reading.
 - Schools must continue to provide intervention services until the student is reading proficiently at their current grade level.

Assessments for Retained Students:

If the student does not attain the promotion reading score designated under division (A)(3) of O.R.C. 3301.0710 on Ohio's Third Grade English Language Arts (ELA) Test or on an approved alternative (Renaissance 3rd Grade Proficiency Test), the student shall be retained unless the student is exempt. Retained students are considered third-graders in all subjects until they are promoted to fourth grade; however, they can receive 4th grade instruction in other subject areas. Students who are not promoted mid-year to fourth grade will take Ohio's third grade state tests in all subject areas (see chart below). They will continue to receive intensive interventions documented through the Diocese of Columbus reading and Monitoring Plan.

Current Enrollment Status	Receives Advanced Instruction in Other Subject Areas	Meets District's Criteria for Mid-Year Promotion	Assessment Content
Retained Third Grade Student	No	No	Grade 3 ELA Grade 3 Mathematics
Retained Third Grade Student	No	Yes	Grade 4 ELA Grade 4 Mathematics
Retained Third Grade Student	Yes	No	Grade 3 ELA Grade 3 Mathematics
Retained Third Grade Student	Yes	Yes	Grade 4 ELA Grade 4 Mathematics

Exemptions from the Third Grade Reading Guarantee

All students scoring below the promotion score on the third grade ELA or approved alternative (3rd Grade Proficiency Assessment) must be retained, except specific groups of students including ELLs and students with significant cognitive disabilities:

- ELLs who have been enrolled in US schools for less than three full school years and have less than three years of instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL) program
- Students with significant cognitive disabilities that have a modified curriculum.

NOTE: Students with significant cognitive disabilities are still required to be administered the grade 3 ELA in whichever format (general education grade 3 ELA or the Alternate Assessment) is appropriate for the student.

Mid-Year Promotion

Retained third grade students can be promoted mid-year to grade 4 if they demonstrate that they are reading at or above grade level by attaining the promotion score of the Renaissance Grade 3 Proficiency test. The mid-year promotion form must be completed and approved by the principal of the school. Students who are not promoted mid-year to fourth grade will take Ohio's third grade state tests in all subject areas. The retention provision, including exemptions to retention, continue to apply to these students. Students promoted mid-year to fourth grade will take Ohio's fourth grade state tests in all subject areas. The Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plan for any retained third grade student who has been promoted mid-year to fourth grade must continue to be implemented for the entire academic year and if necessary, for additional school years.

Policy 5333

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Assessments – Accommodations, Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners

Effective: August 2004 as Policy 5121.3 and 5121.35

Revised: July 2023

All Ohio students must take statewide assessments including students with disabilities and English learner students whose primary language is NOT English and whose level of English proficiency is not at the level needed to participate effectively in the mainstream classroom. Accommodations are considered adjustments to the testing conditions, test format or test administration that provide equitable access during assessments for students with disabilities and students who are English learners. The administration of the assessment should never be the first occasion in which an accommodation is introduced to the student.

Accommodations should:

- Provide equitable access during instruction and assessment;
- Mitigate the effects of a student's disability or English learner status;
- Promote learning or performance expectations;
- Preserve the construct being assessed; and
- Maintain the integrity or validity of the assessment.

Eligibility

Five distinct groups of individuals may receive accommodations on Ohio's State Test or an approved alternative assessment:

1. Students with disabilities who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP, or Services Plan).
2. Students with an Accommodation Plan in lieu of an IEP or Section 504 plan.
3. Students who have been formally identified as English learners.*
4. Students who are English learners with disabilities.
5. Testers who exited high school with English learner status and/or a valid IEP, Services Plan or Accommodation Plan in lieu of an IEP or 504.

Schools must document student accommodations by test and content area, not content area alone.

*The [Guidelines for Identifying English Learners](#) outline Ohio's standardized English learner identification. Students who have exited English learner status may not receive English learner accommodations on annual assessments.

Policy 5400

Supervision of Students

Effective: July 2023

Revised:

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Students must be supervised by an adult at all times during the regularly scheduled school day, on school sponsored field trips, during school sponsored activities, and at any other times during which the school accepts responsibility for supervision. All safe environment policies and regulations must be adhered to at all times. All school personnel shall uphold the code of conduct established for the school and follow the expectations, procedures, corrective measures, and penalties regarding the school's rules.

Supervision requires both physical presence and attention to the students. Teachers shall also be responsible for establishing a classroom environment in which students receive continuing instruction regarding acceptable behavior.

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 school or on school property
- A specific diagram of the outdoor space to assist in stationing supervisory personnel

It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure 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.

Since Catholic schools are partners with parents in their children's formation and in providing for their safety, the school administration may notify parents when they become aware of concerns about student life or behavior, even when off-campus. Both civil law and the Gospel demand that whatever can be done to protect God's children must be done.

Policy 5401

Code of Conduct

Effective: February 1981 as Policy 5144.0 and 5144.1

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Each school shall develop, publish, and update a code of conduct for students on a regular basis. This code shall specify expectations for student attendance and behavior that encourage self-discipline and create an atmosphere conducive to learning. It shall indicate procedures, corrective measures, and penalties that the school may use for violations of its rules. 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.

In establishing the code of conduct, the school shall:

1. safeguard the students' rights to due process;
2. ensure that the rules and consequences are understandable by the students;
3. ensure that the consequences are constructive and relative to the misbehavior or that academic credit is not denied except in cases of academic violations, e.g., cheating, plagiarism;
4. ensure that work of an academic nature is not used as a consequence; and
5. encourage reconciliation with the offended party(ies), if applicable.

The following actions are forbidden with the Diocese of Columbus:

1. Corporal punishment. 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. However, school personnel may use an apply only such amount 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 weapons or dangerous objects upon the person or within the control of the pupil, for the purpose of self-defense or for the protection of persons or property." (Ohio Revised Code 3319.41)
 - To protect persons or property
 - All other situations that comport with

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

2. Unsupervised removal. A student may not be sent outside of the classroom if he or she will not be under direct supervision of an adult as described in Policy 5400.

The school's code of conduct shall be distributed annually to students, parents(s)/guardian(s) and the school staff in written form (or on the school website, if appropriate). The signatures of students, parents(s)/guardian(s), and teachers indicating acceptance of the code are required annually and shall be maintained in the school office.

Revision History: 07/23, 07/16, 08/11, 08/06, 08/01, 08/96, 02/90, 05/87, 01/81

Policy 5404

Behavior Off-Campus

Effective: August 2006 as Policy 5144.3

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Students may be subject to the full range of discipline policies, penalties, and procedures that apply to unhealthy, dangerous, or immoral conduct that occurs off-campus, including conduct that adversely affects the education process or the mission of the school community. Examples of such off-campus behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Electronic/internet or cell phone threats and harassment;
- Threats of violence;
- Alcohol use;
- Fighting;
- Hazing;
- Drug possession or sale;
- Reckless driving;
- Sexual assaults.

The following is to be included in all school handbooks:

The Diocese of Columbus has a concern with conduct by students at school or away from school that may bring discredit or harm to the name of the school or the reputation of the student body. Consequently, conduct at school or away from school that is inappropriate to Christian moral standards, conduct that is in violation of the law, including the use of social media, conduct that is detrimental to the common good, threatening, harmful, or offensive to other students or staff or conduct that is of such nature as to jeopardize the good name of the school, may subject a student to discipline. Discipline for such conduct shall be at the sole discretion of the school.

Policy 5405

Probation

Effective: July 2023

Revised:

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

A student may be placed on probation by a principal for a specified time for serious or continued misconduct or serious academic deficiency.

These procedures shall be followed for probation. In parochial schools, the pastor shall be notified in advance that the student will be placed on probation and that a conference will be held.

- A conference including parents, student, principal, and, if appropriate, teacher(s), shall be held to discuss the problem and the terms of the probation.
- A written account shall be made of the conditions of the probation as discussed in the conference. The student and parent shall be made aware of the terms of the probation and that the student has been given a specified period of time in which to show improvement.
- The statement of probation conditions shall be signed by the parents, student, and principal. A copy of the statement shall be given to the parents and one copy kept on file in the school office.
- Parents must be notified in writing when the probation is terminated or if it is to be extended.

Policy 5406

Suspension

Effective: May 1981 as Policy 5114.0

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Serious misconduct is cause for suspension and/or expulsion. Serious misconduct is that which disrupts the academic atmosphere of the school; threatens the safety of or endangers fellow students, teachers, or school officials; damages property; or flagrantly or repeatedly violates regulations or policies of the diocese or school. A student may be placed on suspension for serious misconduct occurring on-campus, during school related activities off-campus, off-campus behavior, or for continued misconduct after having been placed on probation.

For such serious misconduct, the principal or administrator in charge may immediately suspend the student from school. Only an administrator has the authority to suspend a student. The student may be sent home during the school day provided that the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) has been notified. Expulsion shall not take place except as a result of the suspension procedure described below:

Suspension Procedures

1. At the time of the suspension, the principal or administrator in charge shall notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of the suspension in a written format stating the reason(s) for the suspension and request that the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) meet with the principal to review the matter.
2. Within three (3) school days of the suspension, the principal or administrator in charge shall meet with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s). The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be given an opportunity to express their views.
3. By the school day following the meeting, the principal or administrator in charge shall advise the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the decision, either to readmit the student to school, extend the period of suspension, or expel the student.
4. If the decision is to extend the period of suspension, the length of this period shall be indicated. The suspension period may not exceed ten (10) school days per incident. If the student has served an in-school suspension, the in-school suspension counts toward the total suspension time.

An administrator's decision to suspend a student is a final decision.

Policy 5407

Expulsion

Effective: May 1981 as Policy 5114.0

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

The permanent dismissal of a student from a school is an extreme measure to be taken only as a last resort: a) after all other efforts of motivation and counseling have failed; b) where attendant circumstances of crime, scandal, immorality, or disruption constitute a threat to the physical or moral welfare of other persons; c) as set forth in the Student Withdrawal on Grounds of Parental Behavior, Policy 5408; or d) when the contractual relationship between the school and a family has been irreparably broken in the determination of the school.

The following procedures shall be observed:

- A record shall be kept of the previous measures of remediation, counseling, probation, conferences, and/or suspensions. This documentation should include written communication between the school and the family.
- Except in extreme circumstances of crime, scandal, immorality, or disruption that constitute a threat to the physical or moral welfare of persons, a student should be suspended prior to expulsion.
- A conference shall be held with the parents, student, administrator, pastor, and, if appropriate, teachers at which time the grounds for dismissal will be presented and discussed.
- The final decision to expel a student rests with the administrator and pastor in a parochial school and, in a diocesan school, with the principal with the knowledge and consent of the superintendent.
- If the decision to expel is made, the administrator shall notify the parent/guardian and the superintendent in a written format clearly stating, “[student name inserted] is being expelled from [school name inserted]”, and include the reasons for the expulsion within three (3) days the decision to expel the student is finalized.
- The administrator shall notify the parents of the appeal process within the written expulsion letter (Policy 5409).
- The principal shall properly document all expulsion cases involving the grounds, record of conferences, and final notice. Such documentation shall be maintained in a file separate and apart from the student’s permanent record.
- The student’s permanent record shall indicate that the reason for transfer was expulsion.
- Consideration of admitting a student who has been expelled from a Catholic school will be done in consultation with the Office of Catholic Schools, the pastor, and the administrator of both the expelling school and the new school.
- Consideration of re-admitting a student who has been expelled from a Catholic school the year prior will be done in consultation with the Office of Catholic Schools, the pastor, and the administrator of the school.

Revision History: 07/23, 07/16, 08/13, 08/11, 08/06, 08/01, 08/96, 02/90, 01/89

Policy 5408

Student Withdrawal on Grounds of Parental Behavior

Effective: May 2019 as Policy 5114.5

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Normally a child is not to be deprived of a Catholic education or otherwise penalized for actions of parents. However, parents may so significantly reduce the school's ability to effectively serve its students that the parents may be requested to remove their student from the school for any of the following reasons:

1. Refusal to cooperate with school personnel or
2. Refusal to adhere to Diocesan or local policies, regulations, Parent/Student Handbook or
3. Interference in matters of school administration or discipline.
4. Public rejection of or public action contrary to the laws, norms, and teachings of the Catholic Church.

In such cases, reasonable effort to elicit the minimum requisite parental cooperation shall be made and documented.

The principal must verify that parents were informed to terminate the inappropriate behavior and begin cooperating with the school or this policy on Student Withdrawal on Grounds of Parental Behavior would be enforced. If such effort does not correct the situation, then, after consultation with the superintendent, and, in the case of parochial schools, the pastor, the principal may require the parents to withdraw their child.

Documentation signed by the principal and parents, as well as any other information or evidence of consultation with the parents on the matter, must be retained on file.

If the parents refuse to accept the withdrawal, the procedures for expulsion should be followed as outlined in Policy 5407.

Registration for the following school year may be denied on the basis of this policy, but is not limited to the actions specified herein.

Policy 5409

Expulsion Appeal Process

Effective: April 1992 as Policy 5114.1

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

An appeal of an expulsion shall be handled according to the following procedure:

1. When a parent or a student (18 years of age) believes that his/her rights under the handbook agreement with a Catholic school have been violated through the expulsion procedure, the person may submit a written appeal within three (3) days of the date of expulsion was placed in writing to the parent by the administrator. The written appeal must be directed to the superintendent in the Office of Catholic Schools with the following information provided:
 - a. The subject of the appeal
 - b. What rights and/or policies have been violated
 - c. Any factual data, other than hearsay, the person considers appropriate
 - d. The efforts that were made to resolve or correct the issue leading to expulsionOnly requests for appeal submitted in writing will be accepted. Phone calls will not be accepted.
2. Should the superintendent or his/her designee determine that a person's rights and/or a policy have been violated, he/she will investigate the appeal. He/she will review the materials submitted to the Office of Catholic Schools and may ask for further details. At his/her sole discretion, he/she may determine that a hearing would be appropriate, in which case he/she may hear the appeal alone or form a hearing committee. The decision of the superintendent and/or his/her designee in the Office of Catholic Schools, and, if applicable, the hearing committee, is final and binding and concludes the appeal process.
3. The appeal process is designed to support the Catholic Church's belief in subsidiarity and, therefore, at no time during the appeal process or hearing committee meeting may the parent, employee, or student (18 years of age) have an attorney present.

Policy 5410

Threats to Welfare and Safety

Effective: September 1992 as Policy 5140.11 and 5140.12

Revised: July 2024

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

No student shall use, possess, handle, transmit, or conceal any object which is, or can be considered, a weapon or instrument of violence. Furthermore, no student shall make threats of any kind about the use of or intention to inflict harm by means of a weapon or instrument of violence. Objects which are explosive or incendiary in nature, or any object reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety or security of any person, are prohibited on school premises, and at school-related functions.

“Possession” is defined as a) physically holding and/or carrying a deadly weapon, weapon, or replica of a weapon, or b) the deadly weapon, weapon, or replica is under the control of a student whether it is located in a car, locker, backpack, or other location, or c) being under control of or belonging to the student while on the school grounds and/or participating in a school activity. Carrying, bringing, using, or possessing a deadly weapon, weapon, or replica on school grounds, when being transported in vehicles to/from a Catholic school, during a school-sponsored activity or event, and off school property when the conduct has a reasonable connection to school or any school-sponsored event without the authorization of the school is prohibited.

A deadly weapon, weapon, or replica is defined as: a) a firearm, whether loaded or unloaded; b) any pellet, BB gun, or other device, whether operational or not, designed to propel projectiles by spring action or compressed air; c) a fixed blade knife with a blade that measures longer than three inches in length or a spring-loaded knife, or a pocket knife with a blade longer than three inches; d) any object, device, instrument, material, or substance – whether animate or inanimate – used or intended or threatened to be used to inflict death or serious bodily injury including, but not limited to, slingshot, nunchakus, spring gun, throwing star, bludgeon, brass knuckles, or any similar objects.

If a student is found to be in violation of the policy, a report will be made to local law enforcement. Any or all of the disciplinary actions listed below may be imposed by the administrator, depending on the severity of the offense as well as the previous disciplinary record of the student. Consequences may include: counseling/family counseling; approved school/community service; in-school suspension; referral to Juvenile Court and/or other appropriate law enforcement agency; suspension from school; expulsion from school following suspension; and diversion programs.

However, expulsion without suspension is mandatory for the possession of a deadly weapon on school grounds.

Revision History: 07/24, 07/23, 07/16, 08/11, 08/06, 08/01, 08/96, 09/92

Policy 5411

Bullying

Effective: September 2002 as Policy 5140.02

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

The Diocese of Columbus schools and their staffs shall not tolerate any bullying on school grounds or at any school activity on or off campus whether these actions are committed in person, written or electronically transmitted.

Bullying is defined as a conscious, willful, and deliberately hostile activity intended to harm, induce fear through the threat of further aggression, and create terror. Bullying includes these three elements: imbalance of power, intent to harm, and threat of further aggression. Bullying behavior may include physical intimidation or assault; extortion; oral or written threats; electronically transmitted acts; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations; and social isolation.

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place over digital devices such as cell phones, computers, and tablets. Cyberbullying can occur through SMS, text, and mobile applications (apps) or online in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else, causing embarrassment or humiliation. Some cyberbullying crosses the line into unlawful or criminal behavior.

Staff members who observe or become aware of an act of bullying shall take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene. If a staff member believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists, he/she shall report to the school principal for further investigation.

The Diocese expects students and parent(s)/guardian(s) who become aware of an act of bullying on school grounds or at any school activity on or off campus to report it to the school principal for further investigation. The principal will contact parent(s)/guardian(s) of the aggressor and the victim. This investigation may include interviews with students, parent(s)/guardian(s), teachers, school staff, and reviewing records.

Consequences for students who bully others may include but are not limited to counseling, parent conference, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion depending on the results of the investigation. No retaliation shall be taken against a person who reports bullying.

Schools shall have a policy on bullying, which incorporates the essentials of this policy, printed in their parent/student handbook.

Teasing behavior alone does not necessarily constitute bullying. Children may regularly interact in a manner that would be unacceptable among adults. Students are still learning how to interact appropriately with their peers. It is understandable that, in the school setting, students often engage in teasing, insults, banter, shoving, and pushing that is upsetting to students. Teasing behaviors in and of themselves – while needing to be addressed by

school officials – does not constitute bullying or harassment and the interventions and consequences are of another level.

Policy 5412

Minors Harassment Policy

Effective: December 1998 as Policy 5140.05 and 5140.06

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

1. The Catholic schools of the Diocese of Columbus shall maintain a working and academic environment, in all programs and activities, free of all forms of harassment and intimidation. No student, teacher, other staff member or volunteer (male or female) should be subject to harassment in any form, and specifically not to unsolicited and/or unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, whether verbal, physical, or electronically transmitted.
2. Harassment can take many forms. Harassment can occur at any school activity, and/or can take place in classrooms, halls, cafeterias, or even at programs sponsored by the school at other locations. It does not include compliments of a socially acceptable nature. Harassment is verbal, physical, or electronic conduct that embarrasses, denigrates, or shows hostility toward a person because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age, disability, or other protected characteristics.
3. Conduct which constitutes sexual harassment is prohibited. Sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. offensive sexual flirtations, advances, propositions; jokes;
 - b. continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual or gender-based nature;
 - c. explicit or degrading sexual or gender-based comments about another individual or his/her appearance;
 - d. the display or circulation of sexually explicit or suggestive writing, pictures or objects;
 - e. any offensive or physical conduct which shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of gender or sex;
 - f. graffiti of a sexual nature;
 - g. fondling oneself sexually or talking about one's sexual activity in front of others;
 - h. spreading rumors about or categorizing others as to sexual activity.

Sexual harassment is not limited to conduct that is sexual in nature - it also includes harassment that is based on gender. Gender-based harassment, which is also prohibited, is conduct that would not occur except for the sex of the person involved. An example would be referring to a woman by or as a female body part, or a demeaning sex-based term, or treating people differently because of their gender. The same prohibitions apply with regard to inflammatory or offensive comments or conduct which is based upon race, color, age, religion, disability, or national origin. In short, working relationships between employees and peer relationships among students must be based on mutual respect.

Sexual harassment also includes the taking of, or refusal to take, any personnel or academic action on the basis of a person's submission to or refusal of sexual overtures. No person should so much as imply that an individual's "cooperation" or submission to unwelcome sexual activity will have any effect on the

individual's employment, assignment, compensation, advancement, development, academic evaluation, participation in school programs or activities, or any other condition of employment or academic achievement.

Not all physical conduct is necessarily considered sexual in nature. (For example, a coach hugging a minor after an accomplishment, a teacher consoling a minor with an injury, or physical conduct during athletic events would not be considered sexual conduct.) However, peer-based sexual harassment (e.g., student to student) can be a form of prohibited conduct where the harassing conduct creates a hostile environment.

4. A sexually hostile environment can be created by a school employee, volunteer, another student, or a visitor to the school.
5. Any person who believes he/she is the subject of harassment or intimidation must contact either the principal, assistant principal, or pastor at the elementary level; or the principal, assistant principal or Office of Catholic Schools at the secondary level. A complaint must be filed in writing. In the case of harassment involving a student or students, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the respective students shall be duty notified. In the event that an individual alleges harassment by a principal, assistant principal or a pastor, the individual shall file the complaint with the superintendent. All complaints will be promptly investigated, and the person initiating the complaint will be advised of the outcome of the investigation. A student who believes he or she has been sexually harassed (or a parent/guardian who believes that his/her minor has been harassed) must contact one of the appropriate persons as listed above.
6. Where it is determined that harassment has occurred, the appropriate authority will take immediate disciplinary action against any administrator, teacher, staff or student engaging in harassment. The response shall take into account the individuals and circumstances. Such action may include, depending on the circumstances, disciplinary measures up to and including termination of employment or expulsion in the case of a student
7. No retaliation against anyone who reports harassment shall be tolerated. The Diocese prohibits such retaliation and will take appropriate responsive action if retaliation occurs.

Filing of Harassment Information

1. The investigator must keep extensive notes of all aspects of the investigation.
2. These notes must include what the investigator did, what the investigator concluded, and how the investigator followed up as a result of the findings and conclusion.
3. These notes must include verbal statements made by persons questioned and any written statements.
4. All of the above details must be summarized to include:
 - a. how the investigation was conducted;
 - b. what conclusion was reached and why;
 - c. what action was taken;
 - d. how, when, and to whom the conclusion was communicated; and
 - e. notification of warning against retaliation.
5. All of the above is kept only in the investigator's file.
6. If no action is taken, nothing is placed in the personnel file or student file.

7. If an action is taken against the accused (i.e. warning, restrictions, leave, or release from contract in the case of personnel, or warning restrictions, suspension or expulsion in the case of students), the action taken is:
 - a. formalized by putting in writing,
 - b. a copy is given to the person or student against whom the action is taken, and
 - c. a copy is placed in the personnel or student file.
8. The Harassment Complaint Form and Administrative Summary Form can be found on the Office of Catholic Schools website.

Harassment – School Responsibilities

1. Annually, at the start of each school year, the school shall publish the Diocesan Harassment Policy for Students in the parent/student handbook.
2. Each school shall follow diocesan procedures for timely investigation and response to complaints.
3. Each school shall periodically train administrators, teachers, staff, and volunteers and use age-appropriate classroom information for students to ensure that they understand which types of behavior constitute harassment and how they should respond in the event of experiencing such behavior. Records are to be kept of training dates and names of those in attendance.

Policy 5413

Student Abuse and Neglect

Effective: January 2002 as Policy 5140.0

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

In compliance with state law (ORC 2151.421), any teacher, counselor, administrator, or other school employee, having reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected is required by law to immediately contact the county Child Protection Services and law enforcement - if deemed necessary, and inform the agency contacted of the facts and circumstances which led to the filing of a report.

The employee will immediately report the case to the school administrator.

The school administrator will immediately report the case to the diocesan superintendent and the Office of Safe Environment.

If the suspected child abuse involves a school employee, the school administrator shall also immediately notify the Office of Catholic Schools to begin proceedings with the Office of Educator Conduct within the Ohio Department of Education.

Revision History: 07/23, 07/16, 08/11, 08/06, 01/02

Policy 5414

Drug Prevention

Effective: January 1979 as Policy 5140.0

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Possession and/or use of tobacco, possession, use, 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. Vaping and e-cigarettes are included in this prohibition.

The schools of the Diocese of Columbus recognize that the misuse of drugs is a serious problem with legal, physical, and social implications for the whole school community.

For the purposes of this policy, "drugs" shall mean:

1. All dangerous controlled substances as so designated and prohibited by the Ohio statute (ORC §3719.011); all chemicals which release toxic vapors;
2. all alcoholic beverages;
3. any prescription or patent drug, except those for which permission to use in school has been granted;
4. anabolic steroids; and
5. any substance that is a "look-alike" to any of the above (ORC §2925.01-0).

Diocesan schools prohibit the use, possession, concealment, or distribution of any drug or any drug-related paraphernalia as the term is defined by law on school grounds, in school vehicles, or at any school sponsored event. The term "drug paraphernalia" shall have the meaning set forth in the Ohio Revised Code. (§2925.14-A.)

The schools should strive to prevent drug abuse and help drug abusers through education. School policy shall address prevention, intervention, treatment and disciplinary measures. The drug prevention program in schools shall:

1. Emphasize the prevention of drug use;
2. Provide for a comprehensive, age appropriate, developmentally-based alcohol and other drug education and prevention program;
3. Address legal, social, psychological, and health consequences of drug and alcohol use;
4. Provide information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use illicit drugs and alcohol.

Schools shall develop local policies regarding consequences of the use, possession, concealment, or distribution of any drug or any drug-related paraphernalia. These policies shall include:

1. consequences for first time and repeat off enders. The first-time offender is required to meet with his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) and school officials;

2. a clear statement that disciplinary sanctions, up to and including expulsion, will be imposed on students who violate the school standards of conduct and a description of those standards;
3. information about alcohol and other drug counseling and rehabilitation programs available to students and their parent(s)/guardian(s).
4. the obligation to report distribution/sale of drugs to the police.

Anyone who commits any act prohibited by this policy shall be brought to the attention of the building principal or the principal's designated representative. The principal or representative shall place student safety as a priority in each situation. The principal or representative shall notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) within 24 hours of the incident.

Policy 5415

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Sharing Reports of Abuse or Neglect

Effective: January 2026

Revised:

School personnel are required by law to report suspected abuse or neglect to Children Protective Services (CPS). CPS, being the agency receiving the information, shall maintain the confidentiality of information disclosed pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code § 2151.421 or 2151.422. However, Ohio Administrative Code § 5101:2-33-21 permits the disclosure of confidential child abuse and neglect records to certain persons during an assessment or investigation. These persons or entities include the following:

- ODJFS staff with supervisory responsibility
- Law enforcement officials or county prosecutors who are investigating a report of child abuse or neglect or that a person knowingly made a false report
- Any PCSA or children services agency assessing/investigating a child abuse or neglect report
- A guardian ad litem or court-appointed special advocate
- A coroner to assist in the evaluation of a child's death due to alleged child abuse and/or neglect
- Child abuse and neglect multidisciplinary team members
- Public service providers working with a parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker or children of the family about whom the information is being provided, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Probation officers and caseworkers employed by the court or the Department of Youth Services
 - Employees of the local county boards of developmental disabilities and employees of the local county boards of alcohol drug addiction and mental health
- A school administrator
- The licensing and supervising authorities of a public or nonpublic out-of-home care setting in which child abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred
- The approving authority of a kinship care setting in which child abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred
- Administrators of public out-of-home care settings in which child abuse or neglect is alleged to have occurred including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Psychiatric hospitals managed by the Department of Mental Health

- Institutions managed by county courts for unruly or delinquent children
- Institutions managed by the Department of Youth Services
- Institutions or programs managed by the Department of Developmental Disabilities
- Child abuse citizen review boards or a child fatality review board
- A grand jury or court
- A children's advocacy center
- The superintendent of public instruction when the report involves a person who holds a license issued by the State Board of Education, the agency has determined that child abuse or neglect occurred, and the abuse or neglect is related to the person's duties and responsibilities

Under these provisions and in keeping with the directives of the USCCB Charter on Child Protection, school personnel may disclose information reported to CPS to school administrators, the superintendent or his/her designee, and the Safe Environment Office.

Policy 5500

Searches of Students and Schools

Effective: July 2023

Revised:

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Inspection of School Property

A student assigned school property, such as a locker, desk, computer, tablet, etc. has use of, but not proprietary rights to, that item. The pastor or a school or diocesan administrator may conduct a search of the school plant and every aperture thereof, including all school property such lockers, desks, tablets, etc. School searches must be reasonable and related to the school official's responsibilities.

Inspection of Personal Property

Normally, inspection of personal property, e.g. pockets, handbags, book bags, cars, etc., should not be conducted without the student's permission. If permission is given, the search must be made in the presence of at least two school officials. If permission is not given, the principal should contact the Office of Catholic Schools for further instruction.

After consultation with the Office of Catholic Schools, inspection of personal property, e.g. pockets, handbags, book bags, cars, etc., may be made if the school official has reasonable suspicion that such an inspection will reveal possession of objects or any substance which is prohibited on school property.

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

Breathalyzer Testing

The administration of a breathalyzer test to a student by a school official constitutes a search. Except as otherwise noted within this policy, a school official must have reasonable grounds to believe a student is under the influence of alcohol (i.e., looks, smells, or acts intoxicated) before administering a breathalyzer test.

An effort should be made to administer the breathalyzer test in a private setting. If a student tests positive, the school official should contact the student's parents or legal guardian and the police if not involved already.

If a school chooses to make admittance to school-related functions for all students contingent on submitting to a breathalyzer test, in addition to all other admittance requirements, a letter should be sent to all parents/guardians informing them of the practice. A permission slip signed by the parent/guardian and student, authorizing the breathalyzer test, shall be required upon admission to each school-related function.

Revision History: 07/23

Policy 5600

Student Pregnancy

Effective: August 1981 as Policy 5138.0

Revised: July 2023

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

In consideration for the sacredness of life and Christ's example of compassion and mercy, no Catholic school shall suspend or expel a student on the grounds of pregnancy or paternity. However, a discussion between the school administration and the families of the students must occur in order to determine the best path forward. School administrators should consult with the Office of Catholic Schools prior to the meeting.

Any determination as to health matters concerning the restrictions on, or continuing participation in, curricular or extra-curricular activities by a pregnant student shall be made by the student's doctor. Written notice of the doctor's determination shall be provided to the school principal.

Students involved in a pregnancy need Christian acceptance, compassion, and counsel. It is the Christian community's responsibility to give support and aid to those involved. Counseling for the expectant parents and the parents of the expectant parents is strongly recommended.

Policy 5700

Students Under Court Order or Restricted Bail

Effective: July 2023

Revised:

☐ Elementary

☐ Secondary

☒ Both

Any student who has been arrested and charged with any felony or any misdemeanor involving assault of any kind or drug use and/or sale shall not be permitted to attend school pending the disposition of the charge. Instead, during the time the charge remains pending, the student shall receive materials that will allow the student to maintain class progress from home. Upon the disposition of the charge, the school shall make a final determination regarding the student's continued enrollment.

Any student who is the subject of a temporary restraining order which prevents the student from having contact with another student enrolled at the same school or teacher or other employee of the school, and which cannot be reasonably complied with if the student continues attending school, shall not be permitted to attend class, pending the adjudication of the restraining order. Instead, during the time the charge remains pending, the student shall receive materials that will allow the student to maintain class progress from home. Should the restraining order be entered permanently, the school may begin expulsion procedures for that student.