

**Visitation Catholic School  
Parent-Student Handbook**

**2018-2019**



PROMULGATION OF PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK  
OF POLICIES AND REGULATIONS  
FOR VISITATION CATHOLIC SCHOOL

After consultation with the Principal and Education Commission,  
I hereby decree that the Parent-Student Handbook of Policies and Regulations  
for Visitation Catholic School of Kewanee, IL in the Diocese of Peoria  
dated August 1st , 2018 is effective for the 2018-2019 school year.

Given at Visitation Catholic School this 1st day of August, 2018

Circumstances may arise in which Visitation Catholic School determines that  
changes are required in these guidelines and procedures. For this reason, Visitation  
Catholic School reserves the right, at any time, to modify, terminate, rescind or  
supplement any or all of the guidelines or procedures contained herein, and to take  
actions which may be contrary to guidelines, benefits, or procedures set forth in this  
Handbook.

---

Father Johndamaseni Zilimu, PhD  
Saint John Paul II Parish

## Table of Contents

	Page
<b>Preface</b>	1-2
Non-Discrimination in Admission Policies	
Recognition by the State of Illinois	
Gospel Values	
Right to Life Statement	
The Right to Amend the Handbook	
Diocesan Policy	
<b>Mission and Philosophy Statements</b>	3-4
Catholic School Statement of Purpose	
Visitation Catholic School Mission Statement	
Visitation Catholic School Philosophy Statement	
Visitation Catholic School Education Commission Purpose	
Visitation Catholic School Parents' Club Purpose	
<b>Communication Between Home and School</b>	5-7
Parent Communication with Faculty/Staff	
Parent Responsibilities	
Protocol When Dealing with Concerns	
School Visitation	
Telephone Use	
Distribution of School Information	
Electronic Information	
<b>-Faith Development</b>	8-9
Liturgy	
Sacrament of Penance	
Sacramental Preparation Programs	
Rosary and Stations	
Christian Service Program	
Respect and Courtesy	
Chastity Education	
Visitation Catholic School Self-Discipline Goals/Skills	
<b>Tuition and Tuition Assistance</b>	10-11
Kindergarten through 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Tuition Policy	
Preschool Tuition Policy	
<b>Admission Policies</b>	12-13
Admission of New Students	
Immunizations	
Physical and Dental Examinations	
<b>Medical Information</b>	14-16
FERPA, HIPPA	
Medication	
Special Medical Needs	
Lice Policy	
Hearing and Vision Testing	
Speech Evaluation	
Illness, Accidents, or Disease Exposure	
Dioceses of Peoria Schools Blanket Student and Athletic Accident Coverage	

<b>Arrival and Departure from School</b>	17
Drop-off and Pick-up	
Bicycle Riders	
<b>Attendance Guidelines</b>	18-19
Arrival and Dismissal Times	
Absence	
Tardiness	
Early Dismissal by Parent Request	
<b>Dress Code</b>	20-21
<b>Visitors / Volunteers</b>	22
Security	
Volunteers	
Chaperones/Supervisors	
<b>Emergencies</b>	23-24
Visitation Catholic School Safety Plan	
Emergency Dismissals	
Weather Dismissals	
Fire Drills	
Tornado Warnings	
Diagrams of Procedures	
<b>Academic Policies</b>	25
Curriculum	
Technology	
Academic Testing	
Iowa Test of Basic Skills	
ACRE – Diocesan Religion Assessments	
<b>Reporting Academic Progress</b>	26-27
Grades and Grading	
Mid-term Reports	
Report Cards	
Recognition of Achievement	
Honors Cords/Honors Breakfast	
Conferences	
Honor Roll	
Retention of Students	
<b>Homework</b>	28
General Guidelines	
Assignment Notebooks	
Homework Pick-Up	
<b>Student Records</b>	29
Examination of Student Records by Parents	
Transfer of Student Records	
Confidentiality	
<b>Educational Field Trips</b>	30
Privilege, Not a Right	
Field Trip Guidelines	
Standard Permission Forms	
<b>Hot Lunch Program</b>	31

General Lunch Information	
Noon Hour Guidelines	
Free/Reduced Lunches	
Cafeteria Procedures	
Not Permitted	
<b>Supervision</b>	<b>32</b>
General Guidelines	
Inside the Building	
Permission to Remain Indoors During Recess	
<b>Extra-Curricular Programs</b>	<b>33-34</b>
Offerings	
Extra-Curricular Philosophy	
Extra-Curricular Participation and Eligibility	
Extra-Curricular Guidelines	
Diocesan Policy on Performance Enhancing Supplements	
<b>Discipline Guidelines</b>	<b>35-38</b>
Diocesan Policy on Corporal Punishment	
General Guidelines	
Teachers' Responsibilities	
Discipline of Students	
Behaviors That Require Disciplinary Action	
Bullying	
Tobacco Prohibition	
Drugs and Alcohol Policy	
Inspection Policy	
Electronic Devices	
Weapons Possession Policy	
Harassment Policy	
<b>Disciplinary Action</b>	<b>39-40</b>
Detentions	
Suspension	
Permanent Dismissal	
<b>Conflict Resolution</b>	<b>41-42</b>
Definition	
Informal Level	
Formal Level	
Time Lines	
<b>Diocesan Statement of Policy for Appeal and Review</b>	<b>43</b>

# Preface

## **Non-Discrimination in Admission Policies**

Visitation Catholic School is in compliance with all federal and state non-discrimination and equal opportunity laws and regulations regarding admission as stated in the Commission on Education policies of the Diocese of Peoria.

No student shall be refused admission to Visitation Catholic School on the basis of race, color, gender, national or ethnic origin, or disability (when with minor adjustments on the part of the school, the disabled person could be accommodated). Visitation Catholic School complies with applicable federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination, including but not limited to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, the Age Discrimination in Disabilities Act of 1990, the Illinois School Code, and relevant case law including Plyler v. Doe (1982).

Visitation Catholic School gives preference to students of Catholic families who are registered members of Saint John Paul II or other local Catholic parishes; secondly, to non-Catholics. Decisions on student enrollment are based on the school's mission statement. The Pastor makes final decisions on enrollment, with input from the school Principal.

No registered, practicing member of Saint John Paul II or other local Catholic parishes, who is interested in the educational programs of Visitation Catholic School, will be denied participation because of financial need.

## **Recognition by the State of Illinois**

Visitation Catholic School obtained Full Recognition by the State of Illinois under the guidelines for Recognition of Non-Public Elementary Schools. The school has met the standards set by the Illinois State Board of Education and fulfilled application requirements.

## **Gospel Values**

Visitation Catholic School is committed to integrating the Gospel Values throughout the school. This commitment flows from Archbishop Myers' pastoral *To Reach Full Knowledge of the Truth* and the teachings of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

## **Right to Life Statement**

Visitation Catholic School shall uphold the teachings and disciplines of the Roman Catholic Church concerning the dignity of all human life including the rights of the unborn child. Compromise of these doctrines, by word or deed, may be cause for immediate expulsion.

## **The Right to Amend the Handbook**

The administration reserves the right to amend the Parent-Student Handbook. The Pastor of Visitation Catholic School is the final authority in all disciplinary situations and, after consultation with the Principal, may waive any or all regulations for just cause at their discretion. Parents will be promptly notified if changes are made.

## **Diocesan Policy**

Visitation Catholic School is subject to all diocesan policies, which can be found on the diocesan website at [www.cdop.org](http://www.cdop.org). These take precedence over any/all local policies.

# Mission and Philosophy Statements

## Catholic School Statement of Purpose

*“From the first moment that a student sets foot in a Catholic school, he or she ought to have the impression of entering a new environment, one illuminated by the light of faith and having its own unique characteristics, an environment with the Gospel spirit of love and freedom....”*

### **The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, #25**

Catholic schools in the Catholic Diocese of Peoria are established to assist the Bishop and Pastors in the transmission of the Faith to the young of the Diocese. We welcome non-Catholic students into our school who wish to take advantage of the opportunities provided by Catholic education. Every school must have its main goal to help each student develop a personal and ecclesial relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ, who is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life” (John 14:6). The principles, practices, and beliefs of the Catholic Faith must be fully integrated throughout the school’s curricula, service projects, co-curricular activities, and culture.

Students in our Catholic schools are reminded of their dignity as children of God through the study of Catholic doctrine, frequent opportunities for personal and communal prayer, and active participation in the sacramental life of the Church. Together with parents, the primary educators of their children, our Catholic schools pursue academic and spiritual excellence by helping students to develop their intellectual activities, foster wholesome friendships, practice discipleship, strengthen their daily prayer life, grow in virtue, and become leaders through serving others.

All personnel that work in our Catholic schools must have at heart the promotion of the educational mission of the Church, and live as visible role models of faith within the parish/school community. Catholic doctrinal, moral and social teachings are an integral part of each school. Therefore, all faculty, staff, administrative, and volunteer personnel must support the teachings of the Church, actively practice their faith in daily life, and be loyal to the Church’s Magisterium. Our Catholic school personnel share this educational mission and its various commitments and responsibilities with parents and the local Church communities.

*“It is crucial that the policies and procedures of Catholic schools reflect that primary purpose and that the Catholicity of the school and its faithfulness to the teaching authority of the Catholic Church (Magisterium) are not compromised.”*

**Sister Mary Angela Shaughnessy, SCN, J.D., Ph.D.**

## School Mission Statement

**The Mission of Visitation Catholic School is to inspire excellence and to develop future leaders for Christ, through quality education grounded in Catholic values, principles, and traditions.**

## Philosophy of Visitation Catholic School

We believe that Visitation Catholic School exists to make one's faith become living and active through the light of instruction and with God's help. Faith experiences are integrated through liturgy, worship, and service to others. We strive to build community by instilling Catholic virtues and attitudes through example, guidance, and quality instruction.

In recognizing each individual's worth as a child of God, we strive to respect one another and the talents each person possesses. This Catholic atmosphere, quality instruction, development of life skills, and working toward justice and peace will foster the responsibility necessary for spiritual and intellectual growth.

## **Education Commission Purpose**

This Commission has been established to promote the participation of members in the educational mission of the Church, and in particular of local Catholic parishes, to encourage dialogue between the Pastor and members of the Parishes, and to recommend to the Pastor policy on educational matters.

The following specific purposes are to be served by the Education Commission:

- To ascertain and to assist the Pastor in determining, after prayerful study and analysis, the educational needs of the people of Saint John Paul II Catholic Parish and other local parishes.
- To study, in particular, the needs of the formal educational programs of the Saint John Paul II Parish, including Visitation Catholic School, to regularly evaluate existing policy and to make observations and recommendations known to the Pastor.
- To encourage effective consultation in educational matters and to foster the climate of dialogue
- To recommend specific policy to the Pastor regarding Visitation Catholic School.
- To assist the Parish Council of Saint John Paul II Parish, when requested, with implementing recommendations in the field of education and formation.
- To assist the Pastor in his role as Chief Catechist of Visitation Catholic School as he may request.
- To decide how to disperse information regarding Legislative Action when the need arises as the information reaches the Education Commission through the Chairperson as the contact. The elected members will prepare to disperse the information to the parish in the most expedient way with suggested methods such as form letters to legislators being placed in pews at church, pulpit announcements, church bulletins and through Visitation Catholic School.

Visitation Catholic School Commission on Education meetings are held the second Thursday of every other month. (Other meetings may be held as needed.) This is a policy-making body for Visitation Catholic School. It is governed by representation from local Catholic parishes. Anyone wishing to be heard or to speak at a meeting must make a request for permission to the acting Commission President, the Pastor or the Principal at least one week in advance of the meeting date.

## **Parent and Teacher Organization Purpose**

The mission of the Visitation PAT Organization is to maintain open communication and foster trust relationships between parents, teachers and administration by supporting the following activities:

- Organizing religious, social and fund-raising activities
- Professional development/teacher appreciation/Incentive programs
- Replenishing classroom supplies/teacher wish list items as able
- Working on any special project to promote our mission as requested by the Pastor or Principal

The PAT meets as needed at 7 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month to plan for the activities/projects listed. Meetings are advertised in the school memo and Google calendar. All parents are encouraged to attend. All Visitation Catholic School parents are members of this organization, and should strive to take an active role.

# Communication between Home and School

## Parent Communication with Faculty/Staff

As an introduction to the following policy, we recognize the responsibility of faculty/staff members to demonstrate open and courteous communication with parents. Communication and expression of concerns must always be done in a constructive and Christian manner within an appropriate setting.

Rude and/or abusive communication to faculty and staff members on the part of parents or students cannot and will not be tolerated. Conduct that is determined by the administration to be in violation of this policy (of ordinary civility) may include suspension or dismissal of the student. Teachers must treat parents with respect at all times.

Positive, constructive communication between teacher and parent is encouraged. Conferences may be initiated by parent or teacher at any time. An appointment should be set up for any conference at a time that is convenient to both parties.

## Parent Responsibilities

Because the education of children is the primary responsibility of the parents, it is essential that the parent:

- Be a Christian example.
- Assume prime responsibility for guiding and disciplining the child in moral and spiritual growth.
- Teach basic prayers before entrance into school.
- Pray with the child in family prayer and at Sunday Mass.
- Teach respect for authority and the rights of others.
- Participate in sacramental preparation programs.
- Encourage the child to accept and be friendly with all children.
- Respect each child's abilities by not comparing him/her to others.
- Be alert to moments when one can praise and compliment the child
- Develop open lines of communication with children and teachers that allow for mutual sharing of positive experiences or of difficulties.
- Provide time, place and atmosphere in the home that allows for mutual sharing of positive experiences or of difficulties.
- Share with the child the evaluation of the student's progress as indicated in reports and conferences, thereby encouraging continued success.
- Support school policies by helping the child to understand the rules and by enforcing those rules.
- Attend scheduled parent-teacher conferences.
- Approach the teacher initially with questions and/or problems relating to students; exercise discretion in discussing these with the child or others.
- Assume responsibility for the conduct of one's child(ren) when present with them at school activities.
- Support the PAT through attendance at meetings and participation in activities.

## **Protocol When Dealing With Concerns**

When parents wish to discuss a concern, please follow this chain of command procedure:

- Parent(s) contact the teacher either in person, in writing, email or by telephone, stating the concern. The teacher will address your concern and reply either in person, in writing, email or by a telephone call. Most concerns will be resolved in this manner. If the concern is not resolved, you may contact the Principal.
- Very brief "stop-in" times are permitted before and after school in order to check student status or give information. In other instances a conference should be scheduled with the teacher.

## **School Visitation Policy**

"Parent", unless otherwise specified, shall not include a non-custodial parent--for example, regarding visitation rights, requests for dismissal of students, etc. Visitation Catholic School administration reserves the right to designate special days when parents, including non-custodial parents, grandparents, or others may visit with the students during an open house, cafeteria luncheon, or similar events.

If there are limitations, for example, regarding visitation rights, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of any court orders. Non-custodial parent visitations are not permitted at school.

If a parent chooses to have lunch with the student and wishes to purchase a school lunch, please notify the office by 8:00 a.m.

## **Telephone Use**

Ordinarily, long distance calls may not be made from school phones. Cell phone usage during the school day is also prohibited. Students may use the main office phone only for emergency reasons.

Students may not make calls for homework, books, field trip permission slips, or to make plans for after school unless permission is granted by the principal. Students communicate with the homeroom teacher regarding a need to use the phone and report to the office with a note from the teacher.

Cell phones do not belong in the classroom. Students are not to use cell phones except before or after school. ***“To insure the safety and privacy of our students, all cell phones must be turned into homeroom teachers at the beginning of each day. Phones will be safely stored in the homeroom until the end of the day at which time the phones will be returned to the students. This will insure that inappropriate use of phones cannot occur. The privacy and safety of all students is extremely important and must be protected.”*** (Approved by Education Commission in November, 2016.)

## **Distribution Of School Information**

A monthly memo packet will be sent on the third Thursday of the month. The **oldest child** in each family is designated to take these packets from the office to the home. Parents should be expecting these monthly memos and should ask their child about it on the specified day. Parents are urged to bring the child back to school to get the envelope, if forgotten. If it is lost, the parent should phone the office for a replacement.

## **Electronic Information**

### **Option C**

Communication is very important to the success of our school and to the students and families we serve. We currently use a program called OptionC for our school management system. This program is used for billing, attendance, and grade management. We will also continue to use the Parent Alert System to send communications to your home. These communications could be: School Closings, Weekly Newsletters, or Daily Announcements. The weekly memo will also be posted to Option C under the 'Reports' section of Option C. Individual log in information will be sent home in the first school memo. Please take some time to look at the program and contact the office if you have any questions.

### **Google Calendar**

Our school google calendar is updated regularly. This calendar contains all school events, athletic events, and the daily hot lunch menu. It can be viewed in Option C or on our school webpage, [www.visitationcatholic.com](http://www.visitationcatholic.com) You can also download the calendar to your mobile phone or computer. (Instructions for this will also be sent home in the first school memo.) We encourage all families to watch this calendar for up to date information.

Visitation Catholic School maintains all scheduled activities and events on Google calendar. This calendar is available and able to synchronize to any computer or cellular smart phone (Apple and Android). It is encouraged for all parents to check the Google calendar often for school event dates and times as well as daily lunches.

In addition school information is maintained on the Visitation school website [www.visitationcatholic.com](http://www.visitationcatholic.com) as well as the school Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/visitationcatholic](http://www.facebook.com/visitationcatholic).

# Faith Development

## Liturgy

Students in grades kindergarten through 8 participate in all-school celebrations of the Eucharistic liturgies on Fridays and Holy Days. Students in grades 2nd-8th plan and participate in the liturgy under the direction of the homeroom and religion teachers.

## Sacrament of Penance

The sacrament of Penance is celebrated at school monthly throughout the school year. We encourage parents to have the children join them in the sacrament during other times so that a good "habit" will be formed as a family for life.

## Sacramental Preparation Programs

Parents are expected to participate with their children in preparing for the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist (grade 2) and the sacrament of Confirmation (grade 7 or 8). Confirmation is conferred in the odd numbered years.

## Rosary and Stations

Teachers prepare students to pray the Rosary and Stations of the Cross. The Rosary is taught as a traditional Catholic prayer and recited weekly before mass. Stations are prayed weekly in the church during Lent under the direction of a priest or deacon.

## Christian Service Program

Visitation Catholic School has a philosophy based on the Gospel message. Adoring God in worship, we have community with one another, and are moved to Christian service. To give form to the goal of service, all within this community are called to develop means of sharing Christ's life and spirit with others within and beyond the school community.

Service activities will draw from the love of Christ that is fostered at home and school and will become visible gifts from the heart -- not seeking reward, but sharing love.

Visitation Catholic Faculty invites and encourages student participation and involvement in Christian service activities at all grade levels. Service projects are determined by the homeroom teachers.

## Respect and Courtesy

The Faculty of Visitation Catholic School encourages the practice of respectful and courteous words and actions as a means of showing care for one another and for strengthening Christian school spirit.

All teachers instruct their students in the following:

- Stand to welcome priests and visitors in the classroom.
- Welcome others with a smile and friendly greeting.
- Use the person's name when possible. "Good morning, Father." "Hello, Mrs. Smith."
- Use the proper title for a priest, sister, teacher, supervisor and volunteer.
- Show a visitor to the office if he/she appears to need directions.
- Hold doors open for adults and each other.
- Use "please" and "thank you".

- Wait for others to finish speaking instead of interrupting.
- Walk around people, not in front of them.
- Walk quietly in the halls.
- Laugh with others and not at them.
- Respect the property of other students.
- Respect school property.

### **Chastity Education**

We believe that parents are the primary educators of their child(ren). This school collaborates and assists the parents in this process. One aspect of this is the 5<sup>th</sup> grade student/parent program usually given annually. During a Confirmation year Theology of the Body is taught to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade students.

Chastity education includes some, but is not synonymous with, "sex education." Chastity education is an overall education in virtuous behavior, which the Catholic school has traditionally integrated into its total curriculum.

### **Visitation Catholic School Self Discipline Goals/Skills**

A person is self-disciplined when he or she can:

- Listen
- Follow instructions
- Ask questions when something is not understood
- Share time, space, people, things
- Practice the essentials of social skills
- Work cooperatively with others
- Understand and explain the reasons for rules
- Select and develop procedures for accomplishing a goal
- Be a leader
- Communicate effectively
- Organize time, space, things
- Work together to resolve problems of mutual concern
- Take the initiative to resolve problems
- Distinguish fact from feeling
- Sacrifice/serve others

# Tuition and Tuition Assistance

Visitation Catholic School tuition, technology, book, supply and graduation fees are set annually. All fees will be announced at the all school meeting held each Spring.

## **Kindergarten Through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Tuition Policy**

No one will be allowed to register for the new school year with a balance from the previous year(s). This must be resolved with the principal or pastor.

Book fees (non-refundable) and at least one month's tuition must be paid in full at registration. Larger families may contact the principal or pastor to spread book fees over 2-3 months, if necessary.

Monthly payments are preferred by automatic withdrawal. Auto-withdrawal may be executed either once a month, or twice.

Payments need to be made in the school office by the first of each month. For those families who prefer to make lump payments, a minimum of \$50 per child per month is required to show good intent, and to ensure our own financial stability.

All families receiving a Catholic tuition rate must be registered and practicing and contributing members of a local Roman Catholic parish. Catholic tuition is a subsidized tuition; this break comes from every contributing parishioner making up the difference between non-Catholic and Catholic rates. **Registered members of a parish are those who attend Mass and use the church envelopes putting in a minimum of \$15.00 a week. Families not properly registered will be charged non-Catholic tuition.**

Any family hoping to receive financial assistance must follow these guidelines:

- Apply to the Diocese of Peoria for the Spalding Scholarship (info on this is generally released in November and due by mid-February)
- Fill out a FACTS form to assess financial need (also a necessary part of Spalding application).
- Work out the family budget ahead to determine what you can afford to pay each month.
- Set up a meeting with your pastor, preferably before the school year begins, to work out a plan.
- **Understand that expectations for financial assistance are as follow:**
  - **You and your children must be practicing Catholics.**
  - **You need to support your parish with your time, talent, and treasure.**
  - **You need to participate actively in school functions and volunteer opportunities.**

Any family that truly cannot afford our tuition should make arrangements with the principal and their pastor. **No practicing Catholic family will be excluded from Visitation solely for lack of funds.**

## **Preschool Tuition Policy**

Payments must be paid by automatic withdrawal from checking account or may be paid in advance by each semester. Book and Supply Fees must be paid at registration.

If one month is missed parents will be notified that their child will not be able to attend the preschool program, unless the balance is brought current by the first of the next month. If this is not met, then the child will not be allowed back in the preschool program. No student will be allowed to attend the end of the year celebration without all fees paid in full.

# Admission Policies

## Admission of New Students

Visitation Catholic School admits students regardless of sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded to the students in the school.

Priority for Admission: Families who follow our application procedures and timeline will be admitted on the following priority basis:

- First priority for admission is given to children with siblings already attending Visitation who are in good standing with the school.
- Second priority will be given to children of registered and participating members (defined below) of St. John Paul II Parish.
- Third priority will be given to children of registered and participating members of other Catholic parishes.
- Fourth priority will be given to children of families who are non-registered/non-practicing Catholics.
- Fifth priority will be given to children of families from other religious denominations or faith backgrounds.

\*\*\*Kindergarten students must be five years of age by September 1 of the year they apply for admission.

## Required at Time of Application

- Birth Certificate
- Baptismal Certificate (if Catholic)
- Previous school transcript(s) and copy of standardized test scores (if transferring from another school)
- Letter of confirmation of registration/participation from home parish (if Catholic)
- Proof of medical exam and record of immunizations must be submitted by all new students before school begins. Additional medical/dental/vision exam requirements apply for certain grade levels.

All parents and students are made aware that the basic purpose of Visitation Catholic School is for Catholic Formation within a Christian Community inspired by faith, as well as for the academic development of students. As part of the admission process, families agree to maintain a commitment to the mission, goals, and religious values of Visitation Catholic School through support of the policies outlined in the parent-student handbook.

Students transferring to Visitation from other schools will undergo a screening process to ensure that the student's previous record and reason for transfer are consistent with Visitation's mission and goals. Transferring students must have a record free of major disciplinary incidents (e.g. suspension, expulsion, major infractions of school rules). In addition, if the information gathered indicates that Visitation Catholic School does not have the educational program to best serve the academic, behavioral, or social/emotional needs of the student, the student will not be accepted for admission.

Every Catholic is expected to join their parish community at Mass each Sunday and Holy Day to give thanks and praise to God. Visitation offers a tuition discount to members of St. John Paul II Parish who are active participants. Because the parish makes this tuition discount available by contributing a significant sum to the operational expenses of the school, to be eligible for the discounted “parish member” rate, families must observe the following requirements:

- Be a registered parishioner at St. John Paul II Parish or St. John Parish (Galva).
- Participate in the celebration of Mass each Sunday and Holy Day.
- Annually renew their sacrificial giving pledge to the parish by submitting a stewardship card.
- Maintain their sacrificial giving pledge, with a minimum of 25 Sunday envelopes placed in the collection basket at Mass throughout the year.
- Participation in at least one additional parish or school activities or ministries (e.g. lector, bible study, food pantry volunteer, Knights of Columbus, fish fry helper, Hog Days stand, Bazaar, adoration, etc.).

Parishioner status will be monitored each December and June. Families who fail to maintain active parish membership at St. John Paul II Parish will be charged the standard (non-parishioner) tuition rate beginning the next semester.

### **Immunizations**

A complete immunization record must be on file for each student in the school. Students entering school must have proof of immunization by the 15th day of October or the student will be excluded from school until the requirement is met as mandated by the state. Students enrolling after the beginning date must present the immunization record and their latest health examination. If for medical reasons, one or more required immunizations must be given after the beginning day of school, then the parent or student shall present a schedule to the administration of the immunization and a statement of the medical reason for the delay.

Students entering **Kindergarten** must have: a physical exam, a dental exam, a vision exam and all State required immunizations and tests.

The Department of Public Health and your doctor may recommend additional immunizations and exams for your child.

### **Physical and Dental Examinations**

The State of Illinois requires all **Kindergarten, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students** to have a dental exam before entering these grades. All children entering **Kindergarten and 6<sup>th</sup> grade** must have a complete Physical Examination. New students must have proof of current State required immunizations and tests.

# Medical Information

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)

HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act)

Parents/guardians need to know that health information gathered through screening registration forms, physical exams, oral/written communication by a parent/guardian and/or health care providers may be shared by the certified school nurse with those individuals, i.e. teachers/other school personnel who have an educational interest in enhancing the health and safety of the student. This information may be shared via a written/electronic communication or by direct personal contact. If you do not wish to have information shared, please send a written request to the school with a week of receiving this handbook.

## Medication

A child who is not feeling well does not apply his/her best efforts to school work. Many illnesses, including colds, can have an impact on a child's disposition, and can also be communicated to other children. It is important to be sensible about school attendance. Be sure that the school office always has current telephone numbers so that you can be contacted if your child is sick.

## Request for the Administration of Medicine or Treatment

The administration of medicine is usually not a function of education, but if it does become necessary for a student to take medicine at school, the following guidelines are to be followed.

- Parents/Guardians must complete the “Medicine/Treatment Administration Form” for all medications. These forms are available upon request at the school office. (sample below)
- All medication (including asthma inhalers, epinephrine auto-injectors, and diabetic medicines should be brought to the school office in the original container and labeled with the student name. Prescription medication must also contain the physician’s name, the medication name, dosage, and date.
- Students are prohibited from having any prescription or nonprescription medications in their possession; unless prior arrangements have been made through the school office to independently carry an asthma inhaler, a self-administering epinephrine auto-injector, and/or self-administering diabetes medication.
- Only the secretaries or the Principal may administer most medication. In the case of asthma inhalers and/or epinephrine auto-injectors, we recommend that two be brought to school – one for the office and one for the classroom.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for keeping the supply of medication renewed.
- Notification should be received when a drug is discontinued or a change in dosage or interval occurs.
- Medication will only be given to the child listed on the prescription
- Medicine/Treatment Administration Forms must be renewed annually.

# Medicine/Treatment Administration Form

The following information must be completely filled out by a doctor, parent, or guardian. Please mark N/A if it is not applicable. *(Please print.)*

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Medicine/Type of Treatment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dosage and Directions for Administration at School: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Physician's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**All prescription medication must be in the original container, which includes the child's name, the physician's name, the medication name, dosage directions, and date.**

**NOTE:** I acknowledge that it may be necessary for the administration of medications to my child be performed by office personnel other than a school nurse and specifically consent to such practices.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

### **Special Medical Needs**

If a child has a special medical need, please inform the homeroom teacher immediately. Please check with the office to determine if this need has been placed on the emergency card. Parents should inform the principal/teacher if there is any medical reason why their child cannot participate in gym class or in other particular activities.

### **Lice Policy**

If the presence of lice is found on a student, their parents will be notified and students will be sent home with verbal and /or written instruction on proper treatment. Upon return to school, proof of treatment must be presented and designated school personnel will recheck the child. Additional monitoring will be performed if necessary.

### **Hearing and Vision Testing**

Hearing and vision are tested annually by a volunteer nurse for the appropriate grade levels and students.

### **Speech Evaluation**

Speech evaluation and therapy may be provided through the Kewanee District.

### **Illness, Accidents, or Disease Exposure**

If a child becomes ill or injured, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately. If the parent is not available, persons listed on the emergency card will be contacted. This process is channeled through the office. Parents are also notified by note if a child has been exposed to lice or other contagious contact.

### **Dioceses of Peoria Schools Blanket Student and Athletic Accident Coverage**

Coverage would be in force for all participants in school-sponsored and supervised student activities including interscholastic athletes and sponsored group travel.

An accident is defined as an unexpected, sudden and definable event, which is the direct cause of a bodily injury, independent of any illness, prior injury, or congenital predisposition.

The coverage would be for those medical/dental expenses incurred within 52 weeks from the date of the original accident. This plan includes a \$1,000 accidental death benefit and a \$5,000 dismemberment schedule. Treatment must begin within 60 days from the date of the accident by a legally licensed medical or dental practitioner (not a member of the insured's immediate family).

Payment of all medical/dental expenses incurred from accidents is made **ONLY IN EXCESS** over any family or employer group coverage or plan that must contribute its maximum before this coverage has any liability. This is a program of supplemental coverage designed to pick up eligible balances left by the family or employer group insurance or plan and, if no other coverage or plan is available, to pay the medical/dental expenses incurred to the limits stated in the policy.

For more information please contact the School office or the Diocese of Peoria.

## **Arrival and Departure From School**

### **Drop-off and Pick-up**

All students will be dropped off and picked up at the west doors on either Park Street or First Street. With the start of the school year, it's a good time to review pickup and drop off procedures. If you are going to walk your child up to their line in the morning, please park along Park St. or on the north side of First St. The south side of First St. is the drop off lane - please pull up behind the next car in front of you and wait to pull up to drop off. We'd like to avoid cars going around other cars if possible. Also, for everyone's safety, please have your child use the crosswalks to cross the street.

### **Bicycle Riders**

Students who ride bicycles are expected to follow all BICYCLE RULES OF THE ROAD. For safety reasons, the following guidelines are to be followed:

1. Students walk bicycles on parish and school grounds.
2. Bicycles are placed in the rack on the school grounds.
3. Bicycles should be locked.

# Attendance Guidelines

## Arrival and Dismissal Times

Students are not to arrive at school before 7:45 a.m. since teacher supervision is not provided until that time. Students go to in the school to their classrooms at 7:55 a.m. During extremely inclement weather, students will be led to the gym to sit on the bleachers until the 7:55 a.m. bell. When the 7:55 a.m. bell rings, students are to go to their classroom for attendance and lunch count. All students and teachers will gather after attendance and lunch counts are taken, in the gym Mondays through Thursday for Prayer Circle.

The dismissal bell rings at 3:00 p.m.

## Absence

If a student is absent, the parent is asked to call the school office by 8:15 a.m. to report absence or tardiness. The school office will call parent/guardian after 8:15 a.m. to confirm the absence if the parent/guardian has not called.

Students are responsible for making up class work that has been missed. A student missing more than one and one half hours of class time will be marked as absent for a half day.

## Tardiness

**Respect for the learning atmosphere requires that students be on time for school.**

**Any student coming in to the school after the 8:00 a.m. bell is tardy** and must first report to the office with a parent to receive an admit slip before going to the homeroom teacher.

A student who arrives tardy with a parent/guardian is considered having an excused tardiness. Students are allowed two excused tardy times per quarter. **Thereafter, further tardiness will result in a fifteen-minute detention time to be served the following day.** The homeroom teacher gives the detention and it is served after school in the homeroom.

A student who arrives tardy without a parent/guardian is considered having an unexcused tardiness and will serve a half-hour detention the following school day in the homeroom. Tardiness prompted by doctor appointments will be an exception to the detention policy.

If tardiness is frequent or habitual, the teacher first addresses the issue with the parent/guardian. If the problem continues, the teacher notifies the office and the Principal will contact the parent/guardian regarding the student's patterns.

**Habitual violation of this policy will require a meeting between parents, principal and/or pastor.**

### **Early Dismissal by Parent Request**

Daily attendance is important for students, so parents are asked to schedule medical and dental appointments for non-school hours whenever possible. All parental requests for an early dismissal are expected to be in writing and will be shown to the homeroom teacher at the beginning of the day. Children will be released from school only on the personal or written request of a parent or guardian.

# Dress Code

It is our conviction that the personal appearance of the students contributes to the general environment of study and good order; therefore, we ask the parents' cooperation and support with regard to the dress regulations. School personnel will monitor the appropriateness of a student's appearance. The Principal will make final decisions.

- Uniforms must be worn to and from school.
- No caps or hats of any kind may be worn inside the school building at any time.
- Hair should be neat, clean and well-groomed. Concerns with hair length or style will be addressed to the parents, rather than the students.
- Students may wear navy blue and khaki walking shorts during the months of August, September, October, April, and May. **They shall not be worn on days that the school has Mass.** All walking shorts must be of knee length. Walking shorts with belt loops require a belt.
- Mondays are considered T-shirt/Sweatshirt days. Students have a choice of wearing their regular uniforms or they may wear uniform pants (or shorts) with a Visitation t-shirt. Exceptions to this "T-Shirt Day" may occur on some occasions.

## **BOYS: Grades K-8**

1. **Shirts** must be navy blue, red or white (solid colors only) polo style shirts with collars, button down dress shirts or turtleneck shirts. Shirts are to be tucked inside pants. No logos, other than the approved VCS logo, are allowed.
2. **Navy blue or Khaki trousers, uniform style only (not denim or w/cargo style pockets).** Trouser bottoms are to hang freely--(no elastic or rolled up cuffs.) Slacks with belt loops require a belt. Belts must be brown, black or navy.
3. The official Visitation sweatshirt can be worn over the uniform polo shirts on days that are cool. No other sweaters, sweater vests, cardigans, etc. will be allowed other than on designated days.
4. **Hair** must be clean and well-groomed at all times. No distracting hairstyles are acceptable. No over the ears; no mohawks.
5. **Shoes** must be dress shoes, or clean athletic shoes.
6. **Socks** are to be worn at all times.
7. Boys may not wear any kind of earrings.

## **GIRLS: Grades K-8**

1. **Girls' tops** may be tailored blouses, polo style shirts w/a collar, or turtleneck shirts. Blouses/Shirts may only be in solid colors of navy blue, red or white. No t-shirts. No logos other than the approved VCS logo. All tops are to be worn inside uniforms.
2. **Uniform jumpers/skirts** must be at least knee length.
3. **Navy blue or Khaki trousers, uniform style only (not denim or w/ cargo style pockets).** Trouser bottoms are to hang freely--(no elastic or rolled up cuffs.) Slacks with belt loops require a belt. Belts must be brown, black or navy.
4. An official Visitation sweatshirt can be worn over the uniform polo shirts on days that are cool. No other sweaters, sweater vests, cardigans, etc. will be allowed other than on designated days.

5. **Socks** are to be worn at all times. They **must be white or navy blue** and must cover the anklebone completely with regular wear (not needing to be pulled out of the shoes to cover).
6. **Shoes** must be dress shoes, or clean athletic shoes. Sandals are allowed, but **must be worn with socks and must have a back**. No platforms or heels. Clogs must have a back.
7. **Sweatpants** and sweatshirts may be worn to and from school, but **not in school**.
8. **Hair** must be clean and well-groomed at all times. No distracting hairstyles are acceptable.
9. For safety reasons, please limit earrings to small post style rather than large or dangling ones.

### **P.E. Uniform Dress Code**

P.E. uniforms may be a requirement for upper grades.

### **Dress Code Violations**

Any student not in dress code will be sent to the office and a parent called and asked to bring the correct items to school as soon as possible. All students are expected to follow the dress code on a daily basis.

### **Dress Code During After School Activities**

While representing Visitation Catholic School and its various teams, groups and organizations, students will model a modest and tidy appearance as a reflection of the character of our school. Students will not wear clothing depicting alcohol, tobacco or drugs. No hats, caps or bandanas or other kinds of headgear may be worn inside the school building at any time.

### **Non-Uniform Days**

On days where special permission is given to dress out of uniform, students may wear jeans, shorts of at least knee length (during August, September, October, April, & May), or capris. No leggings, pajama pants or yoga pants are permissible.

We appreciate the opportunity to give the students a special day where they may relax a bit and wear the clothes they are accustomed to wearing outside of school; however, if the above guidelines are not adhered to, the opportunities will be far less frequent or not at all.

### **Care of Property**

1. Mark all gym clothes, coats, **sweatshirts**, hats, mittens, boots, lunch boxes, and book bags with the name of the child, especially for primary children.
2. Unmarked items that become lost will be placed in the "lost and found". If items are not claimed by the end of the second quarter, or again by the end of the school year, they will be donated to charity.
3. All books are to be carried back and forth from school in a book bag. All books are to be covered. Parents will be billed for book damage or replacement.
4. When sending money or messages, please enclose them in a sealed envelope. On the outside, mark the child's name and grade. If money is enclosed, please note its specific purpose.

# Visitors/Volunteers

## Security

Parents and visitors are welcome to Visitation Catholic School. All parents, visitors and volunteers must use the front entrance and check in and out at the school office. They will receive a visitor's badge before proceeding to the classroom.

## Volunteers

The Visitation Catholic School community recognizes the value of volunteers in the overall function of the school and encourages their involvement. These volunteers enrich educational experiences. Visitation Catholic School welcomes talented individuals with skills, knowledge, services and time to share with students and staff. Through their service, great motivation and stimulation are fostered, additional learning is provided and professional staff members are assisted.

All parents, volunteers, or class trip chaperones who engage in activities with the students of Visitation Catholic School are also requested to comply with the philosophy and policies of Visitation Catholic School. **This includes attending a Safe Environment Session, having a Background Check performed and being fingerprinted before serving as a volunteer.** This process is a requirement of the Peoria Diocese for anyone who works or is a volunteer for the Diocese.

## Chaperones/Supervisors

Chaperones are an important part of the total educational experience. Varied on-site and off-site experiences cannot be offered without the services of adult supervisors. All chaperones/supervisors must comply with the Safe Environment Training, fingerprinting, CANTS background check and Catholic Mutual Defensive Driving Session (if transporting students). They must also fill out the chaperone form and show a current driver's license and proof of insurance.

Chaperones will receive orientation from the teacher who will inform them of their expected duties, school rules and consequences for breaking rules, and of their responsibility to enforce the rules.

# Emergencies

## **Visitation Catholic School Safety Plan**

A handbook containing the Visitation Catholic School Safety Plan is on file in the school office and can be viewed by parents upon request. A plan is also posted in each classroom. The handbook includes emergency numbers, emergency alarm/bell system explanations and procedures to be followed in an emergency situation. Fire, tornado and active shooter drills are held regularly in accordance to the State mandates.

Playground, school and gym equipment are checked annually for safety.

Asbestos - Visitation Catholic School was built in 1989 of brick and mortar. There is no known asbestos present.

All employees of Visitation Catholic School have been trained according to OSHA Blood Borne Pathogen Standards. They have also been trained and certified in CPR for adults and children and in proper use of the school's defibrillator.

## **Emergency Dismissals**

In case of emergency dismissal, children must have an alternate place to go should a parent not be at home. Parents are asked to discuss with their child(ren) an alternative plan and make appropriate arrangements for use of the plan. Emergency contact persons and phone numbers must be on file in the school office.

Emergency days, early dismissals, and cancellations will be announced on radio station WKEI, 1450 AM or WJRE, 102.5 FM as well as TV stations KWQC Channel 6 and WQAD Channel 8. Facebook and the Option C parent alert will also give information for dismissals, activities and cancellations.

## **Weather Dismissals**

In the event that school cannot be held due to snow, ice, or extreme cold or heat, announcements will be given announced on local radio station WKEI 1450 AM or WJRE 102.5 FM and TV stations KWQC channel 6 and WQAD channel 8. Facebook and the Option C parent alert will also give information for dismissals, activities and cancellations.

If a parent needs to take children out of school earlier, due to weather conditions, please communicate first with the office.

## **Fire Drills**

Fire Drills are conducted periodically during the school year as required by State Code. Teachers instruct students in proper evacuation procedures. Local and state officials annually visit the school to inspect fire hazards or conduct a fire drill. Students are trained to comply strictly with the rules of quiet and walking at times of emergency drills.

In the event of a real fire situation and re-entry to the building is not possible classes will walk to the parish rectory or YMCA. Alternate location is the Kewanee Public Library. Students may be released to their parents or alternate contact only by signing them out with the classroom teacher.

### **Tornado Warnings**

In the event of a tornado warning, children go to an assigned area for their class. Periodic drills are conducted for these routines. If an actual tornado warning occurs near the end of a school day, children will not be dismissed until the "all clear" signal is given. No student will be dismissed except by personal parent request.

In the event of a real tornado and re-entry to the building is not possible classes will walk to the parish rectory or YMCA. Alternate location is the Kewanee Public Library. Students may be released to their parents or alternate contact only by signing them out with the classroom teacher.

### **Diagrams of Procedures**

Diagrams of procedures for fire and tornado are posted in each room. These reminders are appropriate to all who may be located in the school if an emergency situation occurs.

# **Academic Policies**

## **Curriculum**

The curriculum consists of a variety of experiences planned for pupils at each grade level. It is of on-going concern and is constantly evaluated by the staff. Religion classes hold a priority position since ours is a Catholic School. It is expected that all students participate in this class regardless of their religion.

Included in the curriculum are: Religion, Reading, Language, Spanish, Spelling/Vocabulary, Writing, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Music, Art, Physical Education, and Computer Education. All subjects, except foreign language classes, are taught in English.

## **Technology**

Visitation Catholic School is committed to combining technology with a restructured learning environment to prepare our students for the 21st century. This commitment includes proper use of technological tools and skills in an active and enriching classroom and lab experience for each student--one that enhances learning, instruction, and management. Computers are integrated into the curriculum to teach/reinforce skills and concepts. One to one learning is being used in Grades 4-8.

Students have networked access to Internet as directed by the teacher and individually as authorized by the parents in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy. Teachers assist the students in the Computer Lab.

## **Academic Testing**

- IOWA TEST OF BASIC SKILLS is administered during the month of September to each student in grades 3-8 according to diocesan guidelines.
- DIOCESAN RELIGION ASSESSMENTS (ACRE) is given during the second semester in grades 5 & 8.

The results of these tests are studied by the faculty and used in curriculum planning for individual and class instruction.

# Reporting Academic Progress

## Grades and Grading

In grades K-2, the general evaluation in each subject, Christian conduct/social growth, and work habits shall be reported in terms of one of the following scales:

S+ Exceeds basic requirement	S- Having difficulty meeting basic requirement
S Satisfactory progress	U Unsatisfactory
P Makes sufficient progress for the student's aptitude but below grade level	
NI Needs improvement	

In grades 3 through 8, the general evaluation in each subject shall be reported in terms of the following scale:

A = (94-100)	Excellent
B = (86-93)	Good progress
C = (76-85)	Satisfactory progress
D = (68-75)	Poor progress
F = (Below 68)	Failing
I = (Incomplete work)	

## Mid-Term Reports - Progress Reports

Teachers in grades 4-8 report work at the mid-term of each grading period to parents prior to report cards. Parents are asked to review the form/report and sign it before returning it to the teacher.

## Report Cards

Report cards are distributed every nine weeks. Report card envelopes are to be signed by the parent and returned to the homeroom teacher within four school days after issuance.

## Recognition of Achievement

All teachers at all grade levels are encouraged to use various forms of reward and positive affirmation on a continual basis.

## Honor Cords/Honors Breakfast

An honors breakfast will be held each May for the students who have achieved Honor Roll for the first three quarters and have above a C Average for the current fourth quarter.

Graduation Honor cords are given to graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who have achieved honor roll every quarter in grades 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>.

## Conferences

Conferences may be initiated by either the parent or teacher at any time. Appointments should be scheduled for the convenience of both parties. Parents and teachers are encouraged to use this form of communication. Parent(s) are asked to make requests for conferences by note or telephone. Conferences are scheduled through the office during the year. An All-School open house will be held in the spring.

## **Honor Roll**

Honor Roll is published quarterly regarding students in grades 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>.

The requirements are:

- i) Highest Honors: All A's
- ii) High Honors: All A's and 2 or fewer B's
- iii) Honors: All A's and B's

## **Retention of Students**

If it is determined that retention is to be considered as a necessary action for the benefit of the student, the following process is used:

- The teacher keeps the parent(s) informed of student progress throughout the year. The teacher(s) should offer a variety of remedial work to aid the student and include diagnostic testing. Communication should be maintained between conferences and progress reports.
- The teacher informs the Principal of the potential need for retaining a student prior to or by the third quarter.
- The teacher then communicates with the parent(s) regarding the need/possibility of retention and gives rationale for proposing it.
- Parents may also request or discuss retention with the teacher at any time, particularly if they become aware of anxiety, frustration or failure in the student due to learning difficulties.
- If there is disagreement or uncertainty about retention between the teacher and parent(s), the Principal meets in joint conference with them. The Pastor is kept fully informed during this process.
- The parents make the final decision regarding the placement of a student after having seriously considered the input of both the Principal and teacher.
- If the parent refuses to accept the school's recommendation concerning retention of their child, the parents will be required to sign an official document indicating they refused to permit their child to be retained --- thus assuming responsibility for the child's future success at Visitation Catholic School. This document will be kept on file. The Pastor is informed of the outcome.

# Homework

Homework is a crucial aspect of the learning process for Visitation Catholic School students. Since it is an important component to help young people become responsible persons, homework is used to teach appropriate responsibility and to assist parents in becoming aware of what the child is learning at school.

The faculty perceives homework as an extension of daily studies and strives to give some type of home responsibility consistently at all grade levels. Homework is given to:

- reinforce and evaluate skills taught in class
- complete unfinished class assignments
- study for tests
- prepare special reports or long range projects
- Ordinarily, the following time allotment is acceptable:  
PRIMARY -- 20 / 30 minutes  
INTERMEDIATE -- 30 / 45 minutes  
JUNIOR HIGH -- 60 / 90 minutes

Parents are encouraged to discuss homework difficulties/strategies with the teacher if a problem develops.

Students are permitted to enter the building at 7:45 AM if they seek further teacher assistance prior to the beginning of school.

Incomplete Assignment notices will be given in grades 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> for students not fulfilling any teacher assigned tasks. Receiving four incomplete assignments will result in a detention and a visit to the Principal's office. Homework violations are cancelled at the end of each semester.

## **Assignment Notebooks**

Assignment notebooks are used in grades 2-8. On a daily basis, teachers will initial student notebooks at the end of the day to indicate all homework assignments are written down. On a daily basis parents are to sign the notebooks to indicate they have checked their child (ren)'s homework.

## **Homework Pick-Up**

If a child is absent from school, his/her homework assignments will be ready for pick up by a parent/guardian at 2:30 p.m. Please inform the school office if you would like to pick up your child's homework. If a child is absent from school, it is his/her responsibility to check with the teacher about "make-up" work.

# **Student Records**

## **Examination of Student Records by Parents**

Parents who request to examine records of their child(ren) may do so by contacting the Principal. The Principal will be present during the examination of records by the parent. Upon completion of the examination, the parent and Principal sign a form indicating that such a review has taken place. This form is filed.

## **Transfer of Student Records**

School records are transferred between schools. Parents sign a release form and records ordinarily are mailed to the new school immediately.

## **Confidentiality**

The school office is an environment where confidential and often delicate situations are discussed and handled; therefore, in the spirit of diminishing gossip and protecting the rights of all children, only the Pastor, Principal, and Office Personnel will have regular access. Access will be limited for students, parents, teachers, coaches and other non-administrative individuals.

Be aware, however, that the Pastor and/or Principal are willing to discuss issues important to both parents and students at almost any time. We ask only that you please try to make an appointment.

# Educational Field Trips

The Visitation Catholic Education Commission recognizes that field trips provide effective and worthwhile learning experiences for students. The Education Commission encourages and supports field trips only when they are an integral part of the school curriculum and contribute to the desired educational goals of Visitation Catholic School.

## **Privilege, Not a Right**

Field trips and enrichment classes are a privilege. No child will be allowed to participate unless he/she has a written permission slip from parents or guardians. If, for any reason, a teacher feels that a student may endanger the safety of anyone or cause a behavioral disruption, the teacher has the right and responsibility to leave that student in the care of the Principal.

## **Field Trip Guidelines**

All field trips shall have the previous approval of the Principal.

**Before driving for a field trip,** all drivers of cars must complete an on-line defensive driving session provided by Catholic Mutual Insurance. They must also fill out a form and provide a copy of Driver's License and a proof of insurance on the day of the trip. The form and required attachments are to be submitted to the homeroom teacher who will forward them to the office.

### **This process is required for each driving event:**

1. All field trips will be adequately supervised by faculty members and other approved adults.
2. Parents will be notified of the date, time, and details of the trip.
3. Parental permission, **in writing,** must be obtained before the student will be allowed to attend the field trip. Verbal permission will not be accepted in lieu of written permission.
4. If a student fails to return a written permission slip, that student will not be permitted to attend the field trip and will remain at the school.

## **Standard Permission Forms**

The Diocese of Peoria requires specific standard forms be used to give permission for student participation in various activities. The official forms can be obtained in the school office. An official form will be sent home with the child prior to the event for which it is required. It is the responsibility of the child and parent to be certain the form is at school on the day of the trip.

# Hot Lunch Program

## Lunch

1. Hot lunch is \$2.35. The cost is \$1.25 for an extra portion.
2. The menu is posted on the school website and Google calendar every month.
3. White or chocolate milk is 30 cents if purchased separately from lunch.

Students may eat school lunch, a sack lunch, or go home to eat lunch.

## Noon Hour Guidelines

1. Students eating at school are not allowed off school grounds during the noon hour. However, students may eat lunch at home. A note should be sent at the beginning of the year to inform the office and teacher if this is the case.
2. Students must sign out in the office before going to lunch and sign back in the office when returning from lunch. It is the parents' responsibility to see to the safety of travel back and forth.
3. No food is to be eaten on the playground.
4. Students will keep a conversational tone in the lunchroom.
5. Running is not permitted inside the lunchroom.

## Free/Reduced Lunches

Families whose gross income is at or below levels set by the State each year may be eligible for children to receive either free or reduced price meals. Application forms may be obtained from the office at any time during the year. All personal information is kept strictly confidential.

## Cafeteria Procedures

- All students will pray the Blessing Before Meals in the classrooms prior to lunch.
- Students are to come to the cafeteria in single file. Each teacher accompanies his/her class until they are served.
- Students who misbehave in line will be asked to go to the end of the line.
- All students are expected to practice good manners.
- Courteous responses are expected: "Please" and "Thank You"
- Wait for turn in line without pushing or taking "cuts."
- Subdued talking in the line and at the tables is allowed.
- Leave tables clean and push in chair when leaving.
- Place trays or lunch boxes in assigned place in cafeteria.

**STUDENTS WITH COLD LUNCHES** may not exchange food due to health reasons. Cold milk is available for purchase for them. Students may not bring soda pop or fast food for lunch.

**A student who cannot keep cafeteria/lunch rules will be required to eat in a room away from the main lunch area.**

# Supervision

## **General Guidelines**

- Adult supervision is provided for all students either by faculty members or salaried/volunteer supervisors.
- Teachers supervise students before school from 7:45 a.m.-8:00 a.m. and after school until 3:15 p.m.
- Teachers maintain supervision throughout the entire school day during all activities.
- Sponsors of extra-curricular activities are responsible for supervision while the children are under their direction.

## **Inside the Building**

When recess is held in the classrooms during inclement weather the following rules apply:

- Students return directly to their homerooms after lunch.
- Conversations should be in moderate tones; running is not permitted in the classroom or in the hallway.

## **Permission to Remain Indoors During Recess**

If a parent requests that a student remain indoors during recess/noon time, a note should be sent to the homeroom teacher stating the request and the number of days it applies. Ordinarily, children are strongly encouraged to go outside unless there is a health reason. Students staying indoors for recess are to report directly to the school office with schoolwork unless directed by the homeroom teacher to come to the classroom. No student should be in a classroom without a teacher present.

# **Extra-Curricular Programs**

## **Offerings**

Visitation Catholic School offers a variety of activities including: Golf, Volleyball, Basketball, Track, Bowling, Cheerleading, Pom-Poms, Robotics, Lego Club, Art League, Builder's Club and the Holy Huddle Club.

## **Extra-Curricular Philosophy**

All extra-curricular activities and programs must be consistent with the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the school. Guidelines for the effective administration and functioning of such activities and programs follow the guidelines put in the place by the Catholic Diocese of Peoria. These may be viewed on their website.

1. To help develop "a sound mind in a sound body," a competitive athletic program is beneficial as it provides opportunities and environment for a corresponding progress in spiritual, moral, and mental values along with the development of physical and athletic skills. Caution must be exercised to avoid over-emphasis, which might become harmful to the individual or to the school as a whole.
2. Participation by as many students as possible is the primary ideal. Competition should be taught as a Christian athlete's goal to be prized more than victory in a contest. The honorable "Athlete of Christ" will win by the manner of participation, rather than by the final score of a game.
3. It will be beneficial to all if this philosophy extends beyond the students to each of us as spectators at the games.

The school attempts to provide equal sports opportunities for boys and girls. Students may participate in these extra-curricular activities if they show effort in classes, have an up-to-date physical on file, have filled out the appropriate insurance waiver, and have an acceptable attitude. Coaches or teachers have the right to request that a student be suspended from sports activities, and the Principal or Pastor will have authority to take the necessary action after consideration of the facts.

## **Extra-Curricular Participation and Eligibility**

1. In order to participate in extracurricular activities or athletic contests, students must be in attendance at 8:00 a.m. unless they have an excused absence. Students leaving school on the day of extra-curricular activity because of illness will not be allowed to participate that evening.
2. If a student is earning a deficient grade (below 68%) on any given Friday, he/she shall be suspended from practice and games for 1 week. (Monday through Saturday).
3. If a student is ineligible 3 times in one quarter he/she will be suspended from extra-curricular activities until the grading period ends. At the beginning of each quarter, eligibility is returned and the process begins again.
4. Students receiving disciplinary warning slips will comply with the following consequences:
  - First Warning: One-week suspension from activities.
  - Second Warning: Two-week suspension from activities.
  - Third Warning: Dismissal

## **Extra-Curricular Guidelines**

1. Each student participating in any sport must fill out and sign an insurance waiver to be kept on file in the school office. It is the coach's responsibility to collect signed waivers for each athlete on the team. Parents must sign an insurance waiver prior to participation by the student in practice or contests.
2. Each student participating in any sport must have a physical annually indicating ability to play. The copy of the signed physical is to be on file in the school office. The coach will collect these and turn them in to the school office. Athletes must have a current physical on file prior to participation by the student in practice or contests.
3. A roster of student/athletes is to be given to the Principal before practice begins for each team and season.
4. Parents are responsible for the transportation to and from games for their student.
5. A copy of the games to be played with their location is to be submitted to the office before the first game is played. The Principal is to be notified of any changes in the schedule.
6. A monthly practice schedule will be sent home and will be placed on the gym bulletin board.
7. Coaches/or Athletic Director are to check the gym, bathrooms and locker rooms after practice, etc. to see that the school is left in order.
8. Problems experienced at games or at practice will be reported to the Athletic Director or school Principal. After consultation with the coach, the necessary action will be taken.
9. A student may play in only one game on a school day, unless he or she is elevated up to help that class whose number of players is too small to compete.
10. In the event of a small class size, students from the next lower class may be added to the roster to complete a team. Players can only play up two grade levels.
11. All members of that class will be asked to participate (on a rotating basis, if the coach needs one). Eighth graders will start eighth grade games; seventh, sixth, and fifth grade the same. For all tournaments, the coach may bring all his players in the eighth grade for an eighth grade game. Seventh grade for a seventh grade game. Sixth and fifth the same and then play his best team.
12. The Athletic Advisory Board is responsible for its financial budget.
13. All sports will follow the eligibility policy for the school's extra-curricular activities.
14. **All IESA rules and regulations will be followed as well as any additional rules sets by the Diocese.**

### **Diocesan Policy on Performance Enhancing Supplements**

In order to minimize health and safety risks to student athletes, maintain ethical standards, and reduce liability risks, school personnel and coaches should never supply, recommend, or permit the use of any drug, medication, or food supplement solely for performance enhancing purposes.

# **Discipline Guidelines**

Any student who engages in conduct, whether inside or outside of school that is detrimental to the reputation of the school and/or inconsistent with the mission, philosophy, or teachings of the Catholic Church may be subject to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

## **Diocesan Policy on Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment shall not be permitted in any school or school program in the Catholic Diocese of Peoria. Corporal punishment shall include but is not limited to slapping, paddling, prolonged maintenance of students in physically painful positions or intentional infliction of bodily harm.

## **General Guidelines**

Visitation Catholic School believes discipline is an essential aspect of Christian development and is to be considered an aspect of moral guidance, not a form of punishment. The purpose of discipline is to:

- provide a classroom conducive to teaching and learning
- educate students to an appreciation of the importance of developing responsibility and self-control
- increase student awareness of respect due to the individual student, peers, school personnel, family members, and the greater family of God
- strengthen a "sense of belonging" within the student
- provide a safe environment

The administration reserves the right to authentically interpret the disciplinary policy. While there are guidelines for defined disciplinary procedures, the Pastor and administration reserve the right to adapt or suspend the process in a situation in which it is deemed necessary. Ordinarily, disciplinary problems are handled by each teacher/supervisor who is responsible to the Principal and to the parents of the student(s) involved. Mutual interest, cooperation and frequent communication between parents and teachers/supervisors are essential to the successful solution of more serious problems. The Principal is kept informed but is usually involved only with the more serious problems. The Pastor is always informed of serious problems.

## **Teachers' Responsibilities**

Shall strive to:

- be consistent in following disciplinary policies and guidelines as well as classroom rules
- develop the attitude of respect, of "belonging and acceptance" in each student
- ordinarily, refrain from "group discipline"

## **Discipline of Students**

Visitation Catholic School reserves the right to establish and enforce reasonable standards of behavior for all students involved in educational and recreational activities -- whether during regular school hours on school premises, or in connection with school activities that would otherwise bring scandal to the school or parish in the judgment of the Pastor. In the event of a violation of the school's standards, Visitation Catholic School reserves the right to invoke appropriate disciplinary

steps including, but not limited to detentions, suspensions, probation and expulsion. The level of discipline appropriate for violation shall be determined on a case-by-case basis at the Principal's discretion based upon a review of factors including but not limited to the severity of misconduct, student's age, student's academic and behavioral record and other similar criteria. When offenses occur as listed below, the Pastor will be informed as soon as possible and the Principal will take disciplinary action.

### **Behaviors That Require Disciplinary Action**

The following is a non-exhaustive list of infractions, which are in violation of school policy and for which students may be disciplined up to and including expulsion:

1. cheating on any academic work
2. verbal or physical harassment/abuse to a student or staff member; persistent name calling or ridicule of other students
3. fighting, provoking a fight between other individuals, or participating in activities which result in violence toward any person (including "play" fighting)
4. consistent refusal to obey classroom and school rules; defiance or disrespect to those in authority
5. possession and/or use of any type of weapon or firearm
6. possession and/or use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco
7. vandalism/theft/destruction of school/parish property
8. the setting off or ignition of fused devices or incendiary devices such as fireworks, stink bombs, etc.
9. possession and/or drawing of pornographic pictures and literature
10. use of the school's computer network to obtain, copy, and/or disseminate inappropriate materials, including, but not limited to, pornography, violence and hate
11. disregard for the Church's teachings on the dignity of human life from conception to natural death, for example, abortion, euthanasia, or discriminatory activity
12. any other conduct considered by the administration to be contrary to the best interests of the school and its mission, to students and/or faculty/staff

### **Bullying**

Visitation Catholic School actively seeks to provide a supportive, caring environment that is safe from all forms of intimidation including bullying. Bullying is repeated behavior involving a deliberate, conscious intent to hurt, threaten, frighten, or humiliate someone. It may include physical and/or verbal intimidation or assault; extortion or taking belongings; oral or written threats; teasing, mocking, taunting, putdowns, or name-calling; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; suggestive comments; false accusations, and/or social isolation. Bullying behavior shall not be tolerated in any form at school or school-sponsored programs and activities. Any student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in any type of bullying, intimidation, or harassment will be subject to disciplinary actions and their parents will be notified. Classroom teachers and the Principal will deal with these incidents on a case-by-case basis.

### **Tobacco Prohibition**

Visitation Catholic Education Commission prohibits the use of tobacco in the entire school, gymnasium and cafeteria when such property is being used for any school purposes.

## **Drugs and Alcohol Policy**

Students are prohibited from possessing, using or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while at school or at any school related function. Included with the prohibition are the following:

1. Purchasing, use, possession, manufacture, distribution, dispensation or sale of drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcohol on school premises or with respect to school related activities
2. Storing in a book bag, desk, clothing or other repository on school premises or in connection with any school related activity any drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcohol
3. Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on school premises or in connection with any school related activity.

The administration reserves the right to require a student to undergo testing for the use of alcohol and/or drugs when a reasonable suspicion of use exists. A "reasonable suspicion" of drug and/or alcohol use may be based upon the observation of the student's behavior, information received regarding alleged alcohol or drug use, or other information giving rise to suspicion of this policy. A student's failure to cooperate in testing required by this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the school.

## **Violation of Drugs and Alcohol Policy may result in any of the following steps:**

1. All violations of drug and alcohol laws will be reported to the proper authorities.
2. Participate (at the expense of the family) in drug/alcohol assessment by certified drug/alcohol professional or by a drug/alcohol treatment facility and follow the recommendations, which result.
3. Student suspended at home from school for a week, and/or
4. Student required to participate in counseling as recommended, or
5. Student expelled.

Families would be required to provide documented results of #1 and #3 above.

## **Inspection Policy**

Individuals entering upon the premises of the school -- whether students, employees, or guests -- are expected to conduct themselves in keeping with established norms for personal conduct. In order to provide students and employees with a safe and healthful environment, the administration reserves the right, at its discretion, to conduct inspections of school property and the property of students and visitors existing on the school's premises. Included with this Policy is the right to inspect the following:

- desks
- book bags, knapsacks, briefcases, athletic bags or similar carriers brought onto or existing on the school premises
- vehicles on school premises
- clothing (with appropriate safeguards for the individual's personal privacy)
- other property (whether school, student, visitor) existing on school premises.

## **Electronic Devices**

Cell phones and other electronic devices may be kept **in the off position** in a student's book bags. They are not to be used between the hours of 7:55 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Any exception to this requires the permission of the Principal. Cell phones may not be used in any manner that is disruptive to the educational process. Visitation Catholic School will not be responsible for loss, damage, or theft of any electronic device brought to school. The use of cell phones for field trips and sporting events will be at the discretion of the sponsor or coach.

Students violating this policy will have their cell phone or other electronic device **confiscated and the student will receive a detention**. The cell phone may be picked up at the end of the day. If evidence is found that a student has used his or her cell phone during the day, the same penalty may be applied.

### **Weapons Possession Policy**

It is a violation of the school's policies for a student to possess weapons on school premises or at any time in connection with school related activities. Included within the prohibitions of this policy are the possession, sale, distribution, manufacture, receipt, seeking the sale or trade or use of any firearm, knife, martial arts device or other object which, at the administration's discretion, may reasonably be considered to constitute a weapon.

Violations of this policy may result, at the administration's discretion, in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school.

### **Harassment Policy**

The term "harassment" includes, but is not limited to slurs, jokes, or any other form of verbal, graphic, or physical contact which reflects adversely on an individual's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, citizenship, age, marital status, veteran status or mental handicap. (Diocese of Peoria Handbook)

Harassment of any type -- verbal, physical, visual, sexual -- is opposed to the mission of Visitation Catholic School and will not be tolerated. Harassment of any person on school grounds or by any student while acting as a representative of this institution is not acceptable. Any individual judged to harass another will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

A student that feels he/she has been harassed must notify the parent and a faculty member. The matter must also be reported to the Principal, who will inform the Pastor as soon as possible. An investigation of the incident will take place. In the case of a substantiated incident of harassment, the appropriate course of disciplinary action will be dictated by the particular circumstances of the situation. The Diocese of Peoria Harassment Policy will be followed if any student believes that he/she has been harassed.

# Disciplinary Action

## Detentions

After efforts to create positive change have proven ineffective, teachers and supervisors may give after school detentions to respective student(s). Detentions are ordinarily served the day after the situation -- or at another time agreed upon between teacher and parent. We expect parent support in the process so that the student will be enabled to fulfill his/her obligation. Even though the detention itself is non-negotiable, the student may appropriately communicate his/her feelings to the teacher, supervisor, or Principal.

## Suspension

Suspension is defined as removal from all or part of the school or school activities for a definite period. It will be "in-school" as determined by the Principal. Unless for an infraction requiring immediate recourse, prior to suspension, the teacher and Principal will have pursued other alternatives of discipline and will have notified the parents of the problem(s).

### **Procedure for Suspension:**

1. Parents will be notified if there is a behavior problem and this notification will be documented and placed on file in the school office.
2. Lack of satisfactory improvement will necessitate a conference with the teacher, parents and student to discuss the situation and possible solutions. The Pastor is informed at this point of any further action.
3. If there is still insufficient improvement, the Principal will meet with the teacher, parents, and student to determine appropriate action.
4. This second conference may result in suspension:
  - (a) A suspension may extend from one to seven school days and can be "in-school" or "out-of-school" suspension as determined by the Principal. During an in-school suspension period, the student is expected to fulfill class assignments and will receive grades for the work. In the case of an out-of-school suspension period, student is expected to fulfill class assignments but will receive zeros.
  - (b) A statement as to the type and time of suspension as well as the reason(s) for the suspension will be placed on file in the school office by the Principal.

## Permanent Dismissal

The permanent termination of a student's enrollment for disciplinary reasons is a most serious matter and is invoked only as a last resort. Preferably, it should be preceded by at least one suspension. Prior to permanent dismissal, the student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) must be granted a hearing in the presence of the Pastor by the Principal and teacher(s) involved with consideration given to the extent of the school's previous efforts to remedy the problem.

### **Procedure for dismissal:**

The procedure for permanent dismissal consists of three main parts:

1. Notification of Dismissal
2. Meeting of the Pastor and Principal with the student, teacher(s), and parents/guardians
3. Right to Recourse.

### **1. Notification of Dismissal**

When a Principal believes there is reason for the permanent dismissal of a student, the Pastor, that student (depending on age) and the parent(s) or guardian(s) are informed, verbally, in person or by phone; written notification shall follow.

The written notification includes:

- Reasons for considered dismissal
- Copy of dismissal procedures including the right to recourse process
- Possible dates and times for hearing
- Forms on which parent can indicate having received the notification of dismissal and indicate which dates and times are convenient for meeting. This form is to be completed and returned to School as soon as possible, usually no longer than two working days after it has been received.

## **2. Meeting of Student and Parent/Guardian With Principal and Pastor**

The purpose of this meeting is to give the student and his/her parents/ guardians a chance to ask questions about reasons for dismissal, to present their account of the situation and/or to respond to reasons given for dismissal.

The Principal presides at this meeting. The student and the parents/ guardians are to be present. Teacher(s) or involved staff members may also be in attendance. The Pastor or his delegate is present but is not normally involved at this level as he is the court of appeal.

The meeting is kept as informal as possible. Tapes or verbatim records are not permitted at this level. As soon as possible, usually no longer than 24 hours, the student and parents/guardians are informed of the decision.

If the decision is for permanent dismissal, the parents/guardians are given the opportunity to withdraw the student.

A summary of the conference is prepared and given to the parents/guardians to sign and comment upon. This summary record becomes part of the student's file.

## **3. Right to Recourse**

A decision regarding the permanent dismissal of a student can be appealed by applying the Visitation Catholic Education Commission CONFLICT RESOLUTION LOCAL POLICY and its guidelines for the CONFLICT RESOLUTION LOCAL PROCESS. The Pastor must confirm all such dismissals.

If the conflict is not resolved locally, the Diocesan Commission on Education policy can be applied.

# **Conflict Resolution – Local Policy**

## **Definition**

Conflict Resolution is the process used to secure, at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions to problems which may from time to time arise affecting staff members, parents, students or involved parties of Visitation Catholic School. Neither the presenter nor the respondent shall be represented by a lawyer.

## **Informal Level**

Ordinarily grievances or complaints are handled in discussion with the Principal. The presenter makes the problem known to the Principal. If the conflict is not resolved between the presenter and the Principal, the following steps are followed:

1. The presenter submits to the Principal in writing the problem and the remedy sought.
2. An informal meeting is scheduled with the Principal, presenter, and Pastor. If a solution is not obtained through these informal efforts, the presenter may proceed to the Formal Level.

## **Formal Level**

If a solution has not been obtained through informal discussions, within five (5) working days of the alleged incident the presenter should notify the Principal who will then proceed to the next step. The Principal will forward within two (2) working days the written presentation of the presenter to the Chairperson of the Visitation Catholic Education Commission.

1. The Chairperson of the Education Commission, after consultation with the Pastor, will convene a special executive session of the committee to present the conflict. Prior to the meeting, the Chairperson appoints a Committee for Resolution of Conflict. The Committee shall consist of three (3) members of the Education Commission. The appointed Chairperson shall preside at all meetings. The Committee shall adopt additional procedural and administrative rules as deemed necessary, such as:
  - a) The presenter may make a statement, either orally or in writing, relating to the problem.
  - b) The respondent may make a statement in answer.
  - c) The presenter may give other evidence, either documentary or from witnesses, and may question the respondent.
  - d) The respondent may present evidence, either documentary or from witnesses, and may question the presenter.
  - e) Members of the Resolution of Conflict Committee may question the parties and witnesses.
  - f) All statements, evidence and questions must relate to the specific problem. Either party (the presenter and the respondent) may object to the questions, evidence or statements on the grounds of irrelevancy. The presiding officer shall rule on objections, after consulting with the other members of the Resolution of Conflict Committee.
2. The Conflict Resolution Committee meets to determine the action that will be recommended. The presiding officer will present a written recommendation to the Pastor within five (5) working days.

3. Within five (5) working days the Pastor decides whether or not to implement the committee's recommendation and notifies the presenter, Principal and of the Conflict of Resolution Committee.
4. In the event that either party is not satisfied with the decision of the Pastor, the Diocesan Conflict Resolution Process may be considered.

### **Time Lines**

The Resolution of Conflict Committee establishes the time frames for each step of the process.

1. Failure to proceed within the appropriate time frames on the part of the Principal or Education Commission allows the presenter to proceed to the next step.
2. Failure to proceed on the part of the presenter at any point in the proceeding will make the answer at the previous step final.
3. Any time limit in this procedure may be extended by mutual consent of the presenter and the Resolution Committee; such extension must be stated in writing and signed by the presenter and Chairperson.

# **Diocesan Statement of Policy for Appeal and Review**

A review or appeal of any decision concerning policies, procedures, or other serious matters made by the competent authority of any of the schools of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria may be requested by any member of the diocese under the following conditions only:

- The decision violates or is in conflict with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, or
- The decision violates or is in conflict with an applicable diocesan policy, or
- The decision violates or is in conflict with a policy or procedure of the parish, the school, or other entity that takes precedence over the decision in question, or
- The decision violates or is in conflict with an applicable federal, state or local civil law.

It is to be noted that dissatisfaction with a decision is not a sufficient condition for appeal.

The individual or group desiring the appeal or the review of a decision must make that request known to the governing Pastor or Pastors' board responsible for the school in the form of a letter. As a matter of record, a copy of that letter is to be forwarded to the local vicar and to the Superintendent of Schools.

This letter must clearly cover each of the following points:

- The decision that is being questioned and which competent authority made it.
- The grounds for the appeal or the review with specific reference to one or more of the four (4) conditions listed in the policy statement above, and
- The proposed resolution.

The governing Pastor or Pastors' board, having received the request for appeal or review, is to respond to those making the request within thirty (30) days of receiving the request. A copy of the response letter is to be forwarded to the local vicar having jurisdiction over the particular parish/school and to the Superintendent of Schools.

In most cases, the decision of the governing Pastor or Pastors' board is final. However, those who have requested the appeal or review may further appeal the decision of the governing Pastor or Pastors' board to the local vicar within thirty (30) days. The local vicar has the authority to summarily dismiss the appeal or he may forward the appeal to the Vicar General of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria and the Office of Catholic Schools. The Vicar General shall make a final decision on the appeal in such cases. If the local vicar decides to dismiss the case, he must, as a matter of record, forward a copy of such decision to the Vicar General and the Office of Catholic Schools.

It is at the sole discretion of the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria to intervene in any matter at any time, and to modify, reverse, or rescind any action taken by the above-referenced officials.