

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

AUXILIARY SERVICES

Health Services Program

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that each school maintain a school health services program which provides at least:

1. Maintenance of student health records;
2. Emergency health procedures and responsibilities;
3. Periodic assessment as described in the Health Practices and Procedures Manual for School Nurses in the Diocese of Des Moines;
4. Procedures for dispensing of prescription medication, including the completion and certification of the Medication Administration in Iowa Schools online course through AEA Online Learning in those schools without a full-time nurse.

If a school does not have a full-time nurse, procedures are to be established and documented explaining who will take on the duties of the nurse.

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

**Health Service Program – Health Services
Regulation 701.1**

All schools that employ a nurse will utilize the Health Practices and Procedures Manual for School Nurses in the Diocese of Des Moines.

Policy Adopted: January 19, 2004
Policy Revised: May 19, 2008
Policy Reviewed: March 25, 2013; July 30, 2021
Regulation: August 2026

**Health Service Program – Health Practices and Procedures Manual for School Nurses
Regulation 701.2**

The Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Office will facilitate a review of the Health Practices and Procedures Manual for School Nurses every three years.

Policy Adopted: January 19, 2004
Policy Revised: May 19, 2008
Policy Reviewed: March 25, 2013; July 30, 2021
Regulation: August 2026

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Nicotine/Tobacco Free Campus

It shall be the policy of the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that diocesan schools adhere to the state of Iowa Smoke Free Air Act. (ICC 142D)

Smoking or use of smokeless tobacco or non-FDA approved nicotine products, for purposes of this policy, “smoking” includes, but is not limited to, burning or vaporizing tobacco or other products in a cigarette, cigar, pipe, electronic cigarette, or any noncombustible product, which may or may not contain nicotine, that employs a heating element, power source, electronic circuit, chemical, or mechanical means, regardless of shape or size, that can be used to produce vapor from a solution of substance, is not permitted in or on school buildings, school grounds, school property, school vehicles, or non-school owned property used for extracurricular activities. This includes enclosed places of work and study, all outdoor areas such as parking lots and sports areas/stadiums, and private vehicles on school parking lots.

This policy applies to employees, students & visitors at all times, including school-sponsored and non-school sponsored events.

Diocesan schools shall display the appropriate non-smoking signs in and around their campuses, at the entrances to the school and on school owned vehicles. The signs must be clear and conspicuous from the exterior of school vehicles.

Failure to follow the law may result in a monetary fine to both the offender and the school.

The school administration is responsible for addressing violations of this policy when the use of the property involves school activities and/or events. In the event of violation during a non-school event, school administration will bring violation to attention of parish administration.

Policy Adopted:	November 17, 2008
Policy Revised:	March 23, 2015
Policy Approved:	March 28, 2015
Policy Revised:	July 30, 2021
Policy Reviewed:	August 2026

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Dental Screening

It shall be the policy of the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that a student enrolled in kindergarten or ninth grade in a Catholic elementary or secondary school of the Diocese complete the dental screening requirements of the state of Iowa. IAC-641-51.1(135) It shall be the duty of the school officials to ensure that a valid certificate of dental screening or certificate of dental screening exemption is on file for each kindergarten and ninth grade student enrolled.

Dental screening is a visual assessment, is non-invasive and non-diagnostic. Dental screening for kindergarten students may be performed by a licensed dentist, licensed dental hygienist, licensed physician, licensed physician assistant, advanced registered nurse practitioner, or a licensed nurse. Dental screening for ninth graders shall be provided by a licensed dentist or a licensed dental hygienist. Screenings for kindergarten is valid from age 3 years to 4 months after enrollment date. A screening for ninth grade is valid from one year prior to enrollment to four months after enrollment date.

The student or student's parents shall submit a valid Iowa Department of Public Health Certificate of dental screening to school officials, which shall be kept on file during the student's enrollment. If the student has been enrolled or enrolls in another Iowa school, the dental screening record should be transferred to the new school. Written permission to transfer dental screening records to another school is not required. Screenings performed by out-of-state providers are allowed. *Dental Screening Form is found on the Iowa Health and Human Services website.*

An exemption from dental screening may be granted for financial hardship for anyone who is unduly burdened by the cost of a dental screening. The certificate of exemption for financial reasons must attest that the screening would cause a genuine financial burden to the family and must be signed and dated by a dentist, dental hygienist, physician, physician assistant or nurse. *Dental Screening Exemption forms are found on the Iowa Health and Human Services website.*

An exemption for religious reasons is allowed by law; however, since there is no legitimate religious exemption for Catholics, Catholic students may not claim such an exemption. Persons of other faiths who claim religious exemption must have the exemption form notarized.

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

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES
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AUXILIARTY SERVICES

Nutrition and Physical Activity Wellness

It shall be the policy of the Des Moines Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that the diocesan schools will promote healthy students. Schools will provide and promote good nutrition through the implementation of the diocesan health education and physical education standards, use of federal nutrition standards and Smart Snacks in School Nutrition Standards, and incorporating physical activity into classrooms and school activities as part of the total learning environment.

The Catholic schools in the Des Moines Diocese support and promote proper dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance. All foods available on school grounds and at school sponsored activities during the instructional day shall meet or exceed federal nutrition standards and Smart Snacks in School Nutrition Standards.

Food should be served with consideration toward nutritional integrity, variety, appeal, taste, safety and packaging to ensure high-quality meals. Standards and nutrition guidelines for all foods and beverages sold to students on the school campus during the school day must be consistent with federal regulations. Food and beverages not sold to students but provided to students (e.g. in classroom parties, classroom snacks, provided by parents, or incentive programs) should align with school policy and procedures for such.

Each Catholic school in the Des Moines Diocese will establish a local wellness committee. The committee membership process shall include inviting the participation of school administrators, students, parents, school board member, health and/or physical education teachers, food service director, school nurse when possible, and health and/or wellness professionals from within the schools' community. The local wellness committee will develop a plan to implement and measure the diocesan wellness policy and monitor the effectiveness of the policy at the local level. The purpose of each school's wellness committee is to participate in the development, implementation, and periodic review of the school's Wellness Plan goals and activities.

Each School Wellness Committee will periodically review progress on the school's wellness goals using established data indicators throughout the school year (formatively) in consultation with the principal. Annually, each School Wellness Committee will report its findings to the school principal. Each school principal will communicate progress with the schools' wellness policy to its school community (i.e., parents and parish) via the annual report (See Policy 336).

Policy Adopted:	May 15, 2006
Policy Revisions:	July 6, 2017
Policy Revised:	July 30, 2021
	August 2026

Nutrition and Physical Activity Wellness Regulation Regulation 716.1

Each school's Wellness Committee will have one goal in each of the following goal areas and identify data-based indicators of progress for each goal:

Nutrition Education and Promotion

Physical Activity

Other School-Based Activities That Promote Student Wellness

Through this process, each Catholic school wellness committee in the diocese will ask: With our goals in mind, how will the goals be measured? What data will be collected and compared year-to-year overtime to determine progress?

Goals may be recorded in a form such as this:

Nutrition Education and Promotion	PLAN: After reviewing data, what is most in need of improving?	DO: Name the actions that will be taken in our school and classroom to achieve the goal. Who is responsible for these actions		STUDY: What data points or indicators of success will we see? Who will collect this data?		ACT: Did the actions achieve the goal. If yes, what new goals are to be set? If no, what needs to be done?	
		Actions	Who	Data Points	Who	Yes, New Goal	No, Further Work
	GOAL:						

Regulation Adopted: July 30, 2021

Regulation Reviewed: August 2026

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Lead Testing

It shall be the policy of the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that the elementary schools adhere to the rules and regulations of Iowa law 641 and cooperate with the Iowa Department of Health concerning lead testing of elementary kindergarten school students. The purpose of the testing requirement is to improve the health of Iowa's children.

A blood level test shall be performed before the applicant or transfer student reaches six years of age, or in cases in which the applicant or transfer student has already reached six years of age, as soon as the Department of Health notifies the parent/guardian that a blood lead test has not yet been performed.

Any kindergarten applicant and/or transfer student must have a blood level test unless they have an exemption for religious reasons or an exemption for very low risk of elevated blood lead levels.

A religious exemption may be granted to students if the testing conflicts with a genuine and sincere religious belief. A certificate for religious exemption from blood lead testing shall attest that the testing conflicts with a genuine and sincere religious belief and that the belief is in fact religious and not based on merely philosophical, scientific, moral, personal or medical opposition to blood lead testing. The certificate of blood lead testing exemption for religious reasons shall be signed and dated by the applicant's or transfer student's parent/guardian and must be notarized. Since there is no legitimate reason for a religious exemption for Catholics; no religious exemption will be granted for Catholic students.

The Department of Health may grant an applicant or transfer student an exemption for very low risk if the parent/guardian provides evidence satisfactory to the Department that the applicant or transfer student meet the definition of very low risk. The exemption certificate shall be signed and dated by the student's parent/guardian and by the chief of the Bureau of Lead Poisoning prevention. The certificate is only valid if it has been notarized.

Each school shall furnish the Department of Health, in the format specified by the Department, (www.idph.state.ia.us/eh/lead_poisoning_prevention.asp#testing) within 60 days after the start of school, an electronic list of the children enrolled in kindergarten, including the names of children who have filed certificates of blood lead testing exemption. The Department will then inform each school of the children who have and have not met the legal blood lead testing requirements.

If the parent/guardian cannot provide evidence that the child received a blood lead test, the school shall, in collaboration with the Department of Health, provide the parent/guardian with community blood testing information, including contact information for the Department of Health

Policy Adopted: March 23, 2009

Policy Reviewed: March 25, 2013

July 30, 2021

August 2026

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Right-To-Know

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that all schools follow the requirements of the Right-To-Know Rules of the State of Iowa.

These requirements include the necessity for all employees to receive the Right-To-Know training within 3 months of initial employment and whenever hazardous chemicals are introduced into the work area. This training may be accomplished through online training provided through the local Area Education Agency, or other means. A record of the date of training for each employee must be made and kept current.

Employers must receive from the manufacturer of any hazardous chemicals used in their facilities “material safety data sheets.” These sheets must be kept in a file, accessible in case of need, and available to all employees and the public if requested. (347-IAC 110 & 120)

Policy Adopted:	June 21, 2005
Policy Revised:	March 25, 2013
	July 30, 2021
	August 2026

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Common Agreements

It shall be the policy of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that when schools share staff and/or enter into some common agreement about a specific program(s), there must be a written agreement signed by the administrators of those schools prior to entering into such an arrangement. The written agreement must include the purpose and scope of the specific program(s) and delineate the conditions and procedures of the agreement including the conditions by which a school may join or withdraw from said agreement. Copies of all common agreements must be kept on file in the respective school offices, with copies forwarded to the Catholic Schools Office.

Policy Approved:	March 27, 2006
Policy Revised:	May 19, 2008
Policy Reviewed:	March 25, 2013
Policy Revised:	August 2026

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AUXILIARY SERVICES

School Bus Driver and Vehicle Requirements

It shall be the policy of the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, that schools owning and operating school buses meet the requirements of both the state and federal governments, maintain and make available to state and federal officials the necessary records.

This policy and its accompanying regulations must be shared with the school bus drivers.

Policy Adopted: November 16, 2009
Policy Reviewed: March 25, 2013
July 30, 2021
August 2026

**School Bus Driver and Vehicle Requirements Regulation
Regulation 728.1**

Schools must comply with the following requirements:

- 1) **281-43.1(285) Driver age.** School bus drivers must be at least 18 years of age on or before August 1 preceding the opening of the school year for which a school bus driver authorization is required.
- 2) **281-43.12(1)(285) Physical fitness.** Except for insulin-dependent diabetics, an applicant for a school bus driver's authorization must undergo a biennial physical examination by a licensed physician or surgeon, osteopathic physician or surgeon, osteopath, qualified doctor of chiropractic, licensed physician assistant, or advanced registered nurse practitioner. The applicant must submit to the applicant's employer the signed medical examiner's certificate (Pursuant to Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration regulations 49 CFR Sections 391.41 to 391.49), indicating among other requirements, sufficient physical capacity to operate the bus effectively to render assistance to the passengers in case of illness or injury, and freedom from any communicable disease. At the discretion of the chief administrator or designee of the employer or prospective employer, the chief administrator or designee shall evaluate the applicant's ability in operating a school bus, including all safety equipment, in providing assistance to passengers in evacuation of the school bus, and in performing other duties required of a school bus driver.
- 3) **281-43.12(2)(285) Insulin-dependent diabetics.** A person who is an insulin-dependent diabetic may qualify to be a school bus driver if the person meets all qualifications of Iowa Code

subsection 321.375(3). Such driver is subject to an annual physical examination by a qualified medical examiner as listed in rule 281-43.15(285).

- 4) **281-43.23(285) Application form.** The school bus driver and the board of education/school board shall submit an application for the school bus driver's authorization annually, and upon a form prescribed by the Department of Education.
- 5) **281-43.17(285) Semiannual inspection.** To facilitate the semiannual inspection program, School officials shall send their buses to inspection centers as scheduled. A sufficient number of drivers or other school personnel shall be available at the inspection to operate the equipment for the inspectors. There is a fee for each vehicle inspected.
- 8) **281-43.18(285) Maintenance record.** School officials shall cause the chassis of all buses and allowable alternative vehicles, whether publicly or privately owned, to be inspected annually and all necessary repairs made before the Vehicle is put into service. The inspection and repairs shall be recorded on a form (TR-F-27A) prescribed by the Department of Education. The completed form (TR-F-27A) shall be signed by the mechanic and carried in the glove compartment of the bus.
- 9) **281-43.19(285) Drivers' Schools.** All school bus drivers shall attend classes or schools of instruction as approved by the Department of Education and provided for in Iowa Code subsection 321.376(2). The course of instruction for new drivers, to be successfully completed within the first six months of employment, shall also include the annual course of instruction for the school year in which the new driver is hired. All current school bus drivers shall attend the annual course of instruction, unless the current driver misses a year of instruction . Upon missing a year of instruction, a current driver shall successfully complete the course of instruction for new drivers prior to receiving an authorization. The employer of a school bus driver may impose additional training requirements for any new or current driver.
- 10) **281-43.20(285) Insurance.** The board of education shall carry insurance on all school-owned buses and see that insurance is carried by all contractors engaged in transporting pupils for the school in the coverage and limits as determined by the diocesan insurance company.
- 11) **281-43.23(285) Railroad crossings.** The driver of any school bus will comply with Iowa Code section 321.343, regardless of whether or not there are any pupils in the bus, and regardless of whether or not there is an automatic signal at the crossing. After stopping, the driver shall open the entrance door, shall look and listen for approaching trains, and shall not proceed to cross the tracks until it is safe to do so.
- 12) **281-43.24(285) Driver regulation.**
 - 43.24(1)** The driver of a school bus shall not smoke in the vehicle or on any school property.
 - 43.24(2)** The driver shall not permit firearms or other weapons, nor ammunition, to be carried in the passenger compartment of any school vehicle transporting pupils.
 - 43.24(3)** The driver shall not fill the fuel tank while the motor is running or when there are passengers in the vehicle
 - 43.24(4)** The driver shall ensure that aisles and exits are not blocked.
- 14) School bus drivers must comply with drug and alcohol testing rules.
- 15) **281-43.26(285) Pupil instruction.** At least twice during each school year once in the fall and once in the spring, each pupil who is transported in a school vehicle shall be instructed in safe riding practices and participate in emergency evacuation drills. Documentation of these drills shall be maintained locally for five years and made available upon request.
- 16) **281-43.27 (1-2)(285) Trip inspections.** A pre-trip inspection of each school vehicle will be performed and recorded prior to each trip to determine if any defects or deficiencies exist that may affect the safety of the vehicle's operation or result in its mechanical breakdown. The pre-trip inspection report is to be signed by the driver and submitted promptly to the person responsible for the school transportation program. Any deficiencies that merit an OOS (out of service) rating pursuant to department of education school bus inspection guidelines must be repaired prior to use of the vehicle. All other deficiencies should be repaired as soon as possible

but do not bar the use of the vehicle. 43.27(2) A post-trip inspection of the interior of the school vehicle shall be performed after each trip to ensure no passengers remain.

17) **281-43.28(285) Loading and unloading areas.** Restricted loading and unloading areas shall be established for school buses at, or near schools.

18) **281.43.29(285) Communication equipment.** Each school bus shall have a two-way communications system or cellular telephone capable of emergency communication between the driver of the bus and the school's base of operations for school transportation.

Regulation Approval:	November 16, 2009
Regulation Revised:	March 25, 2013
	July 30, 2021
	August 2026

School Bus Driver and Vehicle Requirements

Bus Driver Drug and Alcohol Testing Regulation

Regulation 728.2

Schools that own and operate school buses must have a designated company employee (DER) who serves as the key employee for the bus driver drug and alcohol program functions.

Schools may administer the Department of Transportation (DOT) drug and alcohol testing program in one of three ways:

- Administer the program internally
- Outsource some of the program functions to service agents
- Outsource all of the program functions to a vendor, called a "consortium" or a "third party administrator" and a DER on staff.

It is recommended that schools contract with an outside consortium/third-party administrator (C/TPA) as they must assure their clients that the services it provides comply with DOT regulations and that its service agents are qualified. A C/TPA will coordinate the required drug and alcohol testing services for the schools. These services include conducting initial urine collections for drug testing; designation of randomly selected bus drivers for testing; laboratory testing; alcohol testing; breath and alcohol technician (BAT), medical review officer (MRO) and/or substance abuse technician (SAP) if needed; and preparation of annual Management Information System (MIS) reports.

Policy Adopted:	November 16, 2009
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	July 30, 2021
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