

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES

Catholic Schools Policies/Regulations

STAFF PERSONNEL

Corporal Punishment

The Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Office, under the aegis of the Bishop, and the State of Iowa define corporal punishment as the intentional physical punishment of a student. Corporal punishment is prohibited. It includes the use of unreasonable or unnecessary physical force or physical contact made with the intent to harm or cause pain.

No employee is prohibited from using reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain, in order to accomplish any of the following:

- To quell a disturbance or prevent an act that threatens physical harm to any person.
- To obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object within a pupil's control.
- For the purposes of self-defense or defense of others as provided for in Iowa Code section 704.3.
- For the protection of property as provided for in Iowa Code section 704.4 or 704.5.
- To remove a disruptive pupil from class or any area of school premises or from school-sponsored activities off school premises.
- To protect a student from the self-infliction of harm.
- To protect the safety of others.
- Using incidental, minor, or reasonable physical contact to maintain order and control.

Reasonable physical force should be commensurate with the circumstances of the situation. The following factors should be considered in using reasonable physical force for the reasons stated in this policy:

1. The size and physical, mental and psychological condition of the student;
2. The nature of the student's behavior or misconduct provoking the use of physical force;
3. The instrumentality used in applying the physical force;
4. The extent and nature of resulting injury to the student, if any;
5. The motivation of the school employee using physical force.

Upon request, the student's parents shall be given an explanation of the reasons for physical force.

If a written allegation of unreasonable or unnecessary physical force or physical contact has been made against a school employee, the allegation must be investigated by the Level I investigator and the employee placed on administrative leave. (IAC 280.21)

If the results of an investigation find that the school employee's conduct constitutes a crime, the administrator or superintendent must make a report to the Board of Educational Examiners. (IAC281-102.5(6))

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