

**Catholic Identity and Mission.**

Due to the nature and mission of the Catholic Church, all employees are bound to exhibit respect for the teachings and discipline of the Church in regard to matters of faith and morals. Each employee is therefore expected to conduct himself or herself at all times in accordance with Catholic morality and the rules and regulations of the Diocese of Harrisburg and the local school and to avoid any embarrassment or scandal to the Catholic faithful of the Diocese of Harrisburg and the local school.

Each employee must avoid engaging in any conduct in or out of the workplace which, in the judgment of that individual's employer, constitutes serious or public immorality, sacrilege, lewd conduct, public scandal or overt rejection of, or the holding up to doubt, public ridicule or question of the official teaching, doctrine or laws of the Catholic Church, as contained in, but not limited to, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the 1983 Code of Canon Law, the decrees, policies or norms issued by Church authority, and in the official policies or handbooks adopted by the local school.

Any violation of this provision that is brought to the attention of the individual's employer may result in disciplinary action against the employee, which may include, but not be limited to, at the discretion of the Employer: counseling, admonition, the completion of corrective action, suspension or termination of employment.

An employee whose employment is terminated pursuant to this policy may, within seven days of his or her dismissal, petition the Office of the Diocesan Bishop to, at his discretion, review the termination decision. Petition to the Office of the Diocesan Bishop shall be the sole and exclusive means of review of dismissals for violation of this policy.

Adopted:  
January 1, 2018

RWG/Bishop of Harrisburg

## Addendum

Catholic education is one of the principal means by which the Church fulfills the Lord's command to make disciples of all nations (See Mt. 28, 19-20). The Church brings forth new disciples through the sacrament of Baptism, and essential age appropriate formation in all aspects of the faith is carried out through her teaching mission. In this fundamental ministry or work of the Church the Catholic school holds a special place.

The very identity of the Catholic school is inextricably linked with the mission given by Christ to His Church. *"It is from its Catholic identity that the school derives its original characteristic and its 'structure' as a genuine instrument of the Church, a place of real and specific pastoral ministry"* (The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, #11) The Catholic bishops of the United States echo this description of the Catholic school and its ministry noting: *"These Catholic schools afford the fullest and best opportunity to realize the fourfold purpose of Christian education, namely to provide an atmosphere in which the Gospel message is proclaimed, community in Christ is experienced, service to our brothers and sisters is the norm, and thanksgiving and worship of God is cultivated."* (Renewing Our Commitment)

How does the school accomplish this ministry of Christian formation? *"Catholic schools provide young people with sound Church teaching through a broad-based curriculum, where faith and culture are intertwined in all areas of the school's life."* (Renewing Our Commitment) Critical to this mission of the Church are those who work in the Catholic school. While all staff members play an important role in reflecting the teaching of the Church and the dignity of the Christian life, the administrators, educators, coaches and moderators are central. Their daily work in the classroom and other venues of student life are essential elements in the overall formation that is provided to students. However, all employees must avoid any form of scandal.

The Catholic school has a unique educational environment. The school is not merely the place for the communication of a particular curriculum, it is also a place where the Christian life is modeled. *"Prime responsibility for creating this unique Christian school climate rests with the teachers, as individuals and as a community."* (Religious Dimension #25) The members of the faculty not only convey the truth of the Gospel as taught by the Church, they also serve as role models of living the Christian life. *"This integration of religious truth and values with the rest of life is brought about in the Catholic school not only by its unique curriculum, but more importantly, by the presence of teachers who express an integrated approach to learning and living in their private and professional lives."* (To Teach as Jesus Did #104) This means that the teacher in a Catholic school has the duty to be a role model in their private and professional lives as a faith filled adult Christian, and to give credible witness to the teachings of the Church in faith and morals. This requirement flows across all curricular departments, disciplines and all school related activities.

Parents and students rightly expect that their Catholic school is operated in accordance with the doctrine, morals and laws of the Catholic Church. *"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 illumined by the light of faith, having its own unique characteristics."* (Religious Dimension #25)

The Catholic school is a ministry of the Church in a very real sense. Those who work there are rightly associated with the teaching ministry of the Church, fulfilling her mission to teach, that is to form a new generation of Christian disciples. As privileged participants in this ministry there are high expectations placed on the faculty and staff of a Catholic school to be witnesses before the local community to the faith of the Church, both in the school and outside of it.

Notes:

**The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium**, Congregation for Catholic Education, Vatican, 1997.

**Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium**, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005. (Renewing Our Commitment)

**The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School**, Congregation for Catholic Education, Vatican, 1988. (Religious Dimension)

**To Teach as Jesus Did**, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1972. (To Teach as Jesus Did)

### **The Catholic School Employee as a Witness to Christ**

#### **A Witness to Truth:**

The employee is a witness to the truth of the Gospel. They faithfully hand on the teachings of the Church to their students. They seek to integrate appropriate elements of faith into the various educational disciplines they are responsible for. They do not publically reject the doctrine, morals or laws of the Catholic Church, nor hold them up to doubt or question. The employee is faithful to their religious obligations and regularly practices their faith.

#### **A Witness to Justice:**

The employee is a witness to the virtue of justice. They will promote the Church's social teaching and doctrine. They will avoid any form of scandal, that is, any word or action that may lead another into evil (See CCC #2284). This means that employees should avoid conduct or comment outside the school that could cause scandal or damage the reputation of the school or the Church. They will not hold public membership, employment or participate in any organization or activity that is incompatible with Catholic doctrine or morals. They will not engage in criminal activity. All communications with students and parents are carried out in a professional manner. They will not exploit or endanger a child in any way. Appropriate boundaries are respected at all times with students, in any contact, physical, verbal, written and electronic.

#### **A Witness to Life:**

The employee upholds the respect for and dignity of every human life. They do not engage in, assist, or support abortion. They respect the sanctity of procreation as the fruit of the marital activity of husbands and wives. They do not engage in, assist, or support contrary approaches

such as in-vitro fertilization, freezing embryos, or surrogate parenthood. They uphold the sanctity and integrity of the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit and do not engage in, assist or support immoral surgical or other attempts to change gender or any other form of physical mutilation.

**A Witness to Marriage and Family:**

The employee respects the dignity of marriage and the Catholic moral doctrine on human sexuality. They only enter into valid marriages as defined by the laws of the Church. They do not condone or seek to enter a same-sex relationship, union or marriage. They do not engage in unchaste behaviors be these heterosexual or homosexual, nor procreation outside of marriage. This includes activities such as cohabitation, adultery and viewing or producing pornography.

Notes:

**Catechism of the Catholic Church**, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997. (CCC)