

## **Absenteeism and Truancy Policy (Diocesan Policy #5134B)**

The Illinois School Code requires that any school, including a nonpublic school, receiving public funds through participation in the federal/state milk, breakfast, and/or lunch programs shall develop and communicate to its students and their parent or guardian, on an annual basis, an absenteeism and truancy policy, that contains certain provisions. The following is the Absenteeism and Truancy Policy to be implemented by those schools participating in the federal/state milk, breakfast, and/or lunch programs.

### **Definitions**

1. **"Valid cause"** for absence includes:
  - the student's illness, including the mental or behavioral health of the student, the student's attendance at a verified medical or therapeutic appointment or appointment with a victim services provider, the student's observance of a religious holiday, death in the student's immediate family, the student's attendance at a civic event, a family emergency, As determined by the school administrator, such other situations beyond the control of the student, or such circumstances which cause reasonable concern to the student's parent for the mental, emotional, or physical health or safety of the student. If the student is an expectant parent or parent, "valid cause" for absence includes the fulfillment of a parenting responsibility including, but not limited to, arranging and providing child care, caring for a sick child, attending prenatal or other medical appointments for the expectant student, and attending medical appointments for a child,
  - If the student is a victim of domestic or sexual violence, "valid cause" for absence includes addressing circumstances resulting from domestic or sexual violence, including, but not limited to, experiencing domestic or sexual violence, recovering from physical or psychological injuries, seeking medical attention, seeking services from a domestic or sexual violence organization, seeking psychological or other counseling, participating in safety planning, temporarily or permanently relocating, seeking legal assistance or remedies, or taking any other action to increase the safety or health of the student or to protect the student from future domestic or sexual violence. A school administrator may require a student to verify his or her claim of domestic or sexual violence prior to approving a valid cause for an absence of 3 or more consecutive days that is related to domestic or sexual violence.
2. A **"truant student"** is one who is subject to compulsory school attendance and who, without valid cause, is absent from such attendance for a school day or portion of the school day, when such absence amounts to more than 1% but less than 5% of the past 180 school days.
3. A **"chronic or habitual truant"** is defined as a student subject to compulsory school attendance and who, without valid cause, is absent from such attendance for 5% or more of the past 180 regular attendance days.
4. **"Truant minor"** is defined as a chronic truant to whom available supportive services, including prevention, diagnostic, intervention and remedial services, alternative programs and other school and community resources either have been offered and refused, or have failed to result in the cessation of chronic truancy.

### **Policy**

1. School attendance is compulsory in the State of Illinois. The responsibility of compliance with the law belongs to the parents, but the school is required to keep a record of daily attendance. The record is placed in the student's permanent file at the end of each school year.
2. A student who is subject to compulsory school attendance shall not be absent from attendance without valid cause. A student who is absent without valid cause is a truant student.
3. When a student is truant: The School administrator or delegate shall be in contact with the parent/guardian and the student when a student is absent without "valid cause", when the school has not been notified by a parent/guardian of the student's absence and reason, when the student returns to school after an absence without a written doctor's or with a note of questionable validity, or when the student continues to be absent for no apparent reason. The School's contact with the parent/guardian is for the purpose of determining the reason for the student's absence and further discussion if the absence is without valid cause. If the parents/guardians cannot be reached, the School will contact all parties listed as emergency contacts in the student's file. If the administration is unsuccessful in reaching the parents/guardians or the emergency contacts, the School will notify police and request a well-being check on the student/family.
4. The School is to determine the reason or cause for a student's unexcused absences by interviewing the student, his or her parent or guardian, and any school officials who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problem.
5. When a student is truant or chronically truant, the School will use the following diagnostic procedures to identify the causes of unexcused student absenteeism: Interviews with the student, meetings or requests for meetings with the parent/guardian, and meetings with any school officials who may have information about the reason for the student's attendance problem. The school is to offer the following interventions and supportive

services for the truant student and chronically truant student: meet with the student, and meet with or request to meet with the student's parent/guardian to persuade the family and the student to regular attendance, encourage heightened engagement in School activities by the parent/guardian and student, and suggest student counseling with the school counselor if one is provided by the School, or with a specific outside provider or providers, family counseling with the Diocese of Rockford Catholic Charities counseling office or with a specific outside provider or providers, and provide parents with information about existing community services that are available to the student relative to his or her needs. The School is not required to pay for any services. Where the student is chronically truant, the above steps will be repeated.

6. When efforts to persuade the student to regular attendance fails, and the student's absences without "valid cause" exceed more than five percent (5%) of the total student attendance days in the school year, the student is deemed a truant minor and written notice shall be sent to the parent/guardian stating that the student's truancy is being reported to the Illinois State Board of Education. This may be done through the truancy department of the Regional Office of Education. Additionally, the School may drop the student from enrolment.
7. The School is required to regularly collect and review its chronic absence data and determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage and encourage the habit of daily attendance for chronically absent students and their families to promote academic success.
8. The School is required to post this Absenteeism and Truancy Policy on the School's website and include it in the School's Parent/Student Handbook. School administrators are also required to notify parents where/how this policy can be accessed by providing them with the URL address. This policy is also published on the Education page of our Diocesan Catholic Education Website.
9. The School is required to submit its Absenteeism and Truancy Policy to the Illinois State Board of Education; and to review and re-evaluate its Absenteeism and Truancy Policy every two years and submit its revised policy or a letter to the Illinois State Board of Education stating the policy was re-evaluated and no changes were deemed necessary. This statement must be submitted electronically to the Illinois State Board of Education via their Web Application Security system no later than September 30 of the year it is due.

### **Acceptable Procedures for the Use of the Internet and Authorization for Internet Access**

#### **Internet Access Policy:**

1. Access to the Internet must be related to the user's work responsibilities, for the purpose of education or research, and be consistent with the educational objectives of the Diocese and School.
2. The use of the Internet is a privilege not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges, disciplinary action (up to and including expulsion or discharge) and/or appropriate legal action. Whether the use is considered inappropriate or violates this policy is a matter within the discretion of the building administrator, and his or her decision is final.
3. Some examples of unacceptable uses are:
  - Using the network for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other contracts, or transmitting any material in violation of any U.S. or State law;
  - Unauthorized downloading of software, regardless of whether it is copyrighted;
  - Invading the privacy of individuals;
  - Using another user's password or account;
  - Using pseudonyms or anonymous sign-ons;
  - Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, or displaying any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, performance, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, illegal material or other information and/or materials that are inconsistent with the objectives and/or teachings of the Diocese and/or School.
  - Using inappropriate language.
4. Use of a photograph, image or likeness of one's self or of any other employee, or student, parent, or parishioner on any Internet or web-based site, or in any electronic communication, is prohibited, except with the express permission of the Principal.
5. Using School equipment to create a web site or to transmit the likeness, image, photograph or video of any employee, student, parent, or parishioner, is prohibited, except with the express permission of the Principal.
6. Employees are prohibited from permitting any other individual or entity from creating a web site for the Diocesan facility, or from photographing, videographing, or otherwise creating the likeness of any employee, student, parent, or parishioner for commercial purposes, advertising purposes, or for Internet transmission or posting, except with the express permission of the Principal.

7. Employees are not permitted to allow a non-employee to use a School computer or other equipment unless the non-employee is an authorized volunteer.
8. The School reserves the right to monitor employee use of School computers. Employees, including an employee's Internet use and email use and content. Thus, employees have no expectation of privacy in their use of School computers, the Internet or email.

**Your account and password are confidential and must remain so.  
Do not use another individual's account and confidential password.**

### **Bullying Policy (Diocesan Policy 5170)**

Any action, word or behavior which harasses, intimidates or causes physical, emotional or psychological harm to another student or students is strictly prohibited, whether the action, word, or behavior is based on a person's characteristic(s) or other matter. This prohibited conduct also extends to the use of technology ("Cyberbullying") as a tool to harass or cause harm.

Bullying is prohibited during any school-sponsored education program or activity; while in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities; or through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or their similar electronic school equipment. However, this policy is not limited to conduct that occurs on the premises of the Diocese school or during school hours or school activities.

"Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in person, in writing, or electronically ("cyberbullying"), directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. Examples of cyberbullying include but are not limited to the use of email, websites, text messaging, posting or sending electronic photos or videos on social media or "apps" (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, etc.) to harass or intimidate. These lists are meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

#### **Reporting the conduct:**

Any school employee who is made aware of conduct which violates this policy, or who receives a report of bullying, shall promptly report this information to the school administrator and, in the administrator's absence, to the administrators designee, assistant principal, or Dean of students. Parent / Guardian who has information that bullying involving a student(s) of the school is occurring shall promptly notify the school of this information.

#### **Notifying the parents/guardian:**

Within 24 hours of the school being made aware of a reported bullying incident the school administrator shall notify the parents/guardian of each of the students reportedly involved the school administrator shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent/guardian using all contact information available to the school or which the school within that 24 hours can reasonably obtain.

#### **Investigating:**

The school administrator shall investigate the matter, may involve School support Personnel or others as deemed appropriate, and will make reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days of the date the report is received by the school. However, information may be discovered during the investigation which extends the investigation beyond 10 school days.

Students who violate this policy will generally be subject to the discipline policy of the student's school, but where the nature or extent of the conduct warrants, violators of the policy may be subject to suspension and/or expulsion. The school administrator or designee will provide to the parents/guardians of the students who are parties in the investigation (parties are the student(s) reported to be the target of the conduct, and the student(s) reported to be committing the conduct) information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the school administrator or designee to discuss the investigation, the investigation findings, and actions are investigations taken to address bullying, adhering to privacy rules and laws. To the extent appropriate, the school will identify to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the involved student(s) school- or community-based resources, if available, to assist the

involved student(s). The school may require the parent/guardian of the involved student(s) to participate in community-based resources for the involved student(s).

**Procedure:**

This policy to be distributed annually by each Diocese school principal to the school's students and their parent/guardian, and school employees, and to new employees when they are hired. If the school has a website accessible to the public, the policy is to be posted there as well. If the school has a student/family handbook, it is to be posted there as well. If the school posts policies, rules, or standards of conduct in the school, it is to be posted there as well. This policy will be reviewed/updated every 2 years and filed with the State Board of Education after being updated.

**Cardiac Emergency Response Plan (CERP) for St. Charles Borromeo**

**Purpose:** To establish a protocol that ensures a rapid and effective response to cardiac emergencies, in compliance with Illinois HB 5394 and the American Heart Association's guidelines.

**1. Identifying Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA):**

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) is a life-threatening condition that occurs when the heart unexpectedly stops beating, leading to a sudden loss of blood flow to the brain and other vital organs. Key signs of SCA include sudden collapse, unresponsiveness, and abnormal or absent breathing. In some cases, individuals may gasp irregularly, which should not be mistaken for normal breathing. Victims will not respond to tapping or shouting, and no pulse will be detectable. Prompt recognition of these symptoms is critical, as immediate CPR and the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) can significantly increase the chances of survival.

**2. Cardiac Emergency Response Team (CERT):**

- **Composition:**
  - The Principal of St. Charles Borromeo will appoint the CERT. This should include trained staff members such as teachers, administrators, school nurses, coaches, and security personnel.
- **Training:**
  - All CERT members must maintain current certification in CPR and AED use from a nationally recognized organization.
- **Responsibilities of CERT members:**
  - Initiate emergency response during an SCA.
  - Ensure prompt use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).
  - Liaise with emergency medical services (EMS) upon their arrival.

**3. AED Placement and Maintenance:**

- **Locations:**
  - Principal to strategically place AEDs in accessible areas such as the main office, gymnasium, cafeteria, and near athletic fields.
- **Maintenance:**
  - CERT to conduct monthly inspections to ensure AEDs are functional and batteries are charged.
  - CERT to maintain a log of inspections and any maintenance performed.

**4. Emergency Communication Plan:**

- **Internal Communication:**
  - Establish a reliable system (e.g., intercom, two-way radios) to alert CERT members and staff during an emergency. That system will be: Intercom System.
- **External Communication:**
  - Assign a team member to call 911, providing clear information about the victim's condition and precise location. That team member is: Debra Wingren.
  - Ensure someone is designated to guide EMS to the exact location upon arrival.

**5. Annual Training and Drills:**

- **Training:**
  - CERT to provide annual refresher courses for all staff on CPR, AED use, and emergency procedures.
- **Drills:**
  - CERT to conduct annual cardiac emergency response drills to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of the CERP in conjunction with local first responders.

**6. Post-Event Review:**

- **Debriefing:**
  - After an SCA, CERT to hold a debriefing session to assess the response and identify areas for improvement.

- **Documentation:**

- CERT to complete an incident report detailing the event, actions taken, and outcomes.

## **7. Compliance and Review:**

- **Policy Review:**

- CERT to annually review and update the CERP in conjunction with local first responders to ensure compliance with Illinois HB 5394 and alignment with the latest guidelines from the American Heart Association.

- **Distribution:**

- CERT to annually distribute the CERP to all teachers, administrators, school support personnel, coaches, and other identified staff members and volunteers.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

St. Charles Borromeo admits students of any race, color, gender, or national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at this school. St. Charles Borromeo School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, disabilities, status as immigrants or national and ethnic origin in the administration of their educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. As an equal opportunity employer, the Diocese of Rockford allows for no discrimination in employment. In keeping with this commitment and the requirements of Federal and State law, the Diocese of Rockford prohibits discrimination against employees and/or candidates for employment on the basis of age, race, gender, color, handicap or disability, national origin, or status upon discharge from military service.

Sexual Abuse Response and Prevention Resource Guide

<chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Faiths-Law-Resource-Guide.pdf>

## **CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**

Pursuant to Illinois's Faith's Law requirements, the Diocese of Rockford adopts this Code of Professional Conduct for School Employees. Each of the provisions below is contained in existing policies and rules of the Diocese of Rockford but are restated as a Code of Conduct for School Employees to comply with the law.

Each school is required pursuant to Faith's Law to post this Code of Professional Conduct for School Employees on the school's website and to publish this document in the school's parent/family/student handbook, if the school has one.

### **I. Educator Code of Conduct**

Pursuant to recent Illinois law, the Diocese adopts the relevant portions of the Illinois Educator Code of Conduct, as follows, which applies to school employees who are certified or working toward certification or whose certification has been waived:

Principle 1: Responsibility to Students. Educators are committed to creating, promoting, and implementing a learning environment that enables students to achieve their highest academic potential, and to succeed as a responsible member of society. They are committed to embodying standards of professionalism in the learning environment; respecting the inherent dignity and worth of each student by assuring that the learning environment is characterized by respect for each student; maintaining a professional relationship with students at all times; providing a curriculum based on high expectations for students; and fostering in each student the development of attributes that will enhance skills and knowledge necessary to be a contributing member of society.

Principle 2: Responsibility to Self. Educators are committed to establishing high professional standards and striving to meet these standards through their performance. They are committed to assuming responsibility and accountability for their performance and striving to demonstrate proficiency and currency in both content knowledge and professional practice; developing and implementing personal and professional goals with attention to professional standards through a process of self-assessment and professional development; representing their professional credentials and qualifications accurately; and using sound professional judgment.

Principle 3: Responsibility to Colleagues and the Profession. Educators are committed to collaborating with school and Diocesan colleagues and other professionals in the interest of student learning and to meet state educational standards; working together to create a respectful, professional and supportive school climate for educators to maintain their individual professional integrity; seeking out and engaging in activities that contribute to the ongoing

development of the profession; encouraging promising candidates to enter the education profession; and supporting the preparation, induction, mentoring and professional development of educators.

Principle 4: Responsibility to School Parents and Families. Educators are committed to collaborating, striving to build trust, and respecting confidentiality with school parents and families striving to develop and maintain professional relationships with school parents and 89 4105 families; and promoting collaboration and supporting student learning through communication with parents and families.

Principle 5: Responsibility to the ISBE. Educators are committed to supporting the Administrative and School Codes as applicable to Catholic schools, state and federal laws and regulations as applicable to Catholic schools, and the Illinois State Board of Education's standards for highly qualified educators, as applicable to Catholic schools. They are committed to providing accurate communication to the Illinois State Board of Education concerning all certification matters; maintaining appropriate certification for employment; and complying with the state and federal codes, laws, and regulations, that apply to Catholic schools.

## **II. Sexual Misconduct**

The Diocese's Norms for the Prohibition of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Sexual Misconduct with Adults: Education, Prevention, Assistance to Persons making a Report, Investigation, and Procedures for Determination of Fitness for Ministry/Employment, prohibits sexual abuse of minors by its employees, clergy members, and volunteers. Pursuant to Faith's Law, the Diocese has amended its Norms to add additional description of acts constituting sexual abuse of a minor:

Sexual misconduct, defined by Faith's Law as any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity directed toward or with a minor for the purpose of establishing a romantic or sexual relationship with the minor, including but not limited to a sexual or romantic invitation; dating or soliciting a date; engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog; making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a minor; selfdisclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature; and/or a sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the minor (Illinois' Faith's Law, Public Act 102-0676, (105 ILCS 5/22-85.5)).

Grooming behavior, defined by Faith's Law and the Illinois Criminal Code as knowingly using a computer online service, internet service, local bulletin board service, or any other device capable of electronic data storage or transmission, or performs an act in person or by conduct through a third party, or uses written communication to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice, or attempt to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice, a child, or another person believed by the person to be a child, to commit any sex offense as defined in Section 2 of the Sex Offender Registration Act, to distribute photographs depicting the sex organs of the child, or to otherwise engage in any unlawful sexual conduct with a child or with another person believed by the person to be a child.

## **III. Expectations of School Employees**

The Diocese restates here the Diocese's expectations of all its employees, including employees who work at parish elementary schools and Diocesan high schools in the Diocese of Rockford:

School employees are expected to maintain professional relationships and boundaries, recognizing the age and the developmental levels of the students with whom they interact.

These expectations are set forth in detail in the following:

Diocese's Code for the Pastoral Use of Technology and Social Media;

Diocese's Code of Pastoral Conduct; the Diocese's Guidelines for Youth and Those Working with Youth Employee, Volunteer, and Youth Participant General Guidelines and Boundaries Expectations;

Diocese's Norms for the Prohibition of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Sexual Misconduct with Adults: Education, Prevention, Assistance to Persons making a Report, Investigation, and Procedures for Determination of Fitness for Ministry/Employment; Illinois DCFS Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status form; and the following trainings:

Virtus Protecting God's Children; Illinois DCFS's Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters; and State of Illinois' Prohibition of Sexual Harassment training.

## **IV. School Employees are Mandated Reporters**

The Diocese restates here the Diocese's requirement that its employees, including employees who work at parish elementary schools and Diocesan high schools in the Diocese of Rockford, shall report suspected child abuse and suspected child neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

Pursuant to the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, (325 ILCS 5/4), school employees are required to make a report suspected child abuse and suspected child neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services by calling the hotline number at 1-80025-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873) whenever the employee has reasonable cause to believe that a child known to the employee in the employee's professional or official capacity may be abused or neglected.

This requirement is contained in the following:

Diocese's Norms for the Prohibition of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Sexual Misconduct with Adults: Education, Prevention, Assistance to Persons making a Report, Investigation, and Procedures for Determination of Fitness for Ministry/Employment; Illinois DCFS Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status form;

and the following trainings:

Virtus Protecting God's Children; Illinois DCFS's Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters; and State of Illinois' Prohibition of Sexual Harassment training.

#### **V. Employee Training Related to Child Abuse and Educator Ethics**

The Diocese requires its employees be trained annually in their obligations as mandated reporters and every three years to be trained in preventing, detecting and responding properly to sexual harassment. The trainings are entitled DCFS's Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters; and the State of Illinois' Prohibition of Sexual Harassment training. Those requirements are set forth in the Diocese's Employee Handbook and in the Diocese's Safe Environment Requirements for Clergy, Adult/Teen Employees and Volunteers whose role involves direct contact with minors. The Diocese will require its school employee educators to receive training in educator ethics. When those resources are completed, they will be shared with educators.

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#### **References:**

Diocese's Norms for the Prohibition of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Sexual Misconduct with Adults: Education, Prevention, Assistance to Persons making a Report, Investigation, and Procedures for Determination of Fitness for Ministry/Employment; Illinois DCFS Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status form; Diocese's Code for the Pastoral Use of Technology and Social Media; Diocese's Code of Pastoral Conduct; the Diocese's Guidelines for Youth and Those Working with Youth Employee, Volunteer, and Youth Participant General Guidelines and Boundaries Expectations;

and the following trainings:

Virtus Protecting God's Children; Illinois DCFS's Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters; and State of Illinois' Prohibition of Sexual Harassment training. Effective July 1, 2023