



Catholic Schools
A Faith-Based Education
that Lasts a Lifetime

POLICIES FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Fourth Revision
September 2021

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DONALD WILLIAM WUERL
BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE APOSTOLIC SEE
ARCHBISHOP OF WASHINGTON

DECREE

To the Clergy, Religious and Lay Faithful of the Archdiocese of Washington:

It is my pleasure to approve and promulgate the new Policies for Catholic Schools within the Archdiocese of Washington. The purpose of the policies is to provide a common and agreed upon instrument for ensuring that our schools are Catholic, academically excellent, well governed and, to the best of our ability, affordable and accessible.

The policies reflect nearly two years of significant work on the part of pastors, principals, teachers, parents, parishioners and archdiocesan staff. Thousands of people were involved in the development of the policies, which will well serve the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Washington for many years to come. In a particular way, I am grateful to the archdiocesan staff who dedicated much effort to this project and to all those who took the time to share their insights and expertise throughout the extensive consultative process.

These policies on Catholic education become effective on October 1, 2009 with their implementation to be carried out in stages until the process is complete on July 1, 2010, anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

The alteration and/or interpretation of these policies is the sole responsibility of the Archbishop of Washington.

It is my hope that these policies will assist all involved in Catholic education to achieve our goal of providing students formation in Christ's Gospel and our Catholic faith and helping them grow in their encounter with the living Lord.

Given this fifteenth day of August, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, two thousand and nine in the Archdiocese of Washington.


Archbishop of Washington



Chancellor

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

Catholic identity is best expressed by a school's visible communion and cooperation with the Archbishop, the appropriate celebration of sacramental life, the teaching of the faith and an environment permeated with the spirit of the Gospel. Policies in these four areas of Catholic identity apply to all Catholic schools and seek to ensure that the Good News that Jesus proclaimed is truly passed on from one generation to the next through the great blessing of Catholic schools.

GOVERNANCE

The governance structures for Catholic schools vary depending on the sponsoring organization that has overall responsibility for the school. The Archdiocese of Washington, through parishes, has direct responsibility for all aspects of parish and Archdiocesan-owned schools and for recognizing the affiliation of independent schools as Catholic schools. For independent Catholic schools, the responsibility for the day-to-day operations, instruction, financing and overall direction of the school rests with the sponsoring community or organization.

These policies more clearly delineate the relationship between the variety of schools and the Archdiocese so that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. In addition, for Archdiocesan owned and operated schools, these policies more clearly outline the roles and responsibilities for pastors, chief administrators and other leadership positions.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Academic excellence is central to the mission of all Catholic schools. It requires uniform policies to ensure that the declaration of the quality of Catholic education is verifiable. These policies address essential Archdiocesan school-wide requirements in four sections: academic/curriculum standards, instructional standards, assessment standards and professional standards. All four sections are designed to support and maintain a culture of excellence based on the highest academic standards for the school community. Individual school leadership and the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Office support these efforts to sustain the highest standards in all Archdiocesan schools.

Policies focused on curriculum standards define student expectations by content areas and grade level for Archdiocesan K–12 schools. Instructional standards are reinforced by policies that define the expectations for the adoption of engaging learning practices which support effective educational environments. Assessment policies are designed to ensure quality evaluation practices including the adoption of multiple methods of assessment, the continuous monitoring of student performance, the analysis of data to adapt instructional practices and the evaluation of school level progress across the Archdiocese. The last set of policies addresses the professional expectations and requirements essential for a Catholic school community. These policies provide the foundation for the contents of all school handbooks and address the principles of behavior for school personnel, student, families and the wider school community.

AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

As early as October 2007, during the Convocation for Catholic Education, the consultative process identified the need for a new model for funding Catholic schools that would maximize the use of limited resources to strengthen our schools and more equitably distribute the cost of Catholic education across the entire Archdiocese.

These affordability policies follow on the understanding that the effort to support Catholic schools across the Archdiocese must be shared at both the parish and Archdiocesan levels, that there be a mechanism to more equitably distribute assistance to the schools and that we identify the sources of needed additional funding.

For these reasons, these policies shift support to tuition assistance scholarships in an effort to provide assistance for as many families in need as possible.

These policies call for increased financial commitment at the Archdiocesan level and an increase of the educational assessment at the parish level.

While we look to the future with confidence, these policies do not seek a goal that is beyond our collective means as a Church, nor do they guarantee that each school building will continue in service. Rather, these policies represent the best efforts of an extensive collaborative process to do the best we can to ensure the continued success of Catholic schools in this Archdiocese for future generations.

SECTION 1000: CATHOLIC IDENTITY

1000 CATHOLIC SCHOOLS' PURPOSE

“Education is integral to the mission of the Church to proclaim the good news. First and foremost, every Catholic institution is a place to encounter the Living God, who in Jesus Christ, reveals His transforming love and truth” (Pope Benedict XVI).¹ Catholic schools exist to form young people in the faith and to provide a faith-based environment for their education. In cooperation and partnership with parents – the first educators of their children – these schools seek to educate the whole child by providing an excellent education. Catholic schools cultivate the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity; the moral virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance; and the intellectual virtues of understanding, knowledge, philosophical wisdom, prudence and art. Based on these three sets of virtues, a comprehensive curriculum shall have as its goal the spiritual, moral, emotional, intellectual and physical development appropriate to the needs of each child. Non-Catholic students also benefit from Catholic school education and are welcomed.

1100 DESIGNATION OF A SCHOOL AS CATHOLIC

All Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the Archdiocese are canonically responsible to the Archbishop and shall maintain true communion with the Church. The Archbishop, as the pastoral head of the Church of Washington, has sole authority to recognize and designate a school as “Catholic.”² All proposed new Catholic schools shall be approved by the Archbishop as a Catholic school in the Archdiocese.

1200 CATHOLIC IDENTITY STANDARDS FOR ALL CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

All Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the Archdiocese shall abide by the four Catholic identity standards and the supporting Catholic identity policies that are central to the nature of a Catholic school. It is also imperative that any school called “Catholic” provide a level of academic excellence that is at least as distinguished as that in other schools of the region.³ Schools owned and operated by the Archdiocese of Washington shall be governed by additional policies, particularly those in the areas of excellence, affordability and accessibility.

1210 Communion and Cooperation with the Archbishop

All Catholic schools shall have a formal and defined relationship with the Archdiocese and specifically with the Archbishop who has oversight of the teaching of the faith in all Catholic schools. These practices are the practical mechanism to maintain communion within the Church.⁴

1211 Communion with the Local Church

All Catholic schools shall communicate, consult and collaborate with all involved parties, particularly the appropriate archdiocesan offices in an effort to ensure communion with the local Church.

1212 Pastor or Canonical Administrator Responsibilities

Throughout this document the term “pastor” or “canonical administrator” is used to designate the priest who is duly appointed to the pastoral governance of the parish (pastor or parochial administrator) and is therefore responsible for and exercises oversight

regarding all aspects of the school program because of his pastoral office. This responsibility follows on his appointment as pastor of a parish that has a school or that participates in an agreement with other parishes relative to a regional school, an incorporated regional school or a consortium school.

Archdiocesan parish-based schools are a ministry of the parish, and therefore the pastor or canonical administrator is directly responsible for and has oversight over all aspects of the school, working collaboratively with the principal. The pastor or canonical administrator has a particular responsibility to ensure the school has a strong Catholic identity and culture manifested in all areas of school life.

1213 Child Protection Policy

All Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall adhere to Archdiocesan child protection regulations as presented in the Child Protection Policy handbook.

1214 Catholic Identity Review

All Catholic schools' religious education programs, sacramental life and Catholic identity shall be reviewed by Archdiocesan officials at least once every three years. Such review shall include submission of a written report by the school and a visit by Archdiocesan officials.

1215 Relationship with Local Pastors and Parishes

All Catholic schools shall maintain a close and collaborative relationship with local pastors and parishes, particularly in the areas of religious education and sacramental life.

1220 Appropriate Celebration of Sacramental Life

All Catholic schools shall adhere to all Archdiocesan sacramental norms and policies to ensure the development of an authentic spiritual and sacramental life for students.

1221 Spiritual Formation

All Catholic schools shall provide appropriate and regular occasions for prayer, liturgical worship and the celebration of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist to ensure religious instruction and spiritual formation of students.

1222 Religious Instructions and Worship Attendance

All Catholic schools are places of faith formation and all Catholic school students, regardless of religious background, shall attend school prayer and worship services and fully participate in religious instruction. All Catholic students are expected to attend regular Sunday liturgies at their home parish and to receive frequently the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist, once they are eligible.

1223 Sacramental Norms

All Catholic schools shall adhere to the sacramental norms and policies of the Archdiocese, and respect local parishes as the sacramental home for parents, students and all parishioners

1224 Sacramental Space

The celebration of the sacraments in all Catholic schools shall occur in appropriate spaces that are respectful and well suited to authentic worship.

- 1225 Sacramental Preparation**
Pastors shall be responsible for the sacramental preparation of their parishioners. All Catholic schools, Archdiocesan and independent, shall collaborate with the pastors of students to ensure any school instruction for sacramental preparation is fully integrated with and supportive of the student's primary parish sacramental preparation program.
- 1226 Sacramental Celebration**
First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation shall be celebrated in the parish that the student's family attends. Pastors may allow exemptions to this policy.
- 1227 Prayer Life**
Regular prayer and devotions shall be standard practice in all Catholic schools. The school day begins and ends with prayer and all meals are blessed.
- 1230 Teaching the Faith**
All Catholic schools shall adhere to all Archdiocesan policies regarding religious education to ensure that the faith is effectively and authentically taught in the school.
- 1231 Oversight of the Archbishop**
All Catholic schools shall conform in all matters of religious education to the oversight of the Archbishop.⁵
- 1232 Teaching of Religion**
The teaching of religion in all Catholic schools shall be subject to the same standards of professionalism and excellence as all subjects in the school to include, but not be restricted to, allocation of resources, teacher professional development, evaluation, assessment and hours of instruction.
- 1233 Religious Education Foundation**
The religious education program of all Catholic schools shall have as its foundation the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, the *General Directory of Catechesis* and the *National Directory of Catechesis*, and also follow national and Archdiocesan directives. These programs shall conform to academic excellence policies as listed in Section 3000.
- 1234 Religion Teachers**
All religion teachers shall be practicing Catholics, qualified and certified to teach religion by the Archdiocese and have a deep knowledge of doctrine and live as an authentic witness to the faith.⁶
- 1240 Environment and Catholic Identity**
Catholic identity shall be present and explicit in all aspects of all Catholic schools, including the school's mission statement. The school presents evidence of clear commitment to witness the faith in all activities. The entire school shall be permeated with the Spirit of the Gospel for the effective formation and faith development of students.

1241 Archdiocesan School Mission Statements

Archdiocesan Catholic school mission statements shall reflect the teaching mission of the Catholic Church and the Archdiocese and shall be approved by and on file with the Catholic Schools Office. These statements shall be effectively communicated to all stakeholders with an emphasis on ensuring that all parents and guardians fully understand the Catholic identity of the school. The mission statement shall include and/or reflect the following elements:

- A. Fosters the love of Jesus and the Church, including the development of sacramental and spiritual life;
- B. Education in the truth of the faith based in the fullness of revelation contained in the Catholic Church;
- C. Development of virtues within the student that reflect the person of Christ.

1242 Catholic Schools' Self Evaluation

All Catholic schools shall regularly engage in Catholic identity self evaluation. The principal, pastor or canonical administrator, and advisory board shall review all plans, policies, handbooks, guidelines, teaching practices and events to ensure support for the implementation of the six tasks of catechesis outlined in the *National Directory for Catechesis* and the *General Directory for Catechesis*. Assessment instruments shall be approved by the Archdiocese.

1243 Principals and Catholic Identity

All principals or chief administrators shall be practicing Catholics who uphold the teaching of the faith and are committed to Catholic education that is academically excellent and rooted in Gospel values. Exceptions shall be permitted for one (1) year with the written approval of the Secretary of Education.

1244 Teachers and All School Staff

Catholic teachers and Catholic staff shall be hired whenever possible. Administrators, faculty and staff shall be qualified, supportive of the teachings of the Church and imbued with a strong sense of the mission of Catholic schools and act in ways that promote the best interests of the Church and do not violate the principles or tenets of the Catholic faith. All staff shall be responsible for integrating Catholic identity and Church teaching across the curriculum and all school activities.

All school administrators and all faculty shall adhere to Catholic faith, teaching and moral discipline, and shall not contradict the Catholic faith, teaching and moral discipline, and shall not harm communion with the Church.

1245 School Sponsored Guests and Activities

School sponsored guests, public statements, public events and community activities of all Catholic schools shall not contradict the Catholic faith, teaching and moral discipline, and shall not harm communion with the local Church.

1246 Physical Environment

The Archdiocesan Catholic school physical environment shall include religious signs and symbols that reflect the Catholic identity of the school, including pictures of the Holy

Father and the Archbishop, and a statue of Mary. Every classroom shall have a crucifix and should have visible prayer/sacred spaces.

1247 Fostering Vocations

All Catholic school communities shall promote and foster interest in, and respect for, all vocations, examining vocations to religious life and the priesthood as a real life option for students.

1248 Social Justice

The life of Catholic schools shall reflect the Catholic Church's teaching on social justice and witness service to others. The Catholic Church's teaching on ecumenism shall be respected.

SECTION 2000: GOVERNANCE

2000 SCHOOL STRUCTURES

The structures and responsibilities pertaining to day-to-day governance and financial viability for Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Washington vary based on ownership and sponsorship.

2010 Schools Operated by Parishes or the Archdiocese

Throughout these policies the term “archdiocesan school” refers to those schools that are a program of a parish, a combination of parishes or of the archdiocese. These schools fall directly under the jurisdiction and ownership of a parish or the archdiocese. For convenience sake, even such parish schools are referred to as archdiocesan.

Schools established and operated directly by parishes and/or the Archdiocese participate directly in the Church’s teaching ministry as “Archdiocesan Catholic Schools.”

2020 Schools Established, Operated and Sponsored by a Religious Community

No Catholic school is independent of the archdiocese relative to its communion with the Church, its unity in faith and sacramental life and its solidarity with the Archbishop as head of the local Church. Yet, some schools because of their sponsorship and governance structure are responsible for the direction of the school, its day-to-day operations and its financial support. These schools traditionally are referred to as independent.

Schools are established and operated under the sponsorship of a religious community so that the community’s charism is visibly expressed. Normally, these schools shall participate in the teaching mission of the Church as “Independent Catholic Schools.” Religious communities may form partnerships with the Archdiocese in support of an Archdiocesan school.

2030 Schools Established and Operated by Groups of Lay People

Schools may be established and operated by groups of lay people who form themselves in a canonically recognized entity. The authentication of their communion with the Church and the authorization to teach the faith in the name of the Church shall require the approbation of the Archbishop. These schools participate in the teaching mission of the Church as “Independent Catholic Schools.”

2040 Sponsorships

The sponsoring organization(s) for each type of Catholic school shall be responsible for the governance of the school, its day-to-day operations and the appropriate financial support systems.

2050 State Standards

All Catholic schools shall adhere to the state standards for non-public schools as established by the State of Maryland or the District of Columbia.

2060 Accreditation

All Archdiocesan Catholic Schools shall be accredited after five years of initial operation. Accreditation is conferred by a nationally recognized and Archdiocesan-approved entity after

successful completion of school-wide assessment. This accreditation shall be maintained by following the accrediting body's regulations.

2100 LEVELS OF AFFILIATION

All Catholic schools shall be identified as Level I or Level II affiliates of the Archdiocese of Washington.

2110 Level I Affiliation: Archdiocesan Owned and Operated Schools

Level I Affiliation shall be assigned to an Archdiocesan owned and operated school approved by the Archbishop as a "Catholic School."

2111 Level I Affiliates: Catholic Identity

Level I Affiliate Catholic schools shall adhere to the Catholic identity standards for all Catholic schools.

2112 Level I Affiliates: Accountability

Level I Affiliate Catholic schools shall be accountable to the Catholic Schools Office in accord with all Archdiocesan policies for Catholic schools, including the areas of academic excellence, affordability, accessibility, governance and community.

2113 Level I Affiliates: Types of Schools

Level I Affiliates include the following types of Catholic schools:

A. Parish School

Parish-based school is one school designated for, and managed by, one parish.

B. Regional School

Parish-based regional school is one school designated for, and supported by, multiple parishes according to a formal written agreement with an appointed canonical administrator.

C. Incorporated Regional School

Incorporated regional school is a school serving multiple parishes and incorporated as a separate archdiocesan corporation with an appointed board of limited jurisdiction.

D. Consortium School

A consortium school is a member school of an alliance of parish schools incorporated as a separate archdiocesan corporation with funding and leadership provided directly by an appointed board of limited jurisdiction.

E. Archdiocesan High Schools

An archdiocesan high school is one that is owned and operated by the archdiocese and incorporated as a separate archdiocesan corporation with funding and leadership provided directly by an appointed board of limited jurisdiction.

2120 Level II Affiliation: Independent Schools

Level II affiliation shall be assigned to an independent school recognized by the Archbishop as a "Catholic School."

2121 Level II Affiliates: Catholic Identity

Level II affiliate schools shall adhere to the Catholic identity standards for all Catholic schools.

2122 Level II Affiliates: Communion

Level II affiliate schools shall participate in appropriate associations that assist in ensuring effective ecclesial communion, such as the Archdiocesan High School Principals' Association and the Elementary School Principals' Association.

2123 Level II Affiliates: Governance

Level II affiliate schools shall be responsible for their own internal governance, particularly in the areas of management, affordability and accessibility.

2124 Level II Affiliates: Accountability

Level II affiliate schools shall be responsible for ensuring the academic excellence of their programming and qualifications of their faculties.

2200 APPROVAL PROCESS FOR NEW CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

All proposals for new Catholic schools shall adhere to the Catholic Schools Office guidelines and be submitted to the Catholic Schools Office for Archdiocesan approval.

2210 New Archdiocesan Catholic Schools

A proposed, new Archdiocesan Catholic elementary or high school shall be established as a recognized level I affiliated "Catholic" school, canonically responsible to the Archbishop, only after a review by the Catholic Schools Office, a recommendation from the Archdiocesan Board of Education and the approval of the Archbishop. The review shall focus on religious and academic programs; the presence of parish and parental support; the impact of the proposed school on existing Archdiocesan Catholic schools; the projected enrollment; the proposed facilities, staff and financial plans; and other relevant areas. Once approved, a new Archdiocesan Catholic elementary or high school shall comply with all applicable Archdiocesan policies.

2220 New Independent Catholic Schools

For a new or proposed independent Catholic school to receive designation as a "Catholic" school, the governing organization shall submit a proposal to the Archdiocese requesting approval for the designation and recognition as a Level II Independent Catholic School of the Archdiocese of Washington. The review process shall adhere to the Catholic Identity policy guidelines. The proposal should include details on how the school will meet and adhere to the Catholic Identity standards for all Catholic schools and follow guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

2300 ARCHDIOCESAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

The Archdiocese shall provide the servant leadership necessary to ensure that all Catholic schools are authentically Catholic, academically excellent, affordable and accessible.

2310 Secretary for Catholic Education

The Secretary shall be responsible for the Catholic Schools Office and Office of Religious Education. The secretary for Catholic education shall be appointed by, and responsible to, the Archbishop and assist him in his teaching ministry by providing service and leadership to parish religious education programs and Catholic schools.⁷

2320 Superintendent of Catholic Schools

The superintendent shall be appointed by the Archbishop as the chief administrator of Catholic schools and shall be responsible to the Archbishop for the oversight of all Catholic schools in the Archdiocese and supervision of all Archdiocesan schools, in accordance with Archdiocesan Catholic school policies.⁸

2400 LEVEL I ARCHDIOCESAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS LEADERSHIP

All Level I schools owned and operated by the Archdiocese shall adhere to leadership policies regarding sponsorship, responsibilities, school leadership, advisory boards and major expansions and reduction of services.

2410 Pastor or Canonical Administrator

The pastor or canonical administrator shall be appointed by the Archbishop as the pastoral and administrative leader responsible for implementing the educational mission of an Archdiocesan school in collaboration with the chief administrator of the school and appropriate advisory bodies and in accordance with the policies and guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

2411 Chief Administrator

The chief administrator of the school shall be appointed by, and responsible to the pastor or canonical administrator or board of limited jurisdiction and the superintendent for providing spiritual, instructional and administrative leadership in accordance with the policies and guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office. Titles for “chief administrator” may include president, principal, CEO, headmaster and head of school.

2412 Archdiocesan Advisory Board of Education

The Archdiocesan Board of Education shall be appointed by the Archbishop for the purpose of advising the superintendent regarding the status and operation of Archdiocesan schools under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop. It operates in accordance with the Board of Education bylaws approved by the Archdiocese.

2413 Parish/Regional School Advisory Board

All Archdiocesan schools shall have an organization, named the School Advisory Board, except when the school is governed by a board of limited jurisdiction. The School Advisory Board shall be made up of representatives of the school and parish communities appointed by the canonical administrator, and include the canonical administrator, chief administrator and president of the Home and School Association. The role of the School Advisory Board is to advise the canonical administrator, principal and parish council regarding the oversight, mission, status and sustainability of the school. This organization shall adhere to basic bylaws and the guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

2420 Board of Limited Jurisdiction

A Board of Limited Jurisdiction, working under the Corporate Members, shall provide leadership and oversight to a separately incorporated Archdiocesan Catholic school, or consortium of schools. The board shall be responsible for implementing the mission of the school in collaboration with the school’s or schools’ chief administrator. The board shall assist in the governance of the school or schools and provide necessary support.

2430 Archdiocesan Elementary School Sponsorship and Responsibilities

All Archdiocesan elementary schools shall be sponsored by a parish, multiple parishes or boards of limited jurisdiction.

2431 Parish-Based Schools

The ministry of Catholic elementary school education is integral with the mission of parish life in the Archdiocese. Sponsoring parishes of an elementary school in the Archdiocese enjoy the benefits and accept the concurrent management and financial responsibilities for the school.

2432 Parish-Based Regional Schools

Parish-based regional schools shall be sponsored by two or more parishes. These parishes shall share the benefits and concurrent management and financial responsibilities of the school as delineated in a written agreement signed by the pastors of the parishes and approved by the Archbishop. The canonical administrator for this school shall be appointed by the Archbishop.

2433 Incorporated Regional Schools

Incorporated regional schools shall be sponsored by a board of limited jurisdiction which shares the benefits and concurrent management and financial responsibilities with the Archdiocese and the Catholic Schools Office.

2434 Consortium Schools

Consortium schools shall be sponsored by a board of limited jurisdiction which shares the benefits and concurrent management and financial responsibilities with the Archdiocese and the Catholic Schools Office.

2500 LINES OF COMMUNICATION

Archdiocesan Catholic schools communities, with regard to all school-related matters, shall communicate within a prescribed sequence, based on levels of responsibility consistent with canon law and in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity:

1. Student/parent;
2. Teacher;
3. Chief administrator of the school;
4. Pastor or appointed canonical leader;
5. Catholic Schools Office;
6. Superintendent;
7. Secretary for Education.

2600 MAJOR EXPANSION OR REDUCTION OF ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOL SERVICES

A major expansion or reduction of Archdiocesan school services includes the addition or elimination of one or more grade levels; the construction of new buildings or classrooms; the acquisition of a significant number of mobile units; the adoption of gender-defined programming; the alteration of major school-wide curricular programming or other significant changes and shall require Archdiocesan approval. This does not include school closings or consolidations.

2610 Major Expansion or Reduction Requires School Level Review

A major expansion or reduction of Archdiocesan school services shall require a study of needs, costs, benefits and financial impacts of expansion or reduction. This study shall be completed based on Archdiocesan guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office. The study shall be submitted to the Catholic Schools Office at least nine (9) months prior to the proposed start date. The superintendent and Catholic Schools Office staff shall review the study and make recommendations to the appropriate Archdiocesan advisory bodies and the Archbishop for final approval. When determined necessary by the Catholic Schools Office, reviews shall be conducted in collaboration with the Archdiocesan Board of Education.

SECTION 3000: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

3000 MISSION OF ACADEMIC LIFE

Mission statements for all recognized Catholic schools in the Archdiocese shall clearly articulate a commitment to academic excellence rooted in Catholic identity. School leadership and staff shall accept responsibility and accountability for promoting the stated mission of excellence in collaboration with all school families. This commitment is manifested in instructional goals, priorities and assessment procedures adopted by the school.

3100 ACADEMIC/CURRICULUM STANDARDS

All Archdiocesan schools shall implement the curriculum standards provided by the Archdiocese.

3110 Academic Standards for Archdiocesan Elementary Schools and Pre-Kindergarten Programs

Archdiocesan academic standards shall be utilized as the framework to define student expectations by content and grade level for Archdiocesan elementary schools and pre-kindergarten programs. Schools shall utilize these academic standards as a foundation for determining school readiness, intervention, retention, promotion and graduation, in accordance with guidelines established by the Catholic Schools Office. Standards are provided to all schools by the Catholic Schools Office.

3120 Academic Standards for Archdiocesan High Schools

Academic standards shall be established by each Archdiocesan high school in collaboration with the Catholic Schools Office and shall be used to define expectations by content and grade level. Final approval from the Catholic Schools Office is required for the adoption of academic standards.

3130 Religion Standards for All Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese

Archdiocesan religion standards shall be utilized as the framework to define student expectations for faith formation and religious instruction in all Catholic schools in the Archdiocese. Standards are provided by the Office of Religious Education.

3131 Archdiocesan Religion Curriculum Standards

Archdiocesan Catholic elementary school religion teachers shall effectively use the Archdiocesan religious education standards and implement the six tasks of catechesis from the *National Directory for Catechesis*.

3132 Curriculum Framework for Young People of High School Age

All Catholic high school religion programs shall use curricula based upon, and in conformity with, the *Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age* (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2008).

3200 INSTRUCTIONAL STANDARDS

All Archdiocesan schools shall implement the instructional standards provided by the Archdiocese.

3210 Instructional Standards for Archdiocesan Elementary Schools and Pre-Kindergarten Programs

Archdiocesan instructional standards shall be utilized as the framework to design learning environments and implement instructional practices in Archdiocesan elementary schools and pre-kindergarten programs. Standards are outlined in instructional guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

3211 Instructional Resources for Academic Curriculum

Academic textbooks, technology, instructional materials and local resources shall be selected by the individual school administrator(s) to support the achievement of academic and instructional standards. Selection shall be in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office. Instructional resources for religion curriculum shall follow Catholic Identity policies and guidelines provided by the Office of Religious Education.

3212 Technology and Internet Usage

Technology shall be fully integrated into the curriculum as an essential instructional tool required for the education of all students. Students, parents or guardians shall annually sign the Archdiocesan technology and Internet usage agreements as provided by the Catholic Schools Office. The signed copies shall be kept on file in the school office.

3213 School-based Support Team

Archdiocesan Catholic Schools shall have selected educators from within their school that are designated by the school administrator to serve as a resource for student instruction. These educators may be referred to as a “Student Assistance Team” or by some other similar designation and shall function in accord with the procedures and guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

3220 Instructional Textbooks for Religion

All religion textbooks in all Catholic schools shall be chosen from the published Archdiocesan list of approved textbooks, which includes those texts judged to be in conformity with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ (USCCB) Ad Hoc Committee to Oversee the Use of the Catechism. This list is available from the Archdiocesan Office for Religious Education.

3300 ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

Archdiocese Catholic schools shall implement Archdiocesan assessment standards to regularly assess school excellence through self-evaluation, analysis of outcome data, Archdiocesan school visits, and other strategies. These assessments shall focus on the analysis of multiple standard-based measures, including reviews of faculty qualifications, instructional effectiveness, leadership, student performance and growth, recognition and awards, accreditation and other relevant reports.

3310 Academic Assessment Standards for Archdiocesan Schools and Pre-Kindergarten Programs

Archdiocesan academic assessment standards shall be utilized as a framework by elementary schools and pre-kindergarten programs to assess learning outcomes for all students. Assessment results shall be used to improve individual student performance, adapt instruction for students and measure school level progress and student outcomes.

3311 Evaluation of Student Progress

Archdiocesan student progress shall be evaluated and measured based on Archdiocesan standards and the outcome objectives established and articulated by each school in alignment with these standards.

3312 Reporting of Student Progress

Archdiocesan student progress shall be documented based on student report guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office. Parents and guardians of Archdiocesan students shall receive a student report document at least four (4) incremental times per academic year from 1st through 8th grades and at least one (1) time per semester in preschool and kindergarten.

3320 Academic Assessment Standards for Archdiocesan High Schools

Archdiocesan Catholic high schools shall collaborate with the Catholic Schools Office on academic assessment standards, placement, monitoring of progress, grading and reporting and standardized assessment practices. The Catholic Schools Office exercises oversight over Archdiocesan high schools' assessment practices.

3330 Student Assessment in Religious Instruction

Student assessment in religious instruction shall be regular and effective in all Catholic schools. Assessment instruments shall be approved by the Archdiocese and in alignment with Archdiocesan religious education standards.

3340 Standardized Assessments

Archdiocesan schools shall administer the standardized tests adopted by the Catholic Schools Office to measure student growth and academic achievement in all subject areas, including religion. Archdiocesan schools shall follow the procedures and guidelines for test administration and reporting approved by the Catholic Schools Office.

3341 Standardized Assessment Data

Archdiocesan schools shall follow Catholic Schools Office procedures and guidelines to interpret and disseminate standardized testing results for the benefit of all school stakeholders (parents, teachers, school community). Standardized test results for individual students with Archdiocesan-approved interpretation shall be reported to the parents by the school. Aggregated standardized test results for individual schools with Archdiocesan-approved interpretation will be reported to the school communities. Aggregated standardized test results for all Archdiocesan schools will be shared and reported to the public by the Catholic Schools Office.

3350 Archdiocesan Schools Annual Report Review

All Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall complete an annual end of school year report to be submitted to the Catholic Schools Office by June 30, based on the guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

3360 Catholic Schools Census and Other Data Needs

All schools in the Archdiocese shall fully participate in the annual Catholic School Census and other required research for Archdiocesan planning purposes.

3370 Research/Assessment Projects in Catholic Schools

The Catholic Schools Office shall review all proposals for research/assessment projects to be conducted in Archdiocesan Catholic schools. All proposals for research shall be submitted at least six (6) months prior to the proposed start date. Based upon the guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office, the approval of proposals shall be contingent upon protecting the rights of the students, families and other parties, as well as the intended use of results.

3380 Catholic Schools Office Annual Assessment

The Catholic Schools Office shall conduct an annual assessment of the effectiveness of the programs and services provided by the Archdiocese to all Catholic schools. Oversight of this assessment will be provided by the Secretary of Education. Assessment results shall be used by the Catholic Schools Office and the Secretariat to adapt and improve the leadership, programs and services offered.

3400 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

All Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall adopt the professional standards, expectations and requirements essential to the manifestation of authentic Catholic community in all schools.

3410 Requirements for Chief Administrators

All chief administrators shall possess the following qualifications:

- A. A certified catechist based on criteria from the Archdiocesan Office of Religious Education, or demonstrates continuing progress towards attaining catechist certification in no more than three (3) years after date of hire;
- B. A practicing Catholic;
- C. A Master's degree from an accredited institution in educational administration, curriculum development or an approved related educational field, or demonstrate continuing progress towards attaining a Master's degree in no more than two (2) years from the date of hire;
- D. A Maryland, Virginia or District of Columbia educational administration certification at time of hire or within three (3) years of the date of hire;
- E. A minimum of five (5) years of instructional experience, preferably in Catholic schools.

3411 Appointment of Archdiocesan Chief Administrators

The Catholic Schools Office staff shall lead and consult with school communities throughout the search and selection process. All Archdiocesan schools shall adhere to Archdiocesan guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office for search and selection of chief administrators. In Archdiocesan schools, final interviews of at least two candidates are to be conducted by the superintendent, canonical administrator and others as determined by the superintendent and canonical administrator. In consortium schools,

final interviews of at least two candidates are to be conducted by the superintendent, canonical administrator and executive director of the consortium. In schools governed by a corporate board, final interviews of two candidates are to be conducted by the superintendent and chair of the Board of Limited Jurisdiction.

Upon the recommendation of the Catholic Schools Office, the canonical administrator, executive director or chair of the Board of Limited Jurisdiction may appoint the candidate. The appointment shall become effective upon receipt of the letter of appointment by the candidate.

3412 Appointment of Interim Archdiocesan Chief Administrators

When necessary, the canonical administrator, executive director or board chair shall appoint an interim chief administrator after consultation with, and approval by, the superintendent. This appointment shall be in accordance with the *Archdiocese of Washington Employment Policies and Procedures Manual*. Interim chief administrator appointments normally shall not exceed one (1) year. Extensions shall be granted only with the approval of the superintendent.

3420 Degree Requirements for Archdiocesan Teachers

Archdiocesan teachers shall be Catholic whenever possible. All Archdiocesan teachers of core/required subjects, as defined by the Catholic Schools Office, shall possess at least a baccalaureate degree or equivalent, if educated abroad, from an accredited college or university prior to appointment by an Archdiocesan school. All Archdiocesan teachers of auxiliary courses, as defined by the Catholic Schools Office, shall possess at least an associate degree in a related field, or the equivalent if educated abroad, from an accredited college or university prior to appointment to an Archdiocesan school.

3421 Certification Requirements for Archdiocesan Teachers

All full-time teachers and all part-time teachers of core/required subjects employed by the Archdiocese must have, or must obtain, Maryland, Virginia or District of Columbia certification within three (3) years of the date of hire or alternative certification as defined by the Catholic Schools Office.

3430 Degree Requirements for Counselors, Social Workers & Guidance Counselors

All school-based counselors, social workers and guidance counselors shall be Catholic whenever possible and shall possess at least a master's degree in counseling, social work, guidance counseling, or equivalent from an accredited college or university prior to appointment.

3431 Certification/Licensure Requirements for Counselors and Social Workers

All school-based counselors and social workers shall possess a valid and current Maryland, Virginia or District of Columbia board issued license or a National Board of Certified Counselors certification.

3432 Certification Requirements for School Guidance Counselors

All school guidance counselors shall possess a valid and current certification from the Department of Education in Maryland, Virginia or the District of Columbia.

3433 Professional Requirements for Counselors, Social Workers & Guidance Counselors

All school-based counselors, social workers and guidance counselors shall comply with all policies and regulations pertaining to Archdiocesan schools, school-based policies and expectations and shall provide school-based counseling services restricted to their respective license or certification and within the practicing framework consistent with the doctrines of the Catholic Church, the mission of the Archdiocese of Washington Catholic schools and procedures from the Catholic Schools Office. They shall collaborate with chief administrators on the development of an annual individual professional development plan and shall be evaluated annually according to procedures and guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

3440 Professional Requirements for Administrators and Teachers

Archdiocesan administrators and teachers shall comply with all policies and regulations pertaining to Archdiocesan schools, school-based policies and expectations and job duties and responsibilities as outlined in the local school faculty handbook and other responsibilities as noted in the Letter of Appointment and the *Archdiocese of Washington Employment Policies and Procedures Manual*.

3441 Personnel Records

Personnel records for each Archdiocesan administrator and letters of appointment for each Archdiocesan teacher shall be kept on file in both the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Office and the local school office. Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Exit forms shall be completed by the Archdiocesan chief administrator for all non-returning staff and shall be provided to the Catholic Schools Office no later than June 20 of the year of exit. All school personnel records are confidential.

3442 Professional Growth

Archdiocesan chief administrators and teachers shall collaborate on the development of an annual individual professional development plan for each teacher in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office. Administrators and teachers shall participate in at least 65 hours of principal-approved or Catholic Schools Office approved professional development per school year. Of this, a minimum of 10 hours shall address catechesis and spiritual formation as approved by the Office of Religious Education. Verification of all professional development requirements shall be on file for each teacher. Professional development plans for Archdiocesan teachers shall be available upon request by the Catholic Schools Office.

3443 Evaluation of Performance

At a minimum, all Archdiocesan administrators and teachers shall be formally evaluated annually according to procedures and guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office. Evaluations shall be filed with the Catholic Schools Office based on established timelines and deadlines.

3444 Letters of Appointment for Lay Employees in Archdiocesan Schools

Lay administrators, teachers and other school staff employed by Archdiocesan schools shall serve according to the letter of appointment prescribed by the Archdiocesan Office of Human Resources. Appointments shall be in accordance with the policies described in the *Archdiocese of Washington Employment Policies and Procedures Manual*.

A. **Letters of Appointment for Chief Administrators**

Letters of appointment for lay personnel serving as school administrators in Archdiocesan schools, whether parish-based or regional-based, shall be signed by the superintendent and the canonical administrator. Letters of appointment for lay personnel serving as administrators in consortium schools shall be signed by the superintendent and the executive director of the consortium. Letters of appointment for lay personnel serving as school administrators in schools governed by a corporate board shall be signed by the board chair and the superintendent.

B. **Letters of Appointment for Teachers or Other School Staff**

Letters of appointment for lay personnel serving as teachers or other school staff in Archdiocesan schools, whether parish-based or regional-based, shall be signed by the canonical administrator and chief administrator of the school. Letters of appointment for lay personnel serving as teachers in consortium schools shall be signed by the executive director of the consortium and the chief administrator of the school. Letters of appointment for lay personnel serving as teachers in schools governed by a corporate board shall be signed by the board chair and chief administrator of the school.

3445 Memorandum of Understanding for Religious and Priests

Each priest and religious serving in an Archdiocesan school shall serve under a memorandum of understanding signed by the following four parties:

- A. The priest or the religious;
- B. The pastor or canonical administrator for parish-based schools, the executive director for a consortium school or the chief administrator for schools governed by boards of limited jurisdiction;
- C. The superintendent;
- D. A representative of the religious order or Secretary for Ministerial Leadership.

Consultation with the superior of the religious community, the superintendent and the Archdiocesan Office of Consecrated Life shall occur prior to an offer of employment to a member of a religious community. In addition, all priests, including members of religious communities, shall have the approval of the Archdiocesan Secretary for Ministerial Leadership prior to being offered a position in an Archdiocesan school.

3446 Archdiocesan Substitute Teachers

In the event of a teacher's absence, every effort shall be made to employ a certified, qualified substitute teacher. This teacher shall meet the substitute teacher qualifications and be compensated according to the guidelines of the Catholic Schools Office.

Substitutes who work more than one (1) month in succession shall receive a letter of appointment with expectations of evaluation and review.

3447 Internships

All school-based interns in Archdiocesan schools shall be approved by the Catholic Schools Office.

- 3448 Archdiocesan Support Personnel**
The chief administrator shall determine the need and qualifications for instructional and non-instructional support personnel necessary to achieve mission goals and academic objectives of the school.
- 3449 Health Regulations for Archdiocesan School Personnel**
All Archdiocesan schools personnel shall comply with the applicable health regulations of the state, county or district in which the school is located in accordance with Archdiocesan requirements. All appropriate compliance documentation shall be on file in the chief administrator's office and is subject to review by the Catholic Schools Office.
- 3450 Archdiocesan Salary Scales**
The Archdiocese, upon the recommendation of the Catholic Schools Office and approval by the Archbishop, shall require a minimum salary scale for full-time lay teachers and chief administrators in Archdiocesan Catholic schools. These salary scales shall be multi-year scales, available to the schools and parishes by October of the year preceding their implementation.
- 3451 Archdiocesan Compensation and Benefits**
Employees of Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall receive compensation in accordance with the approved Archdiocesan salary scales and be offered the benefit programs as required by law or adopted by the Archdiocese of Washington and administered through the Archdiocesan Office of Human Resources or the Catholic Schools Office.
- Archdiocesan schools may offer their employees additional benefits but they shall not conflict with the Archdiocesan benefits program and shall be offered and administered in a fair and just manner.
- 3452 Archdiocesan Teacher Education Stipend for Certification Courses**
Archdiocesan teachers shall be entitled to stipends to support academic course work for certification. Stipends shall not exceed the amount recommended by the Archdiocesan salary scale.
- 3460 Availability and Maintenance of Administrative Manuals**
All Catholic schools in the Archdiocese shall maintain a copy of all manuals distributed by the Catholic Schools Office. In Archdiocesan schools these manuals should be in both the chief administrator's office and the canonical administrator's office. These administrative manuals may include *Catholic School Policies Manual*, *Employment Policies and Procedures Manual*, *Child Protection Policy*, *Finance Manual* and others as referenced in this document.
- 3461 Faculty Handbook**
Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall prepare and make available to all teachers a faculty handbook based on Archdiocesan guidelines prepared by the Catholic Schools Office. The faculty handbook shall present the expected responsibilities, procedures and regulations of the local school based on Archdiocesan policies. Among these stated responsibilities is the expectation that the faculty shall not contradict Catholic faith, teaching and moral discipline and shall not harm communion with the Church. All Archdiocesan teachers shall sign a verification form indicating receipt of the handbook and acknowledging their acceptance and understanding of the policies and procedures. Copies of these faculty verification forms shall be kept on file in the chief administrator's

office. Copies of Archdiocesan school faculty handbooks shall be submitted annually to the Catholic Schools Office.

3470 Faculty and Staff Dress Code

All Archdiocesan schools shall provide all teachers and staff with a dress code that emphasizes the professional expectations for all teachers, staff and administrators as recommended in Catholic Schools Office guidelines. This dress code shall be clearly defined in the school faculty handbook.

3500 STUDENT LIFE

All Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall respect the uniqueness of each student and recognize their responsibility to consider what is best for the students and the school community as the foundation for all decisions regarding student life.

3510 Archdiocesan School Admissions

Catholic students shall be given preference over non-Catholic students for initial admission into Archdiocesan schools. In all other ways, Archdiocesan schools shall comply with Archdiocesan nondiscrimination policies and all applicable local, state and federal regulations. Archdiocesan schools shall not discriminate on the basis of race, sex (unless traditionally a single sex school), sexual orientation, national origin or age, in accordance to the law. All applicants shall follow all applicable policies and procedures regarding school-based entrance requirements, health examinations and immunizations before finalizing any admissions.

3511 Admission Priorities for Archdiocesan Elementary Schools

In the event that an Archdiocesan Catholic elementary school receives more qualified applications than it has the capacity to accommodate, students shall be admitted in the following priority:

- A. Catholic students in the order in which they submit completed registration applications prior to posted registration deadlines;
- B. Non-Catholic students in the order in which they submit completed registration applications prior to posted registration deadlines;
- C. All other students in the order in which they submit completed registration applications after posted registration deadlines.

3512 Parent or Guardian Cooperation

Parents or guardians seeking admission for their child to Catholic schools shall accept the Catholic identity and philosophy of the school. As the primary educators of their children, parents or guardians shall cooperate fully with the school and all students shall participate in all required school programming (see Policy 3621).

3513 Archdiocesan Elementary Schools Age Requirements

Students seeking admission into an Archdiocesan school shall follow age admission guidelines of the local jurisdiction in which the school is located. Early admission may be considered if a child has been identified as eligible by his/her local public school. Documentation of early admission eligibility shall be on file at the school. Students' ages shall be verified by a birth certificate, baptismal certificate or U.S. government-issued identification.

3514 Immunization

All students in the Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall be immunized in accordance with the immunization requirements and the guidelines of The Archdiocese of Washington, because Catholic moral teaching urges parents/guardians to immunize their children against serious infectious diseases given the grave risk of non-vaccination to other children, pregnant women, and the population as a whole. Exemptions are provided on a temporary basis to those applicants with a physician-documented medical reason. The Archdiocese of Washington will also consider exemptions based on the assertion of a serious moral objection as a matter of conscience to certain vaccines.

3515 Education of Students with Special Needs

The admission, instruction and retention of students with disabilities or special needs shall be determined on an individual basis by the chief administrator in consultation with the Catholic Schools Office. Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall follow Archdiocesan guidelines and procedures regarding special needs enrollment, referrals, placement and curriculum adaptations.

3516 Education of English Language Learners

The admission, instruction and retention of English language learners shall be determined on an individual basis by the chief administrator in consultation with the Catholic Schools Office. Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall follow Archdiocesan guidelines and procedures regarding enrollment, referrals, placement and curriculum adaptations.

3517 Custody Arrangements

Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall act upon official court orders regarding student custody issues. The schools shall abide by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment for the rights of non-custodial parents' examination and review of student records. Schools shall provide a non-custodial parent access to academic records and other school information regarding his or her child unless there is a court order to the contrary. If there are restrictions regarding access to the student or the sharing of information with the non-custodial parent, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a court-certified copy of the court order at the time of registration.

3518 Catholic High School Entrance Policy

All Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese shall determine criteria for admission. Priority consideration shall be given to Catholic students who attend Archdiocesan Catholic elementary schools. All high school admissions directors shall communicate with Archdiocesan elementary school chief administrators throughout the admission process. Prior to finalizing admissions decisions and releasing decision information to families, admission directors shall contact Archdiocesan elementary school chief administrators and report admissions decisions pertinent to the Catholic high school.

3519 Re-Registration

All Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall extend a re-registration form to eligible students. Denial of re-registrations shall be determined in collaboration with the Catholic Schools Office. Refusal for extending the re-registration form shall be communicated to the parent/guardian in writing. Reasons for such re-registration denial may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Failure to pay tuition, student fees or other school-related expenses;

- B. Students' or parents' refusal to abide by the Archdiocesan school policies and/or procedures.

3520 Archdiocesan Elementary School Class Size

All Archdiocesan Schools shall determine class size for each grade level consistent with, and relative to, the integrity of the instructional program determined by the school, and in accordance with the Catholic Schools Office guidelines for class design, with exceptions to those requirements made with approval of the superintendent.

3530 Archdiocesan School Calendar

Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall develop an annual calendar consistent with the minimum requirements provided by the Catholic Schools Office. Schools shall submit the local calendar plans to the Catholic Schools Office for approval by stipulated deadlines.

3531 Calendar Changes for Archdiocesan Schools

All changes to calendars for Archdiocesan schools shall be approved by the Archdiocese. The Catholic Schools Office will determine, in collaboration with the school leadership, when cancelled school days should be rescheduled and added to the school calendar.

3532 Archdiocesan Elementary School Schedule

All Archdiocesan elementary schools shall develop a daily schedule by grade level consistent with the minimum requirements of instructional minutes required by in the Catholic Schools Office guidelines. Total instructional minutes shall be submitted to the Catholic Schools Office with the school calendar.

3533 Archdiocesan Elementary School Days

All Archdiocesan school days are expected to be full days. The first and last weeks of the school year shall consist of full school days.

3534 Archdiocesan Elementary School Half Days

All Archdiocesan elementary school half days shall be permitted only for planned faculty professional development days and may not exceed 10 days in one school calendar year without Catholic Schools Office approval. These days must be posted on school calendars.

3535 Archdiocesan School Attendance

All Archdiocesan schools shall monitor students' compliance with attendance requirements established by the Catholic Schools Office that meet or exceed local jurisdictions. Schools shall maintain attendance records as defined by Archdiocesan policy. Policies and procedures regarding attendance shall be published in parent student handbooks and clearly reinforced throughout the year.

3540 Archdiocesan School Safety

All Archdiocesan schools shall maintain safe and orderly environments in accordance with the procedures and guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

3541 School Safety, Crisis and Emergency Response Plans

All Archdiocesan schools shall adopt and implement school safety and emergency response plans in accordance with the procedures and guidelines provided by the Catholic

Schools Office. Chief administrators shall be responsible for communicating school safety emergency response plans, regulations and crisis plans to the school community and stakeholders. Review and revision of the plans with school communities shall occur annually within the first two weeks of the school year. All plans shall be filed and reviewed with the Catholic Schools Office based on established timelines and deadlines.

3542 Child Abuse and Protection

All Archdiocesan schools shall adhere to the Archdiocese of Washington Child Protection Policy and the procedures and guidelines from the Catholic Schools Office and the Office of Child Protection Services.

3543 Prevention Programming

All Archdiocesan schools shall prohibit acts of harassment and bullying and shall adhere to school-wide prevention programs that enhance the safety of the school in accordance with the procedures and guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

3544 Health and Allergy Requirements in Archdiocesan Catholic Schools

All Archdiocesan school students shall comply with the applicable health regulations of the state, county or district in which their Archdiocesan school is located and in accordance with Archdiocesan requirements on health and allergy. All appropriate health compliance and allergy documentation shall be kept on file in the schools office and is subject to review by the Catholic Schools Office.

3545 Emergency Contact Information for Archdiocesan Catholic School Students

Only individuals designated by the parents/guardians of Archdiocesan Catholic school students and filed with the school office shall be notified in the event of an emergency during the school day or any school sponsored event.

3546 Transportation of Archdiocesan Catholic Elementary School Students

All parents or guardians of all Archdiocesan Catholic elementary school students shall provide documentation filed with the school office indicating the approved method by which the student shall be transported from school each day. All requests for alternative transportation arrangements shall be in a written note from the parent or guardian, signed and dated on the day of the special request prior to dismissal. Archdiocesan school administrators or staff shall not provide transportation to students without prior written permission from the parent or guardian of the Archdiocesan Catholic elementary school student.

3547 Archdiocesan Catholic School Field Trips

All Archdiocesan Catholic school field trips shall be approved by the chief administrator. All field trips shall adhere to the procedures and guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office. Out of state field trips or field trips to a foreign country shall be submitted to and approved by the Catholic Schools Office and other Archdiocesan offices.

3548 Archdiocesan Catholic School Reportable Incidents

All Archdiocesan Catholic school incidents involving students, Archdiocesan employees or volunteers and/or property shall be reported in written documentation to the Catholic Schools Office no more than 24 hours after the incident occurred. The chief

administrator shall maintain records of all documented incidents in the school office and adhere to the reportable incidents procedures and guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

3549 Archdiocesan Catholic School Counseling Services

All parents or guardians of Archdiocesan Catholic school students shall acknowledge and consent in written documentation to initial school counseling services that may be rendered in the event of a crisis, school referral or some other school-related matter during the school day. Archdiocesan school administrators or staff shall obtain and maintain signed documented consents in accordance with the procedures and guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

3550 Competition

All Archdiocesan school students shall be permitted to participate in competitions that do not interfere with the academic program of the school. All competitions shall be approved by the chief administrator and shall be consistent with the Catholic identity of the school. If a competition is sponsored by groups external to the Archdiocese, the chief administrator shall consult with the Catholic Schools Office before participation. Schools shall provide a list of competitions in the end-of-year school report to the Catholic Schools Office for inclusion in the Archdiocesan planning and marketing efforts.

3560 Archdiocesan Co-Curricular Activities

School sponsored co-curricular activities, including field trips, shall follow Archdiocesan procedures regarding student safety, supervision and liability. Schools shall provide a list of in-school co-curricular activities in the end-of-year school report to the Catholic Schools Office for inclusion in the Archdiocesan planning and marketing efforts.

3570 Archdiocesan School Discipline

Behavior expectations and responsibilities of students and families shall be clearly defined and communicated in Archdiocesan schools' parent/student handbooks. Each school shall be responsible for developing and implementing codes for behavior and discipline that serve the best interests of students and the school community. Corporal punishment shall not be permitted under any circumstances. Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall abide by all disciplinary procedures and guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

3571 Suspensions/Expulsions

Schools shall have clearly defined suspension and expulsion procedures. Decisions regarding suspensions and expulsions shall be made in consultation with the Catholic Schools Office. Disciplinary records shall not be a component of the student's permanent record.

3580 Archdiocesan Dress Codes for Students

All Archdiocesan schools shall establish a dress code for students, which shall be defined in the parent/student handbooks and presented to the parent or guardian. Accountability measures for the school dress code shall be the responsibility of the chief administrator and communicated clearly to parents and guardians.

3590 Maintenance and Confidentiality of Archdiocesan School Student Records

All Archdiocesan Catholic school student records shall be the responsibility of the chief administrator and the property of the school. Maintenance and security of all student records shall comply with Archdiocesan guidelines. Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall fully comply with the provisions of the Buckley Amendment regarding confidentiality and security of student records (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974).

3591 Transfer of Archdiocesan School Student Records

All Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall be responsible for complying with the written request of a parent or guardian for the release and transfer of official records from one school to another. The transfer of student records shall be contingent upon fulfillment of all financial obligations. Archdiocesan Catholic schools normally do not transfer student limited-access records unless an exception is approved based on the written request from the parents or guardians.

3592 Parent or Guardian Release of Archdiocesan School Student Information

Parents or guardians shall cooperate with the Archdiocesan school administrators to provide the school access to confidential information necessary for the education of the student. The school administrator shall adhere to the guidelines and procedures set forth by the Catholic Schools Office for the release of pertinent information and maintaining Archdiocesan school student records, including the transferring students.

3600 COMMUNITY

All Archdiocesan schools are learning communities of faith and service and shall expect the full participation and support of all registered families, faculty and administrators.

3610 Home and School Association

All Archdiocesan parish schools shall have a formal organization of parents and appointed school personnel, named the Home and School Association. The role of the Home and School Association is to build community by hosting school events and, when appropriate, supporting the school's fundraising goals as recommended by the School Advisory Board and the chief administrator and canonical administrator. This association shall adhere to guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

3620 Parent/Student Handbook

All Archdiocesan schools shall annually prepare and make available to all parents and students a handbook that presents all school policies, regulations and procedures of the local school. School policies shall be consistent with Archdiocesan policies as provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

3621 Parent/Guardian Acknowledgment

All Archdiocesan school parents or guardians shall sign a verification form indicating receipt of the handbook and acknowledging their acceptance and understanding of the policies and procedures. Copies of these verification forms shall be kept on file in the chief administrator's office. A copy of each Archdiocesan school's parent handbook shall be submitted annually to the Catholic Schools Office by August 1.

3630 Elementary School Principals Association

The Catholic Schools Office shall support an Elementary School Principals Association (ESPA) as a community forum for professional development for Catholic elementary and middle school

leaders and support interaction between these leaders and Archdiocesan offices. The chief administrators of all Catholic elementary and middle schools constitute the ESPA membership. ESPA shall act as an advisory group to the Catholic Schools Office leadership and operate based on organizational bylaws approved by the Archdiocese.

3640 High School Principals Association

The Catholic Schools Office, in cooperation with all high schools, shall support a High School Principals Association (HSPA) as a community forum for collaboration between and among high school leaders and the Catholic Schools Office. HSPA shall operate based on organizational bylaws approved by the Archdiocese and act as an advisory group to the Catholic Schools Office leadership.

3650 Communications and Public Relations

The Catholic Schools Office, with the support and collaboration of the Archdiocesan Office of Communication, shall be responsible for contact with and the representation of all Catholic schools to relevant organizations and individuals in the Archdiocesan and the larger community concerning the functioning of Catholic schools. All Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall follow the guidelines for managing information, communications and public relations as prepared by the Archdiocese.

3651 Crisis Communications for Archdiocesan Schools

In the event of a current or potential crisis involving an archdiocesan school, the chief administrator and canonical administrator of that school shall consult the designated officials of the Catholic Schools Office and the archdiocesan Office of Communications for guidance, planning and instruction on appropriate ways of addressing inquiries from, and releasing information to, the community, including the media.

3652 Crisis Communications for Independent Schools

In the event of a current or potential crisis involving an independent school, the chief administrator of that school shall inform the designated officials of the Catholic Schools Office and the archdiocesan Office of Communications.

3660 Government and Community Relations

All Catholic schools shall cooperate with public and community agencies, as appropriate, which promote the welfare of the students and the school.

3661 Relations with Other Organizations and School Systems

All Archdiocesan schools shall promote cooperation with public school systems within the same jurisdiction and with other national and local agencies, following consultation with the Catholic Schools Office.

3662 Court Orders

All court orders received by all Archdiocesan school chief administrators, teachers or staff shall be reviewed by the Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with the Office of the Chancellor. No action in response to a court order is permitted without consultation and direction from the Archdiocese.

3663 Government Resources

All efforts shall be made by the local Archdiocesan school administrator in collaboration with the Catholic Schools Office to obtain and utilize government funding at federal, state and local levels for the support of students whose families choose Catholic schools and for programs that support teachers.

3670 Use of the Archdiocese of Washington’s Name

The name “Archdiocese of Washington” and the names of Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall be used only in reference to activities for which the Archdiocese and Archdiocesan school authorities are responsible. Faculty members and staff may not use the name of the Archdiocese of Washington or an Archdiocesan school to represent themselves in connection with activities conducted outside their defined responsibility within the Archdiocese or the Archdiocesan Catholic schools.

3671 Endorsement of Products

All Archdiocesan chief administrators shall not allow the use of the school name for the endorsement of products without prior permission from the superintendent and the Office of the Chancellor.

All Archdiocesan faculty members and staff shall obtain written approval from the Archdiocese to use the name and the name of the Archdiocesan school for the support of a particular activity, product or publication and shall ensure that the use of the Archdiocese of Washington’s name and the name of the school does not imply endorsement.

3680 Contracts, Service Orders, Agreements or Leases

All Archdiocesan school chief administrators shall adhere to the process for contract reviews and seek approval from the Office of the Chancellor regarding any third party, such as vendors or service providers, for all contracts, services orders, agreements, leases or other legal documents that require a signature for services. All Archdiocesan school chief administrators shall not sign any legally binding document on behalf of the Archdiocesan Catholic school, parish or the Archdiocese of Washington without the written approval from the Office of the Chancellor.

SECTION 4000: AFFORDABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

4100 ARCHDIOCESAN TUITION ASSISTANCE

The Catholic Schools Office shall operate a tuition assistance fund to provide need-based tuition assistance to students enrolled in Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the Archdiocese of Washington.

4110 Eligibility for Archdiocesan Tuition Assistance

All Archdiocesan parishes and schools shall adhere to the procedures and guidelines set forth by the Archdiocesan Office of Finance and the Catholic Schools Office.

4111 Qualification for Eligibility

All Catholic schools and student families shall meet the requirements for qualification as set forth by the Archdiocese.

A. Qualifications for All Catholic Schools

All Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Washington shall qualify, in accordance with archdiocesan procedures, to receive tuition assistance.

B. Qualifications for All Student Applications

All families of students currently registered or applying to attend any Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Washington shall be eligible to apply for tuition assistance in accordance with Archdiocesan procedures.

4120 Parish Assessment for Tuition Assistance

All Archdiocesan parishes shall be assessed a percentage of their offertory collection to support the Archdiocesan Tuition Assistance Program, which shall be paid along with other offertory assessments that are due by the 15th of each month.

4121 Parishes Directly Supporting a Catholic School

All parishes that support a Catholic elementary school either directly or through a written agreement as part of a regional school shall contribute 3 percent of their offertory collection as an education assessment that will be used to fund the Archdiocesan Tuition Assistance Program.

4122 Parishes not Directly Supporting a Catholic School

All parishes that do not directly support a Catholic elementary school shall contribute 9 percent of their offertory collection as an education assessment that will be used to fund the Archdiocesan Tuition Assistance Program.

4123 Exemptions from Parish Assessment for Tuition Assistance

All parishes that are financially distressed and already unable to meet their operating needs may request an exemption, in writing, from the Moderator of the Curia.

4200 PARISH SUPPORT OF SCHOOLS

All parishes shall support Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Washington by actively encouraging Catholic families to enroll their children in the local parish or regional school.

4210 Parish with Parish-Based School Financial Support

A parish with a parish-based school shall provide financial support to the school not to exceed 35 percent of parish revenue (see Policies 4440 and 4621-B).

4220 Parish with a Regional School Financial Support

A parish that supports a regional school shall provide financial support to the school according to the agreement, written in consultation with the Archdiocese, establishing the regional school and approved by the Archdiocese.

In the event that a parish(es) financially supports an unexpected regional school budget shortfall, the school shall repay the parish(es) the amount of the unexpected support within three (3) years, in collaboration with the parish(es) and after consultation with the Archdiocese.

4230 Parish Tuition Assistance

Parish tuition assistance shall be made available to families with demonstrated financial need for circumstances determined by the pastor, including material changes in a family's financial circumstances; families with multiple children enrolled in tuition-based educational programs; or, at the pastor's discretion.

4300 SETTING ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOL TUITION RATES

All Archdiocesan schools shall publish a single tuition rate for each program in accordance with procedures set forth by the Archdiocese.

4310 Cost of Educating an Archdiocesan Student

The pastor, canonical administrator or board of limited jurisdiction shall establish a tuition rate for each program that takes into consideration the full cost of educating a student in that program.

4330 Archdiocesan School Tuition Policy Statement

All Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall publish a written tuition policy statement that details the total cost, tuition rates, payment schedules, methods of payments and consequences of non-payment of tuition.

The written tuition statement shall be published no later than February 1, for the coming school year.

4340 Tuition Grants for Active Parishioners in the Archdiocese of Washington

Once each archdiocesan Catholic school has established one tuition rate for each program, it may establish and publish a grant or other program to subsidize tuition for active parishioners in the Archdiocese of Washington

4400 ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOL FINANCIAL OPERATIONS AND BUDGET

All Archdiocesan school budgets shall adhere to the procedures set forth by the Office of Finance and the Catholic Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Washington.

4410 Archdiocesan Elementary School Accounting

All Archdiocesan elementary schools shall use the Church Management Systems (CMS) accounting system and standard chart of accounts adopted for all Archdiocesan elementary schools in the *Parish Accounting Manual*. Each school shall electronically submit financial statements each month to the Office of Finance through the use of CMS.

4420 Archdiocesan School-Based Scholarships and Tuition Assistance

All Archdiocesan schools shall budget for and offer scholarships and tuition assistance to help students with limited means attend the school. All Archdiocesan schools shall collaborate with Archdiocesan tuition assistance efforts as appropriate.

4430 Review of an Archdiocesan Elementary School Budget

All Archdiocesan elementary school budgets shall be submitted to the Archdiocese for review on the dates listed in the Catholic School Calendar.

4440 Archdiocesan Parish/Regional School Budget Deficits

All parishes shall be responsible for budget shortfalls within any parish program, including the parish/regional school, and shall not be permitted to borrow to finance the school operating deficits unless it is for a limited time and with an Archdiocesan-approved plan for a balanced budget that includes debt service.

4441 Loans for Funding Archdiocesan Parish/Regional School Deficits

Any request for a loan to fund Archdiocesan parish/regional school operations shall require the process for extraordinary communications as set forth by Policy 4620 in the *Archdiocese of Washington Catholic Schools Policy Manual*.

4450 Archdiocesan Schools Budget Responsibility

All Archdiocesan schools shall be responsible for all operating expenses, such as salaries and benefits, supplies, utilities, insurance, etc.

4460 Annual Student Assessment Fee

All Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Washington shall pay an annual student assessment fee determined by the Archdiocese of Washington for the costs associated with services provided by the Catholic Schools Office and other Archdiocesan offices.

4470 Archdiocesan School Fundraising

All Archdiocesan schools, working with the sponsoring parish or parishes and School Advisory Board, shall actively engage in planned fundraising efforts, as defined in the school budget reviewed by the Archdiocese

4471 Limitation of Archdiocesan School Fundraising Effort

All door-to-door sales of goods by Archdiocesan elementary students shall be prohibited for reasons of safety, which must be noted in the Parent Handbook.

4472 Accounting for Archdiocesan School Fundraising Revenue

All revenue associated with Archdiocesan school fundraising sponsored by the School Advisory Board, the Home and School Association and other school-based clubs and organizations is an asset of the parish that is restricted for support of the Archdiocesan school and shall be maintained at the parish with the canonical administrator's name on all accounts.

4473 Archdiocesan School Fundraising Goal

Any shortfall in an Archdiocesan school's budget of an anticipated fundraising goal that ultimately is not met shall be covered by the sponsoring parish or parishes; however, the obligation shall be repaid by the Archdiocesan school over a period not to exceed three (3) years.

4480 Bank Accounts

All parishes sponsoring a school shall have one (1) checking account to handle the operations of both the parish and the parish school. All receipts and expenses of the parish school are to be accounted for through the main parish accounts. Organizations may have imprest accounts only with the pastor's or canonical administrator's permission and the pastor or canonical administrator shall be the signer on all accounts.

4500 ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOL VIABILITY AND PLANNING

All Archdiocesan schools shall engage in continuous planning and improvement to sustain and ensure the viability of their school and achieve the goals of providing students and their families an excellent Catholic education that is affordable and accessible.

4510 Annual Assessment of Viability

All Archdiocesan schools shall conduct an annual viability assessment based on the following standards: Catholic identity, governance, academic excellence, affordability and accessibility. This assessment requires parishes and schools to assess their strengths and identify areas where change is needed for the future. The school leadership, with the Catholic Schools Office, shall conduct this assessment.

4511 Criteria for Evaluation for Archdiocesan Schools

The school-specific criteria for evaluating and implementing the annual Catholic Schools Office-designed assessment of viability shall be reviewed in consultation with school leadership and the canonical administrator. This assessment shall focus on parish life, school and academic quality, financial health and facility/physical plant.

4512 Annual Archdiocesan School Assessment Outcomes

The results of the assessment of the Archdiocesan school shall be shared with parish and school communities to help develop appropriate steps to address identified needs and growth areas with the goal of strengthening Catholic schools.

4513 Collaborative Planning for Parish Schools

Parishes and schools shall continuously engage in school planning in collaboration with the Archdiocese. Assessment outcomes may require planning recommendations for:

- A. Proactive school consolidation;
- B. Regional school formation;
- C. Partnering for economies of scale and resource sharing.

4514 Request for Closure and Consolidation of an Archdiocesan School

A parish/regional school, after completing a full consultation and determining the school is no longer viable, may request permission for school closure or school consolidation with a neighboring school. The pastor or canonical administrator on behalf of the parish/regional school shall write to the Archbishop and request permission to close or consolidate the school. This written request shall include a summary of the consultation process and final recommendations.

4520 Collaborating with Other Archdiocesan Schools for Stabilization and Improvement

All Archdiocesan Catholic schools shall collaborate with other Archdiocesan Catholic schools in their geographically logical grouping to support actions that stabilize and improve schools.

4600 REQUIRED ARCHDIOCESAN SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

Each Archdiocesan parish/regional school shall share the school's financial status, including data and results of operations, at least annually with the parish/school community.

4610 Annual Archdiocesan Financial Communications

All Archdiocesan schools shall provide families and parishioners annually, by October of each school year, an Archdiocesan school income/expense report and a current status of school finance report.

4611 Annual Archdiocesan School Income/Expense Report

An annual financial summary of the Archdiocesan school's actual income and expenses for the prior fiscal year that includes operating, capital and overhead expenses shall be provided to all school families.

4612 Annual Current Status of Archdiocesan School Finance Report

All Archdiocesan school families shall receive an annual communication for the current school year that includes information regarding:

- A. Budgeted costs of educating one child in the Archdiocesan school;
- B. Budgeted tuition revenue per child;
- C. Difference between the budgeted cost and budgeted tuition revenue per child;
- D. Explanation of sources of funding for any difference/shortfall.

4620 Extraordinary Archdiocesan School Communications

All Archdiocesan schools experiencing serious financial or enrollment stress shall collaborate with the Archdiocese of Washington staff to provide additional communications and consultations with the parish and school community.

4621 Required Archdiocesan School Consultations

The pastor or canonical administrator and principal, with the School Advisory Board leadership, shall organize parent and parish community meetings in a timely manner and establish a process to address next steps, if any of the following potentially unsustainable economic conditions represent challenges to the viability of an Archdiocesan school:

- A. A loan is required to sustain school operations;
- B. An excess of 35 percent of parish revenue in any given year is required to support the school deficit;
- C. Tuition revenue including all tuition assistance income fails to cover a minimum of 65 percent of the total expense of the school;
- D. Enrollment falls below 65 percent of the school's capacity given the number of classes per grade that are currently offered;
- E. Net proceeds from fundraising falls below five percent of total school expenses.

4700 GEOGRAPHICALLY NECESSARY SCHOOLS

The Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Office shall designate geographically necessary schools based on written criteria including, but not necessarily limited to:

- A. Number of nearby Catholic schools and number of available seats at those schools;
- B. Percent of enrolled students whose homes are not near another Catholic school;
- C. Percent of students whose homes are near their enrolled school.

4710 Geographically Necessary Tuition Assistance Scholarships

A family attending a Catholic school that has been designated "geographically necessary" may be eligible for a larger tuition assistance scholarship.

ENDNOTES

¹ Benedict XVI, *Spe salvi*, 4

² Can. 803 §3 Even if it is in fact Catholic, no school is to bear the name Catholic school without the consent of competent ecclesiastical authority.

³ Can 806 §2 Directors of Catholic schools are to take care under the watchfulness of the local ordinary that the instruction which is given in them is at least as academically distinguished as that in the other schools of the area.

⁴ Can. 803 §1 A Catholic school is understood as one which a competent ecclesiastical authority or a public ecclesiastical juridic person directs or which ecclesiastical authority recognizes as such through a written document.

⁵ Can. 806 §1 The diocesan bishop has the right to watch over and visit the Catholic schools in his territory, even those which members of religious institutes have founded or direct. He also issues prescripts which pertain to the general regulation of Catholic schools; these prescripts are valid also for schools which these religious direct, without prejudice, however, to their autonomy regarding the internal direction of their schools.

⁶ Can. 805 For his own diocese, the local ordinary has the right to appoint or approve teachers of religion and even to remove them or demand that they be removed if a reason of religion or morals requires it.

⁷ Can. 806 §1 The diocesan bishop has the right to watch over and visit the Catholic schools in his territory, even those which members of religious institutes have founded or direct. He also issues prescripts which pertain to the general regulation of Catholic schools; these prescripts are valid also for schools which these religious direct, without prejudice, however, to their autonomy regarding the internal direction of their schools.

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