

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

School Day

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that a day of school is a day during which the school or school district is in session and students are under the guidance and instruction of the instructional professional staff. School shall be considered in session during parent-teacher conferences as well as during activities such as field trips if students are engaged in programs or activities under the guidance and direction of the instructional professional staff. All grade levels of the school must be operated and available for attendance by all students. (281—IAC 12.1(8)(a))

The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Des Moines may adopt a calendar based on 1,080-hour minimum or 180 days. For those schools adopting a calendar based on a 1,080-hour minimum schedule, an official hour of school is an hour in which the school is in session and students are under the guidance and instruction of the instructional professional staff. For purposes of this rule, an “hour” is defined as 60 minutes. The calculation of minimum hours shall exclude the lunch period. Passing time between classes may be counted as part of the hour requirement. School shall be considered in session during parent-teacher conferences as well as during activities such as field trips if students are engaged in programs or activities under the guidance and direction of the instructional professional staff. All grade levels of the school must be operated and available for attendance by all students. Schools have flexibility on how they can reach the threshold of 1,080 hours of instruction but must keep annual documentation of how they meet that standard. The school calendar may include more than or less than or may equal the 180-day schedule. The hours included in an individual day under an hours format may vary. (281—IAC 12.1(8)(b))

A school day, for those utilizing a school calendar based on days, shall consist of a minimum of 6 hours of instructional time for all grades 1 through 12. The minimum hours shall exclude the lunch period. Passing time between classes may be counted as part of the 6-hour requirement. School shall be considered in session during parent-teacher conferences as well as during activities such as field trips if students are engaged in programs or activities under the guidance and direction of the instructional professional staff. (281—IAC 12.1(9))

The length of the school day for Kindergarten students will be determined by the school administrator. (281—IAC 12.1(11))

Policy Adopted:	April 20, 1970
Policy Revised:	March 23, 2015
Policy Approved:	March 28, 2015
Policy Revised:	July 30, 2021
Policy Reviewed:	September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

School Calendar

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that each school adopt an annual academic calendar that may not begin for students prior to state determined start date for schools. Employees may be required to report to work at the school prior to determined start date for students.

For schools who may choose to use a Continuous Learning or Year-Round calendar, these schools will use the steps outlined in Diocesan policy 326 for making a change to the program or operation of the school. This process will include filing the appropriate waiver application with the Department of Education.

The academic school year for students must be for a minimum of 1080 hours or 180 days (see Policy 601). The school calendar must include, but is not limited to, the days for student instruction, staff professional and spiritual development, in-service days and parent-teacher conferences. Professional Development may not be counted for required instructional hours.

Special education students may attend school on a school calendar different from that of the regular education program consistent with their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Graduating seniors may be excused from up to 30 hours of instruction after the school requirements for graduate have been met. Graduating seniors may also be excused from making up days missed due to inclement weather if the student has met the school's graduation requirements. (281-IAC 12.1(7)).

The local calendar is to be shared with the School Board/Leadership Council for information purposes only. The administrator is responsible for including the reporting date on the Spring Basic Educational Data Survey (BEDS) report for the state. The school's calendar and hours noted on the Spring BEDS will be submitted to the Catholic Schools Office each spring after the presentation to the school board or leadership council.

The administrator may amend the official school calendar if a change is determined to be in the best interests of the school's education program. The administrator will communicate any changes to the stakeholders as well as the Catholic Schools Office.

Policy Adopted:	January 16, 1989
Policy Revised:	May 20, 2015
Policy Approved:	May 20, 2015
Policy Revised:	July 30, 2021, September 2026

<p>DIOCESE OF DES MOINES</p> <p>Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations</p>

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

School Scheduling – Wednesday Evening and Sunday Morning Activities

Unanimously adopted by the Presbyteral Council of the Diocese of Des Moines, April 24, 2012 and approved as Diocesan Policy by Bishop Richard Pates, May 1, 2012 and Bishop William Joensen on July 30, 2021. Policy revision with approval of Bishop William Joensen in September 2026.

Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Diocese of Des Moines that:

1. Youth-based activities except for sacramental, ministerial, and/or catechetical endeavors will not be scheduled or hosted by any Catholic school, institution, or organization on Wednesday evenings after 6:00 p.m., September through May.
2. No youth-based activities except for sacramental, ministerial, and/or catechetical endeavors will be scheduled or hosted by any Catholic school, institution, or organization on Sundays until 1:30 p.m.
3. Singular exceptions to this policy can be made only by the parish pastor.
 - Exceptions to this require written approval from the student's pastor. This approval must be given for each sport where the exception is being requested.

Policy Adopted: May 1, 2012
Policy Reviewed and approved: July 30, 2021
Policy Revised: September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Triduum Activities

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop that our Catholic schools shall adhere to the following schedule for extracurricular activities participation during the Triduum and on Easter Sunday. This schedule is to allow our students, faculty, coaches, and their families to gather together and participate in liturgies, services, and other family activities on these most sacred days.

Extracurricular activity practices or events will not be held:

- After 6 PM on Holy Thursday;
- After Noon (12:00 PM) through the evening on Good Friday;
- After 6 PM on Holy Saturday;
- On Easter Sunday.

Policy Approved: April 18, 2023

Policy Revised: December 15, 2023

Policy Reviewed: September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

School Accreditation

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that all schools of the Diocese be accredited by the State of Iowa Department of Education.

The accredited schools of Iowa must adhere to the rules and regulations of the Iowa Administrative Code, Chapter 12, General Accreditation Standards that apply to non-public schools. The Catholic Schools Office will create policies to be put in place at the school level. Policies established by local school boards/leadership councils may not supersede the Diocesan policies and must align with Iowa accreditation standards.

Policy Adopted:	April 25, 2000
Policy Revised:	May 19, 2008
Policy Reviewed:	March 25, 2013
Policy Revised:	July 30, 2021
	September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Curriculum

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop that, in order to best align the elementary and secondary school curricula and in order to maximize the school improvement efforts across the diocese, the Diocesan Schools Office, shall facilitate an ongoing curriculum development, implementation and evaluation process.

The school improvement efforts contain tasks and responsibilities for Catholic Schools Office, local school administrators, and may include input from teachers across the diocese.

The Diocesan Schools Office, in consultation with the school Administrators, shall coordinate the school improvement efforts. (IAC 281.12.8(1))

Policy Adopted:	March 21, 1988
Policy Revised:	March 25, 2013
	July 30, 2021
Policy Reviewed:	September 2026

Curriculum – Curriculum Development
Regulation 610.1

Curriculum development is an on-going process consisting of both research and design. Research utilized to review, revise and improve curriculum and instruction. Design is the process of planning and selecting Standards, Benchmarks, Grade/Course Level Expectations, and instructional strategies to improve student learning.

The Diocesan Schools Office, in consultation with the school administrators, should develop a curriculum framework which will describe the processes and procedures that will be followed for each content area.

Regulation Adopted:	March 21, 1988
Regulation Revised:	May 19, 2008
Regulation Reviewed:	March 25, 2013
	July 30, 2021
	September 2026

Curriculum – Curriculum Implementation

Regulation 610.2

Curriculum implementation refers to what actually happens in practice. It includes the provision of organized assistance to staff, in order to ensure that the intended curriculum and the best teaching practices are actually incorporated in the classroom activities.

The school Administrator, as the academic leader of the school community, should assume the role of one who ensures that the intended curriculum is taught and that best practices are utilized by all faculty. The Administrator should keep the local school board/leadership council informed about curriculum implementation.

The Catholic Schools Office will assist the Administrator in this task and, most importantly, assist all Administrators in designing and coordinating needed professional development activities to ensure the intended curriculum is enacted utilizing best practices in instruction.

Regulation Adopted:	March 21, 1988
Regulation Revised:	May 19, 2008
Regulation Reviewed:	March 25, 2013
Regulation Revised:	July 30, 2021
	September 2026

Curriculum – Curriculum Evaluation

Regulation 610.3

Regular and on-going evaluation of the total curriculum is necessary to ensure that the intended or written curriculum is being delivered and producing the desired results. Curriculum evaluation includes gathering information data with which the school can make decisions about student learning and program effectiveness.

The Administrator should serve as the facilitator of the local school's and/or diocesan efforts to gather information from comprehensive assessments in order to make decisions about the local effectiveness of the curriculum and instruction. The Administrator will work with the Catholic Schools Office in this process.

All Administrators, in collaboration with the Catholic Schools Office, should determine diocesan-wide curriculum effectiveness. The Catholic Schools Office will coordinate the review and possible revision of standards, benchmarks, and expectations as necessary. Administrators and teachers will participate in this work.

Regulation Adopted:	March 21, 1988
Regulation Revised:	May 19, 2008
Regulation Reviewed:	March 25, 2013
	July 30, 2021
	September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

School Improvement

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that the Catholic schools in the Diocese abide by the rules and regulations of the State of Iowa concerning school improvement. The school improvement efforts contain tasks and responsibilities for the Catholic Schools Office and the local school Administrators.

The Diocesan Schools Office, in consultation with the school Principals, shall coordinate the school improvement efforts. A part of the task will be to complete a comprehensive School Improvement Plan. This work will be coordinated by the Catholic Schools Office and will be reviewed, evaluated, and revised each year to ensure the plan is accurate and reflects current status and work. (IAC 281.12.8(1))

Policy Adopted:	April 25, 2000
Policy Revised:	May 19, 2008
Policy Reviewed:	March 25, 2013
Policy Revised:	July 30, 2021
Policy Reviewed:	August 2026

School Improvement – Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade Level Expectations
Regulation 613.1

The Catholic Schools Office, in consultation with the school administrators and teaching faculties, shall draft and publish the Standards, Benchmarks and Grade-Level Expectations for each area of the curriculum. The Iowa Core will be used to serve as standards in the areas of English-Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Consideration will be given to make certain nothing in the standards is contrary to the Catholic faith. Religion/Theology standards and benchmarks will be diocesan developed.

The Standards, Benchmarks and Grade-Level Expectations shall be the core of the teaching curriculum for which the students, faculty and administration will be held accountable.

There must be ongoing assessment and, if needed, revision of the Diocesan Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks and Grade-Level Expectations.

Regulation Adopted:	April 25, 2000
Regulation Revised:	March 25, 2013, July 30, 2021
Regulation Reviewed:	August 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Accountability for Student Achievement

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that all schools, with the support of the Catholic Schools Office, meet the accountability requirements for increased student performance and achievement.

The requirements for the schools through the Iowa Department of Education include the Desk Audit, which encompasses the State of Iowa Accreditation process. Each school will have a School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC) which will partner with the Administrator to review goals and data.

Each school will utilize a School Improvement Plan that is created with the school leadership team, which can include the school's SIAC, and is shared with the Catholic Schools Office.

Policy Adopted:	April 25, 2000
Policy Revised:	May 19, 2008
Policy Reviewed:	March 25, 2013
Policy Revised:	July 30, 2021
Policy Revised:	February 7, 2025
	September 2026

Accountability for Student Achievement – Comprehensive School Improvement Planning
Regulation 616.1

Annually, each school within the Diocese of Des Moines will submit a School Improvement Plan (SIP) to the Catholic Schools Office. This plan will serve as a comprehensive review and planning document in the areas of Academics (to include Professional Development), Catholic Identity, Community Involvement, Finances, Facilities/Technology, and Enrollment Management. Schools will utilize the National Catholic Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Schools (NSBECS) as a framework for this work.

Each year the Administrator will work with the Building Leadership Team (BLT) to review, evaluate, and revise (if needed) the SIP. The document will include goals developed through an analysis of data, action steps to meet the goals, and a timeline for accomplishment of goals. Each school's SIP will assist the Administrator in determining needed professional development, as well as cost, in meeting each goal area.

On an annual basis, the Administrator will share the SIP review, accomplishments, and any changes with the Catholic Schools Office.

Regulation Adopted: April 25, 2000
Regulation Revised: March 25, 2013
July 30, 2021
February 7, 2025
September 2026

Accountability for Student Achievement – Desk Audit Regulation 616.2

All schools in the Diocese of Des Moines will complete the annual Desk Audit required by the Iowa Department of Education as a part of the accreditation requirements. The Catholic Schools Office will assist the schools in completing this report.

The Desk Audit is completed through the CASA application in the Iowa Education Portal. Requirements of this Desk Audit include board policies, schedules for the programming of the school, and information on enrollment and attendance information (for high school). Schools may also be required to submit their SIP as a part of the Desk Audit.

Regulation Adopted: March 17, 2003
Regulation Revised: March 25, 2013
July 30, 2021
February 7, 2025
September 2026

Accountability for Student Achievement – School Improvement Advisory Committee Regulation 616.3

The administration of each school shall appoint members to the School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC). This Committee, under the leadership of the Administrator, shall be composed of persons who represent faculty and staff, parents, community members, and where and when appropriate, students. (For non-public schools, the community is considered to be members of the sponsoring parish(es). (IAC 281.12.8(1)(2))

The School Improvement Advisory Committee shall share recommendations for school improvement with the local school board/leadership council. Based on the data analysis, the SIAC shall make recommendations concerning:

- major educational needs of the students
- student learning goals
- long-range goals including state indicators that address reading, math and science achievement
- the wellness program

Annually, the SIAC shall also make recommendations to the local board/leadership council with regard to:

- progress achieved with the annual improvement goals for state indicators that address reading, math and science
- progress achieved with other locally determined core indicators
- Success in meeting the goals of the wellness program

Regulation Adopted: April 25, 2000
Regulation Revised: March 25, 2013
July 30, 2021
February 7, 2025
September 2026

Accountability for Student Achievement – Data Collection and Analysis
Regulation 616.4

In order for a School Improvement Plan (SIP) to be created, a needs assessment process is to be devised. Each school in the Diocese of Des Moines will establish a needs assessment process.

The Administrator of each school should conduct on-going and in-depth needs assessments. The Needs Assessment process will include, but is not limited to student assessments, review of data collected from parent, student, and community surveys, and other data including enrollment, financial, and faith formation programming. Schools will utilize the National Catholic Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Schools (NSBECS) as a framework for this work.
(IAC 281.12.8(1))

Regulation Adopted: April 25, 2000
Regulation Revised: March 25, 2013
July 30, 2021
February 7, 2025
September 2026

Accountability for Student Achievement – School and Diocesan Wide Assessments
Regulation 616.5

Multiple assessment measures will be used to, not only determine student performance but also to create annual and long term goals.

The Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) will be given in grades 3-11. Reading and Mathematics subtests will be given to all grades and Science will be given in grades 5, 8, and 10. Beginning in the 2027-2028 school year, Social Studies will also be assessed on the ISASP.

Students in the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools will also be given the FASTBridge Reading and Math Screeners Assessment in grades K-8. Both of these assessments will be given three times a year (Fall, Winter, Spring).

The testing of students using the Cognitive Abilities Test or a similar test may be given to students. This is a decision to be made by the Administrator and the use of these assessment should be shared with parents.

Students will also be assessed in their Faith Knowledge and Growth. The Assessment of Child's Religious Education (ACRE) will be used with students in grades 2, 5, 8, and 11.

Other assessments, such as the ELPA 21 may be used as needed.

The high schools will utilize the ACT at various levels for their students, along with the ISASP.

All test results are to be collected, analyzed, and used for future planning. The Catholic Schools Office will collaborate with the Administrator in the use of the collected data and how it aligns to the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

Regulation Adopted:	October 27, 1969
Regulation Revised:	March 25, 2013
	July 30, 2021
	February 7, 2025
	September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Multicultural/Gender Fair Education

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that students in Catholic schools are free from discriminatory practices in the educational programs. All students are children of God and will be treated with respect and dignity.

These goals shall include multicultural approaches, which are defined as those fostering knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions of diverse cultural groups, including race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed and socioeconomic background. The contributions and perspectives of African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, European Americans, Native Americans and persons with disabilities shall be included in the approaches. Nothing in this policy shall conflict with Catholic doctrine. While Catholic schools will be free from harassment and unlawful discrimination, nothing in this policy or educational approaches shall conflict with the Catholic belief that sex outside of marriage between a man and a woman is forbidden and that there is an objective reality that gender is not fluid.

The emphasis placed on respect for human dignity shall admit multicultural approaches to pedagogy, which are defined as those fostering knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions of diverse cultural groups, including attributes of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed and socioeconomic background. The contributions and perspectives of African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, European Americans, Native Americans and persons with disabilities shall be included among these approaches. It is implicit in this policy that nothing communicated shall conflict with Catholic doctrine. Further, while Catholic schools will be free from harassment and unlawful discrimination, nothing in this policy or educational approaches shall conflict with a Catholic anthropology that affirms the God-given inherent nature of sexual relations as reserved for marriage between a man and a woman, founded on the objective sexual identity of man and woman genetically established at conception and recognized at birth or prior to that moment.

The mission of forming students in a biblically-grounded anthropology consistent with established Catholic magisterial moral teaching shall include gender fair approaches, which are defined as those fostering knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions of and roles open to women and men in society

Policy Adopted:	November 16, 1981
Policy Revised:	March 25, 2013
	July 31, 2024
Policy Reviewed:	September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Religion Curriculum Guides and Educational Materials List

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that the Catholic Schools Office shall provide Standards, Benchmarks, Grade-Level Expectations and Assessments for Religion. The schools shall use the diocesan guidelines in reference to the curriculum and select their educational materials for Religion, Human Growth and Development, and VIRTUS for Students from the approved Diocesan list.

As with other subject areas, standards, benchmarks, and expectations will be reviewed and revised through a process facilitated by the Catholic Schools Office.

Policy Adopted:	May 19, 1980
Policy Revised:	May 19, 2008
Policy Reviewed:	March 25, 2013
Policy Revised:	July 30, 2021
	September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES
Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Standardized Test & Assessment Accountability

The results obtained from standardized tests and assessments provide valuable information for curricular and instructional decisions for individual students, specific grades as well as the entire school.

Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that all schools be committed to ensuring the integrity of the use and results of standardized educational tests and assessments.

Administrators are required to plan and make certain all teachers and proctors of the assessment have the necessary training. This training is to include information regarding test security. The school is to establish an assessment protocol that includes training for pre-testing, testing, and post-testing. The training is to be obtained through the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) site and the Catholic Schools Office. (See Regulation 625.1)

A part of each school's testing protocol should determine who is to have access to group and individual scores. Relevant individual student results are to be shared with the student's parents so they are informed about their child's standardized assessment results and understand that the assessment results are only one indicator of academic achievement.

If a violation of this policy occurs, as determined by the local Test Coordinator and/or the Administrator, the Superintendent of Schools shall determine whether the integrity of the testing and assessment program has been jeopardized, whether some or all of the test or assessment results are invalidated, and whether a teacher or administrator has violated the Code of Ethics of the Iowa Board of Educational Examiners as found in 282 IAC Chapter 25.

If a staff member is found to have committed testing irregularities, the staff member shall be disciplined in accordance with the law. If the staff member is a licensee of the Board of Educational Examiners, the Superintendent shall make a timely report to the Board of Educational Examiners.

If the Superintendent of Schools believes the test or assessment results are invalid, the Superintendent shall make a timely report to the Iowa Department of Education.

Policy Approved:	March 27, 2006
Policy Reviewed:	March 25, 2013
Policy Revised:	July 30, 2021
Policy Reviewed:	September 2026

Standardized Test and Assessment Accountability – Standardized Test and Assessment Integrity Regulation 625.1

Standardized test and assessment results must truly be representative of the achievement of students in the schools of the diocese. Therefore, there are several steps that must be taken to ensure the integrity of the test and assessment results.

For standardized tests and assessments, each school should appoint a Test Coordinator, usually the Principal or Assistant Principal, who may in turn delegate responsibility for testing-related functions to one or more teachers.

The Administrator, working with the Test Coordinator, will ensure all teachers and proctors have been trained as needed via the ISASP training site.

Regulation Approved: March 27, 2006

Regulation Reviewed: March 25, 2013

Regulation Revised: July 30, 2021

Regulation Reviewed: September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Extended Learning

It shall be the policy for the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that middle school students who are capable of accelerating or extending their learning are encouraged to maintain full time enrollment in their Catholic school. The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Des Moines are committed to serving and challenging each child and will endeavor to do so through differentiation of instruction. Grade advancement is not a preferable method of extension for students. Through the assessment process, student needs will be determined, and placement will be made that can best meet the academic, social, and spiritual needs of the student.

Middle school students who qualify for enrichment courses, should work with their own local school as well as the local Catholic high school to determine how the high school may be able to serve the student's advanced academic needs. Qualifications will be set at each high school in collaboration with elementary school administrators and will be communicated and managed by the Catholic high school.

High school students who wish to participate in vocational courses or in other courses not offered in the Catholic high schools, must have written course of study that shows they will meet the graduation requirements for their Catholic high school if the extended learning course is completed successfully.

Policy Adopted:	May 15, 2006
Policy Reviewed:	March 25, 2013
Policy Revised:	July 30, 2021
	September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Human Growth and Development

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that the schools implement a human growth and development program following the direction of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The human growth and development curriculum should be age appropriate and comprehensive. The materials for use in this curriculum shall be taken from the list recommended by the Diocese of Des Moines Evangelization and Mission Department and Catholic Schools Office and will contain the appropriate imprimatur (free from theological or moral error).

Parents who choose not to have their children participate in Human Growth and Development, or in sections of the curriculum, must send written notification to the school. School administrators should provide supervision of students whose parents/guardians do not wish them to participate in part or all of the human growth and development curriculum.

Policy Adopted:	December 19, 1988
Policy Revised:	May 19, 2008
Policy Reviewed:	March 25, 2013
Policy Revised:	July 30, 2021
Policy Reviewed:	September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES
Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

VIRTUS for Children Programming

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that the schools implement the VIRTUS program Empowering God's Children's Program as a part of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People that was communicated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, recent revision approved November 2026.

The VIRTUS – Empowering God's Children program materials focus on keeping children safe by educating them regarding the prevention of sexual abuse in ways that are age and developmentally appropriate. Teachers will utilize lesson plans provided through the diocesan approved program (VIRTUS) and will teach children about boundaries, safe and unsafe friends, and positive, healthy relationships.

Parents who choose not to have their children participate in the VIRTUS – Empowering God's Children program must send written notification to the school. The school is to provide parents with written notice about the program as well as the form to opt-out of the program. School administrators should provide supervision of students whose parents/guardians do not wish for their children to participate in the VIRTUS program.

Policy Adopted: August 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Guidance

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that each school provide an articulated sequential guidance program covering the grades of that school. The purpose of the program is to assist and support students in their physical, emotional, spiritual, psychological, social and intellectual growth and development.

When possible, guidance/counseling professionals shall be identified to work on a regular basis with the school administration, staff, students, parents and community members to deliver the guidance program. These professionals, whether employed by the school or provided through an agreement with another agency or institution, shall comply with all diocesan and local school policies and regulations and only provide those programs and activities which are consistent with the mission and goals of the school.

Policy Adopted:	April 1, 1998
Policy Revised:	March 25, 2013
	July 30, 2021
Policy Reviewed:	September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES
Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Library Media Center: Materials and Use

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that each school provide a library media center that is open to students and staff and is adequate in collection, equipment and facilities to serve and support the educational program of the school.

Where and when possible, the school library media center should be under the direction of a licensed library media specialist and should be available for other groups within the sponsoring parish(es). If materials or technology are needed by groups outside of school groups, consultation with the administrator should occur to ensure materials and/or technology are ready for use and all know how to operate the equipment.

Policy Adopted: March 26, 1990
Policy Revised: March 25, 2013
July 30, 2021
Policy Reviewed: September 2026

Library Media Center
Regulation 640.1

The library media center should provide a wide range of instructional materials with diversity in the levels of difficulty, appeal and views presented. The materials should foster respect for all races, creeds, gender, ethnicity, and disabilities. Also, the materials should support and be consistent with the mission and goals of the school and the Catholic Church.

The staff may seek recommendations from various segments of the school community for materials to be placed in the library media center. However, the final decision should be made by the professional staff.

The library media center staff should be charged with the responsibility to order new and/or additional materials that will assist in the education of the student. Also, the library media staff should accept the responsibility of checking the collection for materials that no longer serve the school's educational program.

All gifts of material and equipment to the library media center should be accepted only after a determination by the professional staff, in consultation with the administrator, that they are appropriate.

Regulation Adopted: March 26, 1990
Regulation Revised: May 19, 2008
Regulation Reviewed: March 25, 2013; July 30, 2021; September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES
Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Reconsideration of Instructional Materials

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that each school allow a review of instructional materials, excluding textbooks, under question.

Policy Adopted: March 26, 1990
Policy Revised: May 19, 2008
Policy Reviewed: March 25, 2013
Policy Revised: July 30, 2021
September 2026

Reconsideration of Instructional Materials – Reconsideration Request
Regulation 643.1

Any parent or employee of the school may formally request reconsideration of instructional materials, excluding textbooks. In order to initiate a reconsideration process for materials, the parent or employee shall:

1. Provide a written statement about why the document or materials should be reconsidered
2. Request a meeting with the administrator to explain the concern with the materials and ask the Instructional Materials Reconsideration Committee look at the items in question.

The school shall convene an ad hoc Instructional Materials Reconsideration Committee which will respond to reconsideration requests. This committee will review the materials in question and discuss the reasons given for reconsideration. The committee will recommend to the administrator a course of action. The administrator will consult with the pastor and then share the final decision with the family or employee who initiated the process.

Membership of the Committee should include at least one teacher, designated by the administrator, a school media specialist, a member of the Diocesan Schools Office staff and a parent.

Regulation Adopted: March 26, 1990
Regulation Revised: March 25, 2013
July 30, 2021
September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Guest Speakers

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that any person wishing to invite or permit a speaker into a student assembly or classroom must first obtain the permission of the administrator.

(Diocese of Des Moines Policy) When a forum discussing matters of the Catholic faith is either provided or promoted within the parishes, schools or other Catholic organizations, the faithful have the right to expect that what they hear will be consistent with the teachings of the Church and with the pastoral direction of the Diocese (cf. Can.229§1). Similarly, the Bishop has the solemn responsibility to “firmly defend the integrity and unity of the faith to be believed” (Can. 386§2). Therefore, it is the diocesan bishop’s responsibility to do what can be done to assure speakers and honorees meet this expectation.

The **Speaker Approval Policy and Procedure** is to be used in the vetting process for speakers who present on matters of Catholic faith, spirituality or morals. **Any person under consideration to give a presentation on matters of Catholic faith, spirituality or morals must be approved in writing by the Diocesan Bishop *before an* invitation is extended to them.**

Policy Adopted:	March 17, 1969
Policy Revised:	May 19, 2008
Policy Reviewed:	March 25, 2013
Policy Revised:	July 30, 2021
	September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Field Trips

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that all field trips must have an educational purpose. The school must utilize a form for each field trip and off school property trips that gives the participant's name, grade, parent's/guardian's name, home address, home and/or cell phone, business phone, type of event, educational purpose of event, event destination, name of sponsor/supervisor, estimated time of departure and return, mode of transportation, and cost to student.

The form must be signed and dated by the student's parents/guardians granting permission for the student to participate and releasing the school from all liability, except in the case of negligence on the part of the school or its' employees.

Policy Adopted:	June 21, 2005
Policy Revised:	May 18, 2009
Policy Reviewed:	March 25, 2013
Policy Revised:	July 30, 2021
Policy Reviewed:	September 2026

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM AND LIABILITY WAIVER

FIELD TRIP

Participant's name: _____

Grade: _____ Sex: _____

Parent/Guardian's name: _____

Home address: _____

Home phone: _____ Business phone: _____

I, _____ grant permission for my child, _____
Parent or guardian's name Child's name

("Participant") to participate in the school event described below that requires transportation to a location away from the school site ("Event"). The Event will take place under the guidance and direction of school employees and/or volunteers from

Name of school

A brief description of the Event follows:

Date of Event: _____

Type of event: _____

Educational purpose of Event: _____

Destination of Event: _____

Individual in charge: _____

Estimated time of departure and return: _____

Mode of transportation to and from Event: _____

Cost to be paid by the student: _____

As parent and/or legal guardian, I remain legally responsible for any personal actions taken by the Participant relating to or arising from the Event.

In consideration of the Participant's participation in the Event, and on behalf of myself, the Participant, my other minor children and our heirs, successors, and assigns, I hereby release, discharge and covenant not to sue _____ the Diocese of Des Moines, and each of them, together with their

(Name of School)

employees, agents, chaperons, or representatives associated with the Event (collectively the Releasees), from any claim arising out of or related to the Event and in connection with any illness, accident or injury (including death) of the Participant or cost of medical treatment in connection therewith, except in the case of negligence on the part of the Releasees. I agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless _____ and its officers, employees, agents and all participants in the program from and against all liability including claims and suits of law or inequity for injury (fatal or otherwise) which may result from any negligence and/or the student taking part in program activities.

I understand that failure to sign this Consent Form and Liability Waiver as is without amendment or alteration is grounds for denial of participation in the Event.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

**FORMULARIO DE CONSENTIMIENTO DE LOS PADRES / TUTORES Y EXENCIÓN DE
RESPONSABILIDAD
EXCURSIÓN**

Nombre del estudiante: _____
Grado: _____ Sexo: _____
Nombre del padre/tutor: _____
Dirección: _____
Teléfono residencial: _____ Teléfono de trabajo: _____
Yo, _____ concedo permiso para mi hijo, _____
Nombre del padre o tutor Nombre del niño
("Estudiante") para participar en el evento escolar que se describe a continuación que requiere transporte a un lugar alejado del sitio de la escuela ("Evento"). El Evento se llevará a cabo bajo la guía y dirección de empleados de la escuela y /o voluntarios de _____.
Nombre de la escuela

A continuación se presenta una breve descripción del evento:

Fecha del evento: _____
Tipo de evento: _____
Propósito educativo del evento: _____
Destino del evento: _____
Persona a cargo: _____
Hora estimada de salida y regreso: _____
Modo de transporte hacia y desde el Evento: _____
Costo a pagar por el estudiante: _____

Como padre y/o tutor legal, sigo siendo legalmente responsable de cualquier acción personal tomada por el Estudiante en relación con o que surja del Evento.

En consideración a la participación del Estudiante en el Evento, y en mi nombre, el Estudiante, mis otros hijos menores y nuestros herederos, sucesores y cesionarios, por la presente libero, descargo y pacto no demandar a _____ la Diócesis de Des Moines, y cada uno de ellos, junto con sus

Nombre de la escuela
empleados, agentes, acompañantes o representantes asociados con el Evento (colectivamente los Exonerados), de cualquier reclamo que surja de o esté relacionado con el Evento y en conexión con cualquier enfermedad, accidente o lesión (incluida la muerte) del Estudiante o el costo de atención médica tratamiento en relación con el mismo, excepto en el caso de negligencia por parte de los Exonerados. Estoy de acuerdo en indemnizar, defender y mantener indemne a _____ y sus funcionarios, empleados, agentes y todos los participantes en el

Nombre de la escuela
programa de y contra toda responsabilidad, incluidas las reclamaciones y demandas legales o la inequidad por lesiones (fatales o de otro tipo) que puedan resultar de cualquier negligencia y /o el estudiante que participa en las actividades del programa. Entiendo que no firmar este formulario de consentimiento y exención de responsabilidad sin enmiendas o alteraciones es motivo para denegar la participación en el evento.

Firma: _____ Fecha: _____

Reglamento Aprobado: 21 de junio de 2005 Reglamento Revisado: 25 de marzo de 2013, 30 de julio de 2021,
September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Transportation

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that all participants in Catholic schools, when involved in an activity sponsored by the school, be transported in a manner that is consistent with the conditions stipulated in the Diocese of Des Moines Vehicle Safety Policy and by the Diocesan insurance carrier, Catholic Mutual. These conditions are stated in Regulation 652.1.

Policy Adopted: May 19, 2003
Policy Revised: May 20, 2013
 July 30, 2021
Policy Reviewed: August 2026

Transportation **Regulation 652.1**

It is important that the schools adhere to the requirements for student transportation as stipulated below:

A. General Information

1. Bus transportation is the most desirable method for any trip, and whenever possible this mode of transportation should be provided.
2. Use of 11-15 passenger vans for the transportation of students is a violation of Federal Motor Vehicle Standards and is not to be used.
3. If a school rents/leases/borrows a vehicle, the school must contact the Diocesan insurance carrier (currently Catholic Mutual, 1-800-228-6108 prior to signing any contract or agreement.
4. The use of private passenger vehicles is discouraged and should be avoided.
5. There must be more than one adult in each vehicle transporting students.

B. Permission Slips

1. Written consent of parents/legal guardians must be obtained for every participant prior to a field trip, sponsored/sanctioned by the school. Permission slips must inform the parents/legal guardians of the following:
 - a. Nature and date of event.
 - b. Mode of transportation to be used.
 - c. Name of person in charge of trip.
 - d. Parent's/legal guardian's responsibility and school, parish and diocese release from liability.

2. Also, there must be a permission slip for each specific field trip and all slips must be signed by the parent/legal guardian.
3. Written consent of parents/legal guardians must be obtained for every student in on-going, recurring activities originating from the school during the current year, prior to the first such activity. Such activities may include, but are not limited to
 - Formation activities
 - Liturgical assistance at a church away from the school site
 - Recreational activities
 - Service projects
 - Small group athletic events
 - Small group contests
 - Student recruiters/school ambassadors
 - Student tutors at an elementary school
4. Permission slips must inform the parents/legal guardians of the following:
 - a. Name and nature of activity/program.
 - b. Mode of transportation to be used.
 - c. Name of person in charge of activity/program.
 - d. Parent's/legal guardian's responsibility and signed waiver from liability.
5. Also, there must be a permission slip for each different recurring activity/program, and all slips must be signed by the parent/legal guardian. The school may NOT allow one field trip permission for all trips throughout the year.
6. Programs containing high school aged students who have drivers licenses must develop a means of communication to be used when small numbers of students may be involved in activities that are endorsed or encouraged by the school and are conducted during the normal operational hours. This means of communication must state that the transportation from the specific activity is the responsibility of the student in consultation with her/his parents. Examples of such activities are shown in paragraph 3 above.
7. Transportation to an event from a participant's home (i.e., not originating from the customary school site) is the sole responsibility of the parents/legal guardians of the participant.

C. Institution Owned Vehicles

1. Vehicles owned by the institution cannot be used for personal use without authorization. A copy of the **Motor Vehicle Record** (MVR) from each state where he/she has ever had a valid driver's license is required and will be obtained in the background check process.
2. Each institution will implement a quarterly vehicle maintenance and inspection program in addition to the manufacturers' operation and maintenance recommendations for all vehicles that they own.
3. All Church owned vehicles must be equipped with a road safety kit and inspected fire extinguisher
4. Cell phones and other electronic devices are not permitted to be used while operating a motor vehicle on behalf of the Church.

D. Privately Owned Vehicles

1. All privately owned vehicles used on behalf of the Church must be insured. They must have a valid and current registration, license plates and proof of insurance card.
2. The vehicle must be in safe operating condition.
3. The private automobile insurance company of the owner of the vehicle will be the primary insurance carrier.
4. The minimum liability limit for privately owned vehicles is: \$100,000/\$300,000. **A Private Vehicle Use Application** must be completed for each vehicle. This form can be found here: <https://www.dmdiocese.org/resources/finance/safety>.

E. All Operators

1. Drivers must be 21 years of age or older.
2. A driver must have a valid, non-probationary driver's license and no physical disability that would impair his/her ability to drive the vehicle safely.
3. Operators must possess a current valid driver's license for the type of vehicle they will be operating.
4. No operator will be hired or be allowed to provide volunteer transportation on behalf of any Church entity who has had any of the following citations or convictions in the past three years:
 - i. Operating a vehicle during a period of license suspension, revocation or forfeiture
 - ii. Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs
 - iii. Hit and run accident
 - iv. Failure to report an accident
 - v. Negligent homicide arising out of the use of a motor vehicle
 - vi. Using a motor vehicle for the commission of a felony
 - vii. Operating a motor vehicle without the owner's authority
 - viii. Permitting an unlicensed person to drive
 - ix. Reckless driving
 - x. A combined total of three or more accidents and/or moving violations
5. It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure that passengers adhere to the current State of Iowa safety belt laws and regulations.
6. All operators are expected to take the online "Defensive Driving Curriculum & Motor Vehicle Report-Des Moines." Find it at <http://www.cmconnect.org>.

F. Accident Reporting

1. If an accident occurs:
 - Obtain medical assistance, if needed, **at the scene** as soon as possible.
 - Contact local police, sheriff or highway patrol authorities as required.
 - Exchange driver, vehicle and insurance information.
 - Report the accident/moving violation to the insurance agent.
 - Report the accident/moving violation to the Church/School.
2. Complete the **Vehicle Accident Report**. This report is found here: <https://www.dmdiocese.org/resources/finance/safety>

G. Record Keeping

1. Records pertaining to driver selection and training should be kept on file for a period of three years following termination of their driving privileges.
2. Vehicle maintenance logs and vehicle inspections must be maintained for the duration of ownership of Church owned vehicles.
3. All organization owned vehicles must carry, at all times, a current **vehicle proof of insurance identification card**.
4. Retention of Forms:

- **Volunteer Driver Application**, retain for a minimum of 3 years
- **Private Vehicle Use Application**, retain for a minimum of 3 years
- **Vehicle Accident Report**, retain for 7 years from date of school

Regulation Adopted: May 19, 2003

Regulation Revised: May 20, 2013
August 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES
Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Lodging

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that any overnight events involving youth be organized so that males and females sleep in different rooms or, in large room settings (e.g., gymnasium or parish hall), sleep on separate ends of the room.

Additionally, when sleeping in:

- 1) Dorm-style settings - there shall be at least two male and two female supervisors.
- 2) Hotel settings - there shall be both male and female supervisors who must sleep in rooms separate from, but nearby the youth.
- 3) Campground settings - there shall be enough tentage so that males and females sleep in separate quarters and that supervisors sleep in quarters separate from, but nearby the youth.

Policy Adopted: May 17, 1999
Policy Revised: May 19, 2008
Policy Reviewed: March 25, 2013
Policy Revised: July 30, 2021
Policy Reviewed: September 2026

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Participation in Extracurricular Activities

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that each school establish policy and regulations pertaining to student participation in extracurricular activities. Activities shall be supervised by qualified professional staff and shall meet the interest and challenge the abilities of all students. Activities shall contribute to the physical, mental, athletic, academic, civic, social, moral, spiritual, and emotional growth of all students. The policy and regulations should contain not only the academic requirements but also a statement stipulating that the participants are representing the school and their behavior must reflect this representation.

Policy Adopted:	May 19, 2003
Policy Revised:	March 25, 2013
	July 30, 2021
Policy Reviewed:	September 2026