



**DIVINE MERCY**  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

**Parent/Student Handbook  
and Policies  
2017-2018**

**Phone # (507) 334-7706**

**Website address**

**[www.dmcs.cc](http://www.dmcs.cc)**

# **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Divine Mercy Catholic School is to help form the whole person: spiritually, socially, culturally, emotionally, and intellectually according to Christ's example as found in the Gospel.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

“Christ is the foundation of the whole education enterprise in a Catholic School.”

(The Catholic School #34)

In a faith filled atmosphere, the message of Christ takes priority and becomes integral in all areas of school activities. Our school emphasizes academic areas and provides a strong Catholic foundation for a child to continue his/her Christian life in society.

Divine Mercy Catholic School seeks to address the individual learning needs of its students, by providing sound Christian leadership, creative and competent teaching, a progressive curriculum, and innovative learning programs. DMCS encourages students to academic and moral excellence. We prepare them to assume their proper roles in Church and society and develop in them a respect for all peoples and cultures.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

At Divine Mercy Catholic School, we will

1. instill in each student belief in God, each other and in Catholic education.
2. provide students with a loving and respectful environment where they will develop a feeling of self worth.
3. foster in each student a personal relationship with God.
4. immerse students in a rigorous academic environment where individual learning styles are utilized to foster classroom and life long learning.
5. provide curriculum that recognizes and respects human dignity throughout the world.

## **PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS**

Our Faithful Beginnings Preschool programming for 3-5 year olds is held daily at Divine Mercy Catholic School in the Mother Samuel Building. We operate a number of programming options including two, three and five day classes. Parents can choose full days or half day programming. Parents/guardians are encouraged to register children for preschool in the spring due to a limited number of openings after June 1. Students who attend the five-day programs are placed by priority. Those students who will be attending DMCS kindergarten the following year are given priority over other preschool students who are planning on not attending DMCS kindergarten. A Summer Preschool program is also offered. Further information is available in the Faithful Beginnings at Divine Mercy Catholic School Preschool Brochure and Handbook.

## **GRADES K-5**

Kindergarten is an all-day every day program. Grades K-5 are housed in the main school building. Along with a rigorous academic curriculum in all grade levels, students participate in Art, Music, Library, Media, and Physical Education through our specialists. We are committed to the success of all students.

## **GRADE 6**

Grade 6 is housed at Bethlehem Academy as part of a cooperative Middle School. Students are still enrolled at Divine Mercy, but attend school with the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students at Bethlehem Academy. The Middle School has its own Dean, counselor, and core group of teachers that work together to support students in academic and personal growth.

## **SCHOOL ACCREDITATION**

Divine Mercy Catholic School is accredited by the Minnesota Non-public School Accrediting Association (MNSAA). Annual reports are submitted to this agency in order to meet association standards. Curriculum evaluation is an on-going process at our school. Programs are selected after careful study and consultation on the part of staff.

## **SCHOOL HISTORY**

Divine Mercy Catholic School's roots are more than 150 years old. It is a consolidated school built from the area's first Catholic schools – St. Lawrence, a Catholic school made up of students predominantly of German descent; Sacred Heart Catholic School, with students of French background; and Immaculate Conception Catholic School for those families of mostly Irish heritage. The first parochial school in Faribault was founded officially in 1872, making Divine Mercy Catholic School officially 147 years old, although classes were taught as early as 1860.

Alexander Faribault deeded land to the area's first resident priest, Father George Keller. Immaculate Conception Catholic Church still stands on this deeded land today. Immaculate Conception opened their school in the basement of the Berglehner residence in 1860. Lay teachers were the first instructors until the Sisters of the Dominican Order in Sinsinawa, Wisconsin, came in 1865 to lead the school. Families paid one dollar a month for each child in addition to the necessary books and supplies needed for education. In 1872, after outgrowing the church basement classrooms, a new school was built for Immaculate Conception. This school served as the parish school until 1925 under the direction of Father Dolphin. Due to continued increases in enrollment, Monsignor Foley built on a large addition. Divine Mercy Catholic School has been added on to over the years and remains in much the same location where it began.

In 1869 Bishop T.H. Grace gave the German Catholic people of Faribault permission to form their own parish. A small frame building was built and their first celebrated Mass was on February 2, 1870. St. Lawrence began teaching school that same year in the basement of the church. In 1872, they purchased new land to build a larger church and school. Beginning in 1881, the Dominican Sisters walked from Immaculate Conception to St. Lawrence to teach the children. Father John Pavlin helped to build up the school until his death in 1896. In 1913, St. Lawrence built a new school building. This building is still used today by the Faribault public school system as the location for the Discovery Charter School.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church opened a mission school in 1916. Four Sisters of the Third Order of St. Dominic worked side by side with Father Monge teaching Catholic education and the French language. In 1952, under Father Houle's direction and increasing enrollment, the parish purchased property for a new school. Students began in their new school building in 1956 with hot school lunches at only 15 cents a lunch. This school building now houses a St. Vincent DePaul outreach center.

The three Catholic schools were consolidated in 1969. Until 2006, the joint schools were called Consolidated Catholic Schools – CCS. CCS was originally a kindergarten to eighth grade educational institute. Today, Divine Mercy Catholic School provides academic excellence to students in preschool

through fifth grade in the Elementary School. Our sixth grade students are part of the Cooperative Middle School with Bethlehem Academy.

### **IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

DMCS Office Hours: 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM

DMCS Business Office: 334-7706

## **SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

### **PARENTAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Parents/guardians are informed of the programs, regulations, and policies of the school. In assisting your child, we require the following:

1. Familiarity with information contained in handbooks and other newsletters from the school.
2. Inform the school of:
  - a. student illness or absence
  - b. parental status and custodial constraints
  - c. change in transportation routine
  - d. change in address, phone, emergency contact, childcare, etc.
  - e. arrangements that might affect communication with the school
3. Meet financial obligation of tuition, fees, lunch accounts, or other accounts that apply.
4. Comply with:
  - a. policies and regulations
  - b. goals and objectives of the Catholic school as identified in this parent/student handbook
5. No student may leave the premises at any time for any purpose without a request/permission from the custodial parent/guardian or approval of the principal.

### **CONTACTING THE SCHOOL**

The school's office hours are 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM. After these hours the voice mail system is available for any messages. Someone will contact you as soon as possible. Feel free to e-mail us. You can do so by typing the staff member's first initial and last name at dmcs.cc (i.e. msmith@dmcs.cc). We look forward to hearing from you.

### **ATTENDANCE**

In order to be a successful student at DMCS, attendance is necessary.

It is Divine Mercy Catholic School policy that it will adhere to all State of Minnesota regulations concerning school attendance. All work missed by students who were absent must be made up as soon as possible after returning to school (also discussed in Section on School Procedures of this manual).

Absences affect a student's performance. Excessive absences often result in poor schoolwork. When an absence is necessary, these steps are to be followed:

1. Parent/guardian will call the school each morning of a student's absence by 8:00 AM. If the school does not receive a call from a parent/guardian when a child is absent, the parent/guardian will be called to confirm the reason for the absence.
2. Student will make immediate plans to do all make-up work due to absence upon return to school.
3. All homework should be requested in the morning before classes begin and will be available for pick-up in the school office at the end of the school day.
4. If absence is due to work, travel, or some other reason, parent/guardian should notify the school prior to the absence. Missed work will need to be completed.

Minnesota truancy law states that any elementary school child missing three full days without a valid excuse is considered continually truant.

A child in elementary school under the age of 16 years who is absent from school without lawful excuse for seven school days is considered a habitual truant. The names of truant children will be referred to the designated school official.

DMCS closely follows the attendance calendar of the local school district, including dismissal for emergencies (i.e. dismissal because of inclement weather). The principal may make some adjustments to the school calendar. Official announcements for school closing will be made over KDHL. Be sure that students know where they should go (i.e. home, a neighbor's home, etc) in the event of an early dismissal.

### **ILLNESS/INJURY DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

The principal, the school nurse, or school delegate dismisses or approves the dismissal of a student who becomes ill or hurt during the school day. Parents/guardians are notified when the illness is reported. If they are unable to come for the student, they must make arrangements for a relative or other authorized person to pick up the student in the school office. No student will be sent home due to illness if no one is at home to be with the student.

If a medical emergency arises and the parent cannot be reached, medical personnel at District One Hospital will be notified. Any serious infections or communicable diseases will be reported to all parents. No over-the-counter medication, including aspirin, can be given to a student for any reason without a doctor's order.

### **TARDINESS**

Children arriving late or leaving early (any time after 8:00 AM or before 3:00 PM) must report to the school office. Students will be marked tardy up to 9:15 AM and after 2:00 PM. If absent one or more hours of instructional time, a student will be marked ½ day absent. Excessive tardiness (more than three times in a four-week period) will result in parent/guardian being notified by the teacher. Continued tardiness will warrant a call by the school nurse or principal to the parents/guardians. Excessive tardiness leads to missed instructional time and is disruptive to the classroom. It may require that the missed time be made up by the student.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING** (emergency or inclement weather)

In case of emergency or severe weather, please listen to KDHL (920 AM), check WCCO (online school closings), or look for an email blast for school closings. The announcement will state that schools in Faribault District 656 are closed. No announcement means that school is in session. It is the rule that Divine Mercy Catholic School is closed if the local public school district (656) is closed because of severe weather conditions. Family Emergency Forms (designating alternative care for your child(ren) in the event of early dismissal) are completed through the TADS registration process.

## **ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

Due to safety and supervision of children before school, Divine Mercy Catholic School requests that children be dropped off no earlier than **7:40 AM** at school. Students arriving before 7:35 AM will be sent to our morning childcare program and parents will be charged the applicable fee. Certified staff will assume supervision starting at 7:40 AM. Children are to enter the south side of the building and report to the gym area in the AM. Students are dismissed at the end of the day at 3:00 PM. Students not picked up by **3:10 PM** will be sent to school age childcare for supervision and parents will be billed accordingly.

## **VISITORS**

All parents/guardians or visitors must sign in at the office before going to a classroom. Parents/guardians and visitors are welcome for open houses, special programs, or observations, and are encouraged to attend. Visitors who wish to observe classrooms are asked to make an appointment with the appropriate teacher and check in at the school office before going to the classroom.

## **TELEPHONE USAGE**

Telephone usage is discouraged during the school day. We discourage children from calling home to make arrangements to go home with a friend, to have a parent/guardian bring forgotten band instruments, books, assignments, gym shoes, etc.

As a rule, neither teachers nor pupils are called to the phone during the hours of class. Messages may be left with the school secretary or voice mail if it is necessary to contact either a student or teacher. Children may not use the school phone except in cases of an emergency. Cell phones are strongly discouraged.

## **VALUABLES**

School insurance does not cover loss of personal possessions; therefore students are to refrain from bringing valuables and electronic devices to school.

## **MONEY**

When money is sent to school, it should be placed in an envelope and labeled with the student's name, grade, and the purpose for the money.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost items will be kept in an appropriate place. Encourage students to check for lost items in the Lost and Found area when something is missing. All Lost and Found items left at Christmas Break and at the end of the school year will be boxed and given to charity.

## **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

Parents/guardians will provide school supplies for their child(ren). A list of needed supplies will be provided each year and is available on the website.

## **PROMOTION/RETENTION**

Promotion/retention will be based on academic achievement and physical, emotional, psychological and developmental maturity. In the case of retention, parents/guardians will be notified of their child's situation as soon as possible. If a recommendation is made to retain a child and is rejected by parents/guardians, the parents/guardians sign a written acknowledgment of the school's recommendation. That acknowledgment shall serve to release the school from any responsibility for failure to follow the school's recommendation.

## **ACHIEVEMENT TESTING**

At Divine Mercy Catholic School, we believe an effective assessment system includes formal, informal, formative, and summative assessments. Our assessment plan promotes student learning and mastery of skills along with guiding instructional decisions and school improvement. We assess student learning to identify and address areas of concern while promoting and celebrating areas of success.

All areas of our curriculum are assessed in some way. Students are assessed by classroom teachers in all subject areas. We use both formative and summative assessments including observation, project, performance, oral and written tests, and other methods. At DMCS we use the following standardized tests.

Grades K and 1; DIBELS (may be used for progress monitoring students in other grades)

Grades K-5; NWEA (Fall, Winter, and Spring)

## **TRANSFERS**

Parents should notify the school office in advance if they plan to enroll their children in another school.

# **COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

The school has established the following ways of communicating with the parents/guardians of its students in order to increase the understanding of the school's mission, programs, goals and the progress of their child(ren).

## **PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

The Parent/Student Handbook is sent annually to school families and always available on the school website.

## **THURSDAY COMMUNICATION FOLDER/NEWSLETTER**

The Thursday Folder contains important notices. The oldest student from each family will take home the communication folder each week. Parents/guardians are asked to be sure that their eldest child return the folders to school on FRIDAYS. The main newsletter, lunch menus and other notices are emailed out every Thursday afternoon throughout the year.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Parents have access to TADS/Educate where they can view their child's progress at any time. Log-in information is sent out at the beginning of each school year. Reports of student progress are issued at the end of each quarter. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher with questions or concerns.

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent/Teacher Conferences are held in the Fall and Spring. A parent/guardian and/or teacher may request a special conference at any time as the need arises.

We invite and encourage parent/guardian visits and participation at any time during the year. This is your child's school, and we invite you to share it with us. Parents/guardians are always welcome to discuss successes, problems or concerns with the faculty. Appointments can be made during non-school hours for this purpose by calling or emailing your child's teacher (Main office number is 334-7706). Parents/guardians will also be kept informed of school events through letters sent home with the children and via email as often as needed.

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCES**

Parents/guardians, students, and teachers are part of the educational process. We request the attendance of parent/guardian at scheduled conferences so we can maintain a minimum of communication on a student's progress.

## **COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE**

To help with the lines of communication between teachers and parents/guardians, the following actions should be taken:

1. If the parent/guardian has a concern about what is happening in the classroom, please make an appointment with the teacher.
2. If you have met with the teacher and are not satisfied, then make an appointment with the principal. At that time, a meeting with the teacher, student, principal and parents/guardians may be called.



3. If you are still not satisfied with the results of the meeting with the principal, then make an appointment with the pastor.
4. If still not satisfied, a written statement may be filed with the School Advisory Committee, who will decide whether to pursue the concern.

## **SERVICES**

### **SCHOOL BREAKFAST, LUNCH, AND MILK PROGRAM**

The school's breakfast, lunch, and milk programs are subsidized by the state's matching funds. All family lunch accounts need to remain current. Statements are sent home periodically to keep families informed of the status of the account. The food service director maintains these records. All payments are to be made to DMCS Hot Lunch, which is a separate account from tuition.

Free and Reduced-Price meals are available to those who qualify. Forms are available from our website or the DMCS business office.

Lunch at school is part of the total learning situation and as such, good conduct is to be expected. Table manners and other lunchroom conduct are discussed and enforced.

### **TITLE I**

The purpose of Title I is to provide assistance to state and local education agencies in meeting the needs of children in grades K-3 in reading and math.

Working with the classroom teacher, the building Title I contact teacher, or non-public school proctor identifies students and schedules them for appropriate, consistent Title I services.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

The special needs of students at Divine Mercy Catholic School are addressed through the public school district in three ways:

1. Classroom teachers see the needs of their students and consult with the Special Education teacher assigned to their building. Interventions may be suggested to meet the needs of the students. The needs may be in the areas of academic, behavior, health, or motor skills.
2. If the interventions are not successful the student may be referred for assessment by either the school or the parent/guardian. If the school initiates the assessment, written parental/guardian permission will be required. Once the assessment is complete a meeting is set up to report on the results and possibly develop an Individual Student Plan (ISP).
3. If an ISP is written it will include the goals to help improve the areas of need. The services may be direct or indirect. Indirect service is done at the non-public site. Direct service is done off site and transportation is provided by the public school.

### **RESOURCE**

DMCS maintains a resource center staffed by two full time licensed teachers. These teachers address student learning across the entire spectrum, from students needing support to those in need of a challenge. Our resource team also oversees testing and intervention both academically and behaviorally.

## **SCHOOL AGE CHILDCARE**

DMCS offers before and after school childcare programs. The morning childcare program is available from 7:00 AM to 7:40 AM. The afternoon childcare opens immediately after school until 5:30 PM. A non-refundable registration fee will be required for each family using the program. There is a daily charge for the morning and afternoon programs.

DMCS also offers school age childcare during the summer months. Students in grades K-5 are eligible to take part in this program. This program combines summer fun and reliable care for our children. Separate registration is required to participate.

Parents contract for the days that they wish to utilize the program. Staffing is based on contracted usage, so accurate scheduling is important. A sign-in and sign-out logbook will assist in monitoring the actual time usage of the program.

## **SCHOOL PATROLS** (Archdiocesan Guideline)

In accordance with M.S. 126.15, the school establishes a safety patrol program.

The safety patrol program is operated under the supervision of a faculty advisor. The organization and administration of the program can be made available to parents/guardians upon request. The faculty or staff member assigned by the principal coordinates the program on behalf of the school.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Individual and classroom pictures are taken at least once a year. Notification of this will be given well in advance of the photography session.

## **YEARBOOK**

The school publishes a yearbook each school year. Individual or classroom pictures are featured in the yearbook, as well as other photographs portraying the many activities and events that take place. Notification regarding the cost and time when the yearbook is available is sent to the parents/guardians.

## **FIELD TRIPS** (Archdiocesan Guideline #6630, Form A)

Field trips are part of the educational program. These trips are designed to support the curriculum and introduce the students to community resources. Students are expected to participate in field trips and parents/guardians will be notified of the scheduled field trips.

Insurance regulations of the Archdiocese require the use of the parent/guardian authorization form **EACH TIME** the students participate in a field trip. Failure to return the form or provide written permission might mean that the student may not go on the field trip and must stay at school. **\*\*PHONE CALLS TO OR FROM PARENT/GUARDIAN DO NOT FULFILL AUTHORIZATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION. PERMISSION MUST BE IN WRITING. This is a requirement of our insurance carrier.**

Whenever possible, field trip participants travel by bus. Should it be necessary to use transportation provided by parents in private vehicles, parents/guardians will be notified. All private vehicles used to transport students must have documented current registration and proof of insurance. All drivers must have a completed driver license check on file as well as a background check and VIRTUS training.

From time to time throughout the school year, classroom teachers may wish to take students to a location within walking distance from the school. A permission form for “Walking Field Trips” is sent home at the beginning of the school year to cover this type of field trip.

### **BACKGROUND CHECKS**

In an effort to protect and ensure a safe environment for all our students, the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis has mandated that any parent/guardian or person wishing to accompany students on a school sponsored field trip/event or volunteering within the school must complete a background check. There is also an additional background check for people who will be a driver for students on a field trip.

### **VIRTUS TRAINING**

The Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis has mandated that any parent/guardian or person wishing to accompany students on a school sponsored field trip/event or volunteering within the school must attend VIRTUS training before they can work at school with students or accompany a class on a school-sponsored field trip.

### **VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis has mandated that any parent/guardian or person wishing to accompany students on a school sponsored field trip/event or volunteering within the school must complete a Volunteer Code of Conduct.

### **GUEST SPEAKERS/ASSEMBLIES**

Throughout the year, assemblies are held with invited guests to enhance the students' learning opportunities. Guest speakers and topics discussed will be consistent with the mission, philosophy, and objectives of the school.

## **HOMework GUIDELINES**

### **HOMework** (Archdiocesan Guideline #6540)

Homework refers to tasks that the student is assigned to do on his/her own time after school hours. Homework assignments serve as a means of providing a bond of common effort between parent/guardian, child, and teacher. In order for homework to be effective, each participant--teacher, student, and parent/guardian--must understand and be committed to carrying out his/her responsibility. If any of the three (parent/guardian, teacher, student) do not fulfill their responsibilities, then the positive effects of homework will be reduced and may cause a negative impact on the student's learning.

## **HOMEWORK RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS**

1. Communicate to students and parents/guardians homework goals and expectations.
2. Set clear and concise expectations concerning assigning, returning, and evaluating homework.
3. Coordinate homework assignments with other teachers with whom students work, and who may assign homework.
4. Assign appropriate homework according to students' needs.

## **HOMEWORK RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS**

1. Know and understand the purpose of the homework assignment.
2. Responsible for copying assignments into assignment notebook (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade), understanding directions, and knowing what is required for completion of the assignment.
3. Responsible for completing and returning assignments.
4. Understand when some assignments are to be completed independently, others as a team effort.
5. Complete assignments neatly and do quality work.

## **HOMEWORK RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

1. Maintain a positive attitude towards learning and the value of homework.
2. Be aware of the homework policy and individual teacher requirements.
3. Help your child find a study area that is quiet and relatively free of distractions.
4. Be patient with your child and praise him/her for any effort made.
5. If the child has trouble understanding the directions, help her/him with explanations.  
**DO NOT DO THE HOMEWORK FOR THE CHILD.**
6. Look over the assignment to affirm completion and quality. Praise your child.
7. Support the teacher and the child. Get both sides of a story before making a judgment.

## **MAKE-UP WORK**

It is the student's obligation to obtain and complete work missed during an absence. If homework is to be picked up, please inform teachers in the morning. Teachers will have assignments ready for pick-up **after the regular school day in the school office.**

## **STUDENT CONDUCT**

In order to maintain a Christian learning environment it is necessary to have a Code of Conduct, which provides a safe and secure setting for students, faculty, and administration. Students are given clear and specific expectations as they are led toward becoming self-disciplined individuals. Students are responsible and accountable for their behavior and must accept the consequences for their actions. Please see our detailed Discipline policy in the policy section of this handbook.

## **RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM**

DMCS utilizes the *Responsive Classroom* program. This program has several components, but we are focusing on the Morning Meeting and Logical Consequences components.

Daily Morning Meetings create a safe, caring community where every child can learn. They help focus on social and emotional growth as well as honoring academics. Research has shown that children learn best when they have both academic and social-emotional skills.

Each day students will model and practice (**CARES**):

Cooperation

Assertion

Responsibility

Empathy

Self-control

Logical Consequences help students solve problems caused by their mistakes. They are not punishments, rather they help students see the effects of their actions, repair the situation, and learn to do better next time. Three basic kinds of logical consequences are:

Take a Break- If a child is losing self-control, s/he goes to a designated spot to cool off. The break is short and the child rejoins the group as soon as they have gained control.

Loss of Privilege- If a child misuses material or acts out during an activity, s/he will be told to stop using the material or doing the activity for a short time. The privilege will be restored when the child and the teacher have talked about how to prevent a similar problem in the future.

You Break It, You Fix It- If a child damages something or hurts another's feelings, s/he will try to fix the damage. This can be done with such things as writing an apology card, helping with an activity, or taking some other action beyond saying sorry.

Our goal is to help children believe in their ability to create a caring learning environment. Learning to live by the rules is an important step.

## **HEALTH/SAFETY**

### **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

A family emergency information sheet is filled out at the time of registration. Please list any health concerns or changes in health condition. If changes occur during the year, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to notify the school in writing or by phone.

### **HEALTH RECORDS**

Health records are required for each student. It is recommended that the student have a physical before entering kindergarten or first grade, and again in fourth and seventh grades. The State of Minnesota requires immunizations to be up-to-date.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

DMCS follows the requirements of the Minnesota School Immunization Law, (Minnesota Statutes Section 123.70).

All immunization dates are to be submitted to the school prior to the fall start date of the school's present school year. Students will not be admitted if immunizations are not current or appropriate paper work is not completed. Parent/guardian is responsible for providing this information in writing to the school

office, and to include additional immunizations each year as they are administered to the student by the family's physician.

### **MEDICATION DURING A SCHOOL DAY** (Minnesota Statute 126.202)

A physician's order and parent/guardian authorization form is required for the dispensation of medication (to include prescribed and over-the-counter) thereby releasing school personnel from liability should reactions result from the medication. Orders may be faxed to the school (fax #507-332-2669).

Drugs or medicines must be in the original container with a label prepared by a pharmacist. An adult must bring all medicines to the school office. Administration of the medication during school hours shall be by qualified personnel and in a manner consistent with instructions on the label.

Tylenol and similar over-the-counter medications should be considered the same as prescription medication.

### **HEALTH SCREENING**

Annual hearing and vision examinations will be conducted for K-5 students. Sixth graders will be checked for vision. Students in grade 5 and 6 will be given a scoliosis examination in accordance with state recommendations. Public school personnel conduct examinations each school year.

### **WELLNESS POLICY**

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to assure a school environment that promotes and protects student's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

#### **General Statement of Policy**

- A. The school board recognizes that the nutrition education and physical education are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters student attendance and education.
- B. The school environment should promote and protect students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by encouraging healthy eating and physical activity.
- C. The school encourages the involvement of students, parents, teachers, food service staff, and other interested persons implementing, monitoring, and reviewing school nutrition and physical activity policies.
- D. Children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn and thrive.
- E. Students in grades K-5 will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- F. Qualified food service personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the healthy and nutrition needs of students. Food service will try to accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning.

#### **Guidelines**

- A. **Nutritional Guideline Goals**

1. Food service will follow the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act effective immediately.
2. Food service will gradually incorporate more whole and fresh foods into the school menus and decrease the amount of processed foods.
3. Food service has improved the nutritional value of the lunch menus by making the following changes:
  - i. Food service will continue to use the best possible commodity items: turkey corn dogs, turkey ham, reduced fat items, light dressing and will add more whole grain items.
  - ii. Food service will reduce adding additional fats during food preparation.
  - iii. Food service will work to improve the nutritional value of snack.
4. Food service will calculate the nutritional value and calorie count of lunch menus on a quarterly basis and report information to wellness designee.
5. The school will make every effort to provide students with sufficient time to eat lunch.

**B. Physical Activity Guideline Goals**

1. Keep Physical Education classes in regular school year and explore the option of adding more Physical Education Options.
2. Whenever possible, the school will provide daily recess that encourages physical activities.

**C. Nutritional Education and Promotion Goals**

1. The school will encourage all students to make age appropriate, healthy selections of foods and beverages, including those sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal program.
2. School will discourage the use of foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior (unless this practice is allowed by a student's individual educational plan or behavior intervention plan and will not withhold food or beverage as punishment.
3. School programs should ensure that students in K-6 grades receive nutritional education that provides the knowledge they need to adopt healthy lifestyles. Instructional staff will be encouraged to integrate nutritional themes into daily lessons when appropriate.
4. School will promote hand washing before eating lunch or snacks.
5. Efforts will be made to reduce pop and carbonated beverages sold on school premises.

**D. Conditions Governing Vending Machines**

The school is committed to assisting students to make healthy beverage choices through the implementation of vending machine contract. The school will only offer water and sports drinks in the school gym. All other vending machines are located in the staff lounge. Product mix and hours of operation shall be determined mutually with the building principal.

**E. Communication with Parents**

1. The school recognizes that parents and guardians have a primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and wellbeing.
2. The school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
3. The school will make available information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities and will support parent efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.

4. Classroom celebrations and snacks should encourage healthy food and beverage choices

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

- A. After approval by the school board, the wellness policy will be implemented.
- B. The principal will ensure compliance with the wellness policy and report to the school board on a yearly basis.

## **REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT**

The staff members of the school are legally required to follow the requirements of Minnesota law pertaining to reporting child neglect and/or abuse, which may be summarized as follows:

Staff members are required to report a suspected case of child abuse/neglect to the local law enforcement agency or social service agency. This must be done if they know of or have reason to believe there is abuse or neglect presently or has been within the past three years. A written report must be filed within 72 hours of the verbal report.

**Neglect** is defined as failure to provide food, clothing, shelter or medical care and prenatal exposure to controlled substance.

**Abuse** can be physical or sexual abuse, or emotional maltreatment.

## **SCHOOL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

### **EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Divine Mercy Catholic School has periodic emergency lock downs, fire, and tornado drills during the school year. Plans for these drills are posted in classrooms and on file in the office.

### **EMERGENCY DISMISSAL PROCEDURE**

An emergency dismissal will be used when a situation arises that can create an unsafe and disorderly environment for the students.

When an emergency situation exists, no students will be dismissed until an announcement is made over the Public Address system by the principal.

In the absence of the principal, the office personnel will decide if an emergency exists and will make an announcement.

All teachers will be held accountable for his/her students during an emergency situation. All teachers will be present until students in his/her class have been put safely on a bus, all riders have rides home, and all walkers are safely on their way home.



# **TRANSPORTATION**

## **ROLE OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The local public school district handles bus arrangements. Bus transportation is a privilege as well. The students must conduct themselves properly and respect the rights of others. The school bus driver is the authority on the bus and has been directed to maintain order to insure the safety of passengers. Therefore, parents/guardians and students need to support the rules and guidelines regarding the safe transportation of students from the home to the school, etc. Parents/guardians whose children do not follow the bus rules will be notified as to the appropriate behavior of the child. Teachers are not responsible for student behavior on the bus. Each family receives information during the first month of school. If you have any questions or concerns, please refer to the information your child brings home from school or call the Faribault Transportation Company at (507) 334-5121.

## **INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING FOR BUS SAFETY**

Instruction/review in bus and pedestrian safety is required each year. Instruction/review materials appropriate to grade levels are provided by the Faribault Transportation Company.

## **MISCONDUCT ON THE BUS**

Denial to ride the bus may be given for misconduct on the bus. Parents/guardians are notified when such action is necessary.

## **RESTRICTION: BUS STUDENTS ONLY**

Contact Faribault Transportation to obtain information on riding the bus. Students are eligible to ride the bus if their home or daycare is one mile from school. Students are to go home on their assigned bus and get off at their assigned stops.

## **SCHOOL PATROL**

For the safety of our students, fifth grade volunteers are trained to assist students, before and after school, crossing busy intersections near the school. All pedestrians are required to go to the corner and cross with the patrol where school patrols are present.

## **DROPPING OFF/PICKING UP STUDENTS (MAIN BUILDING ONLY)**

### **DROP OFF:**

No students will be allowed to be dropped off or picked up in the front of the building before or after school. All students should enter the building on the south side of the building (entrances on 1<sup>st</sup> St. SW). For your convenience, there is a drop off lane for easy pull up and drop off. Students may also walk up using the crosswalks with patrols.

### **PICK UP:**

The pick-up lane is the same as the morning drop off lane. It enters the playground on 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. SW and pulls up to the south side of the school on 1<sup>st</sup> St. SW. Students riding the bus or walking will be dismissed from the South doors and the bus will be picking up on the corner of the BA lot.

## **STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS**

There are several state and federal programs that non-public students may participate in on an equal basis with public school children. These programs are administrated through the local public school district.

Divine Mercy Catholic School receives state and federal entitlements allocated on a per pupil basis.

### **STATE PROGRAMS INCLUDE:**

**Education Aids for Non-public School Children** - provides textbook and related individualized instructional materials, health services, and secondary guidance and counseling.

**Transportation** - Minnesota public school districts must provide "equal transportation" within the district boundaries. The public school shall have sole discretion, control, and management of scheduling, routes, bus stop locations, and discipline.

**School Lunch Program** - State funds are matched with federal funds to assist families who qualify for free or reduced lunch, as well as providing kindergarten students with at least one serving of milk each school day.

**State Income Tax Deductions** - Taxpayers who itemize deductions may deduct up to \$650 per dependent in grades K-6 and \$1,000 per dependent in grades 7 -12 for books, tuition, and transportation costs. This amount may vary from year to year. Please refer to your State Income Tax Manual's directions.

### **FEDERAL PROGRAMS INCLUDE:**

**Special Education** - Districts shall identify students and make available special education to all who are disabled, regardless of whether they attend a non-public school. The district must provide assessment, periodic observation, review of progress and establish an IEP (Individual Education Plan), which generally involves tutoring by a special education teacher.

**Title I** - This program provides supplementary instruction in math, reading, and language arts to students who have been identified as "at risk." Computer-aided instruction may be an acceptable alternative to direct services.

**Title IV** - Safe and Drug-Free Schools - Nonpublic schools receive monies, on a per-pupil entitlement basis, for programs which address drug and safety issues.

**Title VI** - Block Grant - Non-public schools receive monies, on a per pupil basis, to be used for technology-related reform programs, professional development, and other student-directed improvement programs and materials identified in the school's improvement plan.

# **PARENT/TEACHER ORGANIZATION**

## *DMCS PTO Mission Statement*

*To promote the welfare of the children at DMCS by providing the means to finance programs and activities above and beyond the normal curriculum. To provide an important link between Home & School in line with Christian principles and to recognize staff and volunteers.*

Divine Mercy Catholic School has a parent group, the Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO), which is responsible for the following activities: parent/ guardian education, socials, special programming and fund-raising. It is the Parent/Teacher Organization's responsibility to support the principal, teachers, and overall school program.

The Parent/Teacher Organization meets monthly. This is a casual setting and a time for parents/guardians to socialize and work on future projects of the school. All parents/guardians of students enrolled in Divine Mercy Catholic School are automatically members of this group and are welcome and encouraged to attend the meetings. The Parent/Teacher Organization dues aid in providing educational programs throughout the year for the students and families.

## **Business and Student Policies**

**Section Number: 3200**

**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: June 1991*

*Policy Revised: April 1998*

*Policy Revised: May 2010*

*Policy Revised: June 2013*

*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

### **TUITION POLICY FOR DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

*It is our intention and hope that all children will receive a Catholic Religious Education. It is our hope that no one should be denied entrance into our classes because of financial need. To implement this, the Divine Mercy School Advisory Council has approved the following policies related to Tuition:*

- A. **Tuition and Fees.** The Divine Mercy Finance Committee will recommend annual rates for tuition and fees to the School Advisory Council for their approval in conjunction with the annual budget development. The tuition and, fees must be established yearly by January 31<sup>st</sup>
- B. **Tuition**
  - 1) Full tuition assigned for the year must be paid for each student, subject to financial aid awards.
  - 2) Divine Mercy Catholic School cannot assume tuition and/or fees.
- C. **Tuition (In Parish vs. Out of Parish).** There is only one scale for both in and out of parish.
- D. **Registration Fee.** Each family will pay the required fees at the time of registration. This is a non-refundable fee utilized for student curriculum costs.
- E. **Discounts.** The school may offer discounts on tuition for payment in full. All discounts will be determined in accordance with the budget process and the establishment of tuition rates for the upcoming school year. The discounts will be recommended by the Finance Committee and approved by the School Advisory Council. The discounts may vary based on the method of payment (cash/check vs. credit card).
- F. See **Policy 3200.1** for Tuition Collection
- G. See **Policy 3200.2** for Financial Assistance
- H. See **Policy 3200.3** for Tuition Break

**Section Number: 3200.1**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: August 1995*  
*Policy Revised: April 1998*  
*Policy Revised: May 2010*  
*Policy Revised: June 2013*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>TUITION COLLECTION</b>
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Purpose:

*To provide the Divine Mercy Catholic School system with a means of collecting outstanding tuition amounts owed it under the terms of the contract.*

Policy:

A. **Tuition Committee.** DMCS will maintain a Tuition Committee.

- 1) Membership. The Committee will be comprised of 5 members. 2 members of the Tuition Committee will be liaisons from the DMCS Finance Committee. Additional members include the Principal, DMCS Office Manager and Lead Steward of Administration.
- 2) Reporting. The Principal and DMCS Office Manager will provide monthly updates to the Tuition Committee on all tuition accounts. This includes past due accounts and current year accounts.
- 3) The Tuition Committee will determine appropriate action for the Principal and/or DMCS Office Manager to take relative to delinquent or problematic accounts.
- 4) The Tuition Committee will report to the DMCS Finance Committee.

B. **Tuition Collection.** All families are required to enroll in the tuition management program at Divine Mercy Catholic School. Divine Mercy Catholic School will utilize the following methods of collecting tuition:

- 1) Payment in full by July 1<sup>st</sup> for the upcoming school year. The school may offer discounts for payment in full as described in Section 3200.
- 2) Automatic Payment Plan. Families who chose not to pay in full are required to utilize an Automatic Payment Plan via a pre-determined tuition management company for payment of their tuition. Tuition payment options will be available to the family via the Automatic Payment Plan with the requirement that the tuition is paid in full by June 30<sup>th</sup> of that current school year.
- 3) All families must have their payment plan for the upcoming school year in place PRIOR to the start of the school year or their child will not be able to enroll for that school year.

C. **Alternative Payment Plans.** If a family requests an alternative payment plan from the methods of collecting tuition identified in #3 above, the Principal must submit the

requested alternative payment plan to the DMCS Tuition Committee for their review and approval.

- D. **Late payments.** If the tuition management company contacts the Principal and/or school regarding a family with late payments, the Principal will bring this information to the DMCS Tuition Committee for determination of appropriate action.
- E. **Deviation from payment plans.** During the course of the school year, if a family requests a deviation from their specified payment plan (i.e. missing a payment in December and adding a last payment in May), the Principal must submit the requested deviation to the DMCS Tuition Committee for their review and approval.
- F. **Collection Agency.** The DMCS Tuition Committee will review all past due accounts and make a determination which accounts will be forwarded to a collection agency for repayment. Families, which have been forwarded to a collection agency, will not be allowed to remain at DMCS.
- G. **Families remaining in DMCS system.** The DMCS Tuition Committee will review all past due accounts on a monthly basis. In the event that a family has continually not paid their required tuition payments and has not contacted the Principal to determine a solution, the DMCS Tuition Committee will evaluate whether that family will be allowed to remain in the DMCS system.
- H. **In Kind Tuition Payments.** Under certain circumstances, DMCS may accept in-kind tuition payments. These payments may be allowed under the following circumstances:
  - 1) The expense and/or service is currently included in the operating budget
  - 2) Determination that the value of the service is comparable in the market.
  - 3) The tuition account remains current throughout the course of the year.Any requests for in-kind tuition payments must be submitted by the Principal to the DMCS Tuition Committee for their review and approval.

**Section Number: 3200.2**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: April 1998*

*Policy Revised: May 2010*

*Policy Revised June 2013*

*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

### **A. Amount of Financial Assistance Available.**

In conjunction with the development of the budget process for the upcoming school year, a budget will be created for financial aid. This may include the following sources:

- 1) Financial aid from Divine Mercy Catholic Church in an amount to be determined and designated by the parish.
- 2) Financial aid from the Archdiocese/Catholic Community Foundation in an amount to be determined and designated by the Archdiocese.
- 3) Financial aid from other sources (ie. Council of Catholic Women, St. Lawrence/St. Anna Society) in amounts to be determined and designated by those sources.
- 4) Financial aid from special fundraisers within the school (i.e. Catholic Education Fund Drive, etc.). These amounts may not be earned and distributed within the same school year and/or fiscal year.

### **B. Process for Requesting Financial Assistance**

If a family is financially unable to pay for tuition, they must request a TADS packet from the DMCS Business Office. These will be available in the DMCS Business Office no later than February 1<sup>st</sup> of the prior school year. The required forms must be completed and submitted to TADS no later than March 1<sup>st</sup> of the prior school year.

### **C. Financial Aid Committee**

- 1) There shall be a Financial Aid Committee that determines the financial aid allocations to be distributed.
- 2) The Financial Aid Committee will consist of the Principal, DMCS Office Manager and one (1) member of the DMCS Finance Committee.

### **D. Process for Allocation of Financial Assistance**

Based on the submitted information, TADS will recommend an allocation amount of aid provided amongst the families who have provided their information. This aid is distributed by the Financial Aid Committee as follows:

- 1) The Principal and Finance Committee determine the total financial aid budget as referred to above from the various sources for the upcoming school year.
- 2) The Financial Aid Committee may retain no more than 10% of the total financial aid budget for special circumstances and/or families, which enroll in the school at a later date.
- 3) The Financial Aid Committee allocates the remaining 90% of the financial aid budget based on each family's need as defined in the TADS report.
- 4) Letters to families specifying the amount of the award must be issued no later than May 1st<sup>t</sup> of the prior school year. Letters must also be sent to families who requested aid but did not qualify.

**E. Process for Supplemental Allocation of Financial Assistance**

The Financial Aid Committee will allocate the remaining financial assistance as necessary throughout the course of the school year. Letters to families specifying the amount of the award and the source (i.e. parish, etc.) will then be provided.



**Section Number: 3200.3**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: June 2013*  
*Policy Revised:*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

**PARENT PAID POSITIONS**

- A. Definition of Parent Paid Positions. A Parent Paid Position is defined as a position in the school as approved as part of the school budget wherein a parent is hired and they are paid by a credit to their tuition for the year.
- B. Announcement of Available Parent Paid Positions.
- 1) Upon approval of the school budget for the upcoming year and approval of the respective parent paid positions, a notice will be put in the school newsletter requesting applications for Parent Paid Positions.
  - 2) The notice will include the positions available.
  - 3) The notice will include the preference for awarding Parent Paid Positions.
- C. Application for Parent Paid Positions. The following information shall be requested from the interested parent:
- 1) Name, Address, Phone, etc.
  - 2) Position Requested
  - 3) Days/Hours Available
  - 4) Did the parent submit a request for financial aid via TADS? (Y/N).
- D. Preference for awarding Parent Paid Positions shall be as follows:
- 1) Families that have completed the financial aid process through TADS.
  - 2) Families that have a demonstrated track record in a parent paid position.
  - 3) All other families.
- E. Awarding Parent Paid Positions.
- 1) As part of the process of allocating financial aid for the upcoming year, the Financial Aid Committee will review interested applicants based on financial need for the Parent Paid Positions.
  - 2) In the event that the Parent Paid Positions are not filled based on families meeting criteria 4(a) or 4(b), a follow up announcement will be issued in the school newsletter.
- F. Requirements.
- 1) All individuals in Parent Paid positions must meet the Volunteer requirements as outlined by the Archdiocese.
  - 2) The Divine Mercy Human Resources Department will issue a job description and offer letter for the position.

**Section Number: 3200.5**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: April 2003*  
*Policy Revised: May 2010*  
*Policy Revised: June 2013*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

#### **TUITION REDUCTION INCENTIVE PLAN (“TRIP”)**

The Scrip program at DMCS operates on a plan year running from May 15th through May 14th. During the plan year, DMCS maintains a database of all participating families and tracks earned profits from their scrip purchases throughout the year.

As an incentive to participate in the Scrip program, DMCS offers a **Tuition Reduction Incentive Plan (“TRIP”)**. A family is eligible for 70% of their respective scrip profits to go to a tuition credit for the following school year

DMCS also offers TRIP to Bethlehem Academy families that participate in the scrip program. All scrip profits generated by Bethlehem Academy families are eligible for a 70% tuition credit for the following school year.

**Section Number: 4105**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted:* April 2003  
*Policy Revised:* May 2010  
*Policy Revised:* June 2013  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

**GRIEVANCE POLICY / CONCILIATION PROCEDURE**

**Policy:**

The following local-conciliation procedure is established as policy to address a complaint, dispute or disagreement of any adult (parent, teacher or principal).

**Stage 1: Initial Consultation**

If at all possible, complaints, disputes or disagreements should be resolved on a person-to-person level. If this cannot be accomplished, the following steps should be taken by the person seeking relief:

1. Contact the respondent's immediate supervisor. If there is no relief, then
2. Discuss the problem with the next level of administration. If no relief, then
3. Request in writing to the school principal to begin local conciliation.

**Example A:**

1. Parent to teacher. If no resolution
2. Parent to principal. If no resolution
3. Parent to canonical principal. If no resolution
4. Parent requests in writing to begin local conciliation

**Example B:**

1. Teacher/school staff person to principal. If no resolution
2. School staff person to canonical principal. If no resolution
3. School staff person requests in writing to begin local conciliation
4. Any complaints to the school board concerning personnel or curriculum should be referred to the principal for resolution.

**Stage II: Local Conciliation**

1. The request to begin the next stage of the local conciliation procedure must be made in writing to the school principal by the person seeking relief within 10 working days after conferring with the canonical administrator.
2. A local conciliation team will be formed and made up of three persons; one designated by the canonical administrator; one designated by the respondent; and one designated by the person seeking resolution.
3. The local conciliation committee will meet in a time period not to exceed 15 working days of being formed to receive evidence and make recommendations. The committee shall have the discretion to determine whether evidence shall be written, oral or both.
4. At the conclusion of the meeting, and upon due consideration (discussion, thought, prayer), the committee will write a summary of the meeting and make its recommendations in writing to the principal. The principal, in turn, will determine whether parish and/ or school policies have been altered or amended. The recommendations will then be forwarded to all concerned parties and will be kept confidentially in the DMCS Business Office.

5. The local conciliation procedure should be completed within 25 working days. It is the responsibility of the person seeking relief and the respondent to follow the recommendations of the local conciliation committee.

### Stage III: Local Procedure moves to the Archdiocesan Process

If the complaint, dispute or disagreement is not resolved to the satisfaction of either party, a referral to Archdiocesan Due Process may be made. Nothing contained herein shall obligate either party to consent to conciliation or arbitration under the Archdiocesan Due Process procedure.

A copy of the Archdiocesan Due Process policy may be obtained from the principal.

**Section Number: 5100**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*Policy Revised:*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>DRUGS AND ALCOHOL</b>
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**POLICY:** IT THE POLICY OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL TO PROVIDE A DRUG AND ALCOHOL FREE ENVIRONMENT FOR OUR STUDENTS AND STAFF MEMBERS.

**PROVISIONS:**

A student found on school premises or at a school-related function using, being in possession of or under the influence of alcohol or any illegal chemical, will be immediately suspended from Divine Mercy Catholic School. Parents will be called and a conference will be held with the Administrator and a counselor and/or one of the priests.

An assessment of chemical use will be made either by the school counselor or the drug counselor sponsored by Rice County. A recommendation will be given to the Administration regarding the need for assessment and treatment.

If treatment is recommended, further attendance at Divine Mercy Catholic School will depend upon involvement in and successfully completing a program. If the student or the family of the student refuses to honor the recommendation, attendance at Divine Mercy Catholic School will be terminated.

If formal treatment is not recommended, the student will be expected to meet with the school counselor every two weeks for six weeks or at the discretion of the counselor, to discuss involvement with chemicals.

If a second offense regarding chemical dependency occurs, the student will be dismissed from Divine Mercy Catholic School for a minimum of one grading period. In order to return to Divine Mercy Catholic School, that student must successfully complete the following:

1. An assessment of his/her chemical use.
2. A treatment program, if found chemically dependent.
3. An approved educational chemical dependency program, if not found chemically dependent.
4. One successful grading term at another institution, i.e. exhibit freedom from chemicals, positive academic performance and a positive record of behavior.

After successfully completing the above, the student may petition the Administration to re-enter Divine Mercy Catholic School.

Any student found selling or "pushing" chemicals during the school day or on school premises or at any school-related function will be immediately expelled.

**Section Number: 5125**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*Policy Revised: May 2014*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>CLASS SIZE</b>
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**POLICY:** IT IS THE POLICY OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL TO MAINTAIN A CLASS SIZE ACCEPTABLE NUMBER AS DICTATED BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN, FINANCES, AND BUILDING FACILITIES.

**PROVISIONS:**

It is believed by the Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council that student/teacher ratio is an important aspect of an effective program. Therefore, the Divine Mercy Catholic School administration will make every effort to keep class sizes to an acceptable number as dictated by number of children, finances, and building facilities.

1. Class size for kindergarten shall not exceed 25.
2. It is recommended that:
  - A. Class sizes for grades 1 - 6 not exceed 27 students. The administration has the option of reviewing each class size individually and will put in writing to the Divine Mercy School Advisory Committee the reason for deviating from the recommended class size of 27.
  - B. If a class has over 25 students, has students with special needs, IEPs or behavioral issues the DMCS principal will coordinate for additional staff support to assist the teacher based upon needs and staffing availability.
  - C. Every effort will be made to devise a plan to accept all enrollees.

**Section Number: 5150**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*Policy Revised:*

*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## **ENROLLMENT - PRIORITIZATION**

**POLICY:** IT IS THE POLICY OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL TO UTILIZE THE FOLLOWING PRIORITIZATION FOR DETERMINING THE ORDER FOR WHICH DMCS REGISTERS FAMILIES IN THE CASE THAT THERE ARE MORE REGISTRATIONS THAN POSITIONS.

### **PROVISIONS:**

The following prioritization will be used for determining the order for which DMCS registers families in the case that there are more registrations than positions.

Priority #1 All families and employees who currently have children attending DMCS and are committed to continue sending their children to DMCS.

Priority #2 All parish families and employees who will make a commitment to continue sending their child to DMCS after kindergarten.

Priority #3 all non-parish families who will make a commitment to continue sending their child to DMCS after kindergarten.

Priority #4 All other parish families.

Priority #5 All other families.

### **Waiting Lists**

Waiting lists will be established when grades are filled. The decision to open another classroom would be made at a later date by the Divine Mercy School advisory Committee taking into consideration the grade, staffing and the effect on sibling enrollment. The decision to open another section must be fiscally supportable

**Section Number: 5175**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*Policy Revised: May 2014*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## **FUNDRAISING**

**POLICY:** IT IS THE POLICY OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL TO REQUIRE ALL FUND-RAISING EFFORTS HAVE PRIOR APPROVAL BY THE DIVINE MERECY SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

**PROVISIONS:**

All fund-raising efforts require prior approval by the DMCS Advisory Committee. This process eliminates scheduling conflicts and insures compliance with the school's mission statement and philosophy. Archdiocesan and legal regulations should be considered when planning fundraising programs/events. The procedure for approval at DMCS is: a) request through Principal, b) Principal accepts request and forwards or refuses proposal adoption, d) board accepts proposal.



**Section Number: 5200**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*Policy Revised:*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

**HARASSMENT PHYSICAL ABUSE HARASSMENT POLICY**

**POLICY:** IT IS THE POLICY OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL TO PROVIDE A LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT THAT IS SAFE AND RESPECTFUL OF ALL PERSONS. THEREFORE, NO STUDENT OR EMPLOYEE SHALL BE SUBJECTED TO HARASSMENT OF ANY TYPE. THIS BEHAVIOR COMPROMISES THE SAFE ENVIRONMENT OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

**PROVISIONS:**

1. Prohibited Behavior

1.1 State law defines sexual harassment as including, but not limited to, the following behavior:

1. Verbal harassment (e.g. epithets, derogatory remarks or slurs, sexual comments, jokes or stories, etc.).
2. Physical harassment (e.g. grabbing or touching, gestures, unwelcome or sexually motivated physical contact, request or pressure for sexual activity, etc.).
3. Visual forms of harassment (e.g. sexually explicit notes, letters, cartoons, drawings or graffiti, etc.).
4. Requests for sexual favors or unwelcome sexual advances (etc.).

1.2 State law defines physical abuse as including, but not limited to, the subjection of a child to physical or mental injury, or threatened injury, inflicted by a person responsible for the care of the child. It is a physical abuse violation when the injury is other than by accidental means and when the conduct produces or could reasonably be expected to produce injuries including mental and emotional distress.

2. Procedures

2.1 Any person who alleges harassment by a staff member or student in the school may complain directly to his or her immediate supervisor, a teacher, principal or pastor. Filing of a grievance or otherwise reporting harassment will not reflect upon the individual's status nor will it affect future employment, grades or work assignments.

2.2 A timely and documented investigation of the alleged harassment will be conducted by an administrator (principal).

In the case where the alleged harasser is paid personnel or a volunteer, consideration will be given to suspending the service of the volunteer or the paid personnel (in the latter case, with pay) while the investigation is conducted for harassment. If a psychological assessment is part of the investigation, the cost of the assessment may be borne by the school.

2.3 Corrective action shall be taken in each situation.

2.4 A copy of the detailed investigation report documenting interviews, conclusions and recommendations will be placed in the school harassment file.

- 2.5 Complainant and alleged harasser and parents (if applicable) will be advised the outcome of the investigation in writing. If the outcome is unsatisfactory to either party, the DMCS local conciliation procedure may be engaged.
- 2.6 The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with the school's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.
- 2.7 In all cases of harassment, retaliation against a complainant for making harassment complaint is prohibited.

### 3. Consequences

- 3.1 A substantiated charge against a staff member or volunteer of Divine Mercy Catholic School shall subject the staff member to disciplinary action, up to and including the possibility of discharge.

A substantiated charge against a student of Divine Mercy Catholic School shall subject the student to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion, consistent with the student discipline code.

### 4. Mandated Reporting to Civil Officials

The Law of the State of Minnesota requires that certain categories of persons are to report to civil authorities if they know or have reason to believe or reasonable cause to believe that a minor is being abused. Divine Mercy Catholic School directs its paid personnel who are mandated reporters to comply with the requirements of the Law. It should be noted especially that concerns should be reported within twenty-four hours to civil authorities. Furthermore, Divine Mercy Catholic School directs all of its paid employees and volunteers, even those who are not mandated reporters, to report knowledge or belief of the abuse of children, as such knowledge or belief is obtained while engaging in the ministries of Divine Mercy Catholic School, to Rice County Law Enforcement (Investigative Department, 334-0633), or to Rice County Social Services (332-6214 or 332-6115). If circumstances warrant it, a report can be made to the Minnesota Department of Human Rights (1-800-657-3704).

### 5. Implementation of Policy

- 5.1 Anyone who represents the Divine Mercy Catholic School, including parents, is required to read and understand the Harassment Policy and certify compliance with signature. Review of the policy is required annually for volunteers and school personnel.
- 5.2 School personnel are responsible for enforcement of the policy, updating information and keeping signatures on file.

**Section Number: 5225**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*December 2011*  
*Policy Revised: November 2011*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## **KINDERGARTEN ADMISSIONS**

**POLICY:** IT IS THE POLICY OF THE DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL THAT ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN BE ALLOWED FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE FIVE YEARS OLD AS OF SEPTEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> OF THE YEAR IN WHICH THEY ARE ENROLLING.

### **PROVISIONS:**

#### **ENTRANCE TO KINDERGARTEN**

1. Divine Mercy Catholic School requires children who enter kindergarten to be five years old by September 1 of the year in which they will enroll.
2. Divine Mercy Catholic School does not allow early enrollment into kindergarten.

**Section Number: 5300**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*Policy Revised:*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

**POLICY:** IT IS THE POLICY OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL TO COMPLY WITH STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION, TO THE END THAT NO PERSON(S) SHALL BE DENIED OR EXCLUDED FROM ENROLLMENT OR PARTICIPATION IN ANY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY OPERATED BY THE SCHOOL ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL OR ETHNIC ORIGIN, GENDER, AGE, MARITAL STATUS, STATUS WITH REGARD TO PUBLIC ASSISTANCE, OR DISABILITY.

### **PROVISIONS:**

Divine Mercy Catholic School complies with state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination, to the end that no person(s) shall be denied or excluded from enrollment or participation in any educational program or activity operated by the school on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, gender, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or disability.

**Section Number: 5315**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: November 2011*  
*Policy Revised: May 2014*

<b>ATTENDANCE POLICY</b>
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**POLICY:** IN ORDER TO BE A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT AT DMCS, ATTENDANCE IS NECESSARY. IT IS A DMCS SCHOOL POLICY THAT IT WILL ADHERE TO THE STATE OF MINNESOTA REGULATIONS CONCERNING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE. ALL WORK MISSED BY STUDENTS WHO WERE ABSENT MUST BE MADE UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER RETURNING TO SCHOOL ABSENCES AFFECT A STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE. EXCESSIVE ABSENCES OFTEN RESULT IN POOR WORK.

**PROVISIONS:**

Excused absences or tardies require parental communication with the school on or before the day of absence or tardiness. If such communication takes place, the following shall be considered an **Excused absence:**

1. Ill—flu, cold/coughs, headache, strep throat, etc.
2. Family emergency/special events—accident, funeral, wedding.
3. Childhood diseases.
4. Doctor/dental appointments that cannot be made outside of school hours.
5. Suspension from school.
6. Family vacations outside of the normally scheduled breaks. The parents must notify the school two weeks prior to the vacation.
7. Taking child home at the request of the school.

\*\*\* A doctor's note is required for absences due to illness that exceed four (4) consecutive days or seven (7) cumulative days in a quarter.

**Unexcused absences or tardies:**

1. No parental communication with the school.
2. Sleeping in.
3. 4 tardies equals one unexcused absence.

**Procedures:**

1. Any student not in school will be counted absent. Please call 334-7706 by 8:10 AM every day that your child will not be in school. If the school does not receive a call from a parent/guardian

when a child is absent, the parent/guardian will be called to confirm the reason for the absence. If there is no contact with a parent/guardian, the child will be considered unexcused.

2. Any student that arrives after the bell rings or leaves school early will be counted tardy. A parent's note or doctor's note must be turned into the office in order for a "tardy" or "left early" to be excused.
3. A letter of concern will be sent to the parents of any student who has 3 unexcused absences or 8 tardies, or excused absences that are negatively affecting the students' classroom achievement.  
**Four (4) unexcused tardies will be considered one (1) unexcused absence.**
4. A letter will be sent to parents requesting a meeting with the principal and teacher to discuss their student's attendance when the student has 5 unexcused absences or 10 tardies or excused absences that are negatively affecting the student's classroom achievement.
5. Since unexcused absence, tardies or excused absences can negatively affect the student's classroom achievement, should they continue after a meeting with the staff and parent/guardian, if appropriate, an educational neglect report would be filed with the Rice County Social Service.

The number of days that school is in session is set up by the local school district. DMCS follows the attendance calendar of the local school district, including dismissal for emergencies (i.e. dismissal because of inclement weather). The principal may make some adjustments to the school calendar. Official announcements for school closing will be made over KDHL (email, website?). Be sure that students know where they should go (i.e. home, neighbor's home, etc.) in the event of an early dismissal.

**Section Number: 5325**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*Policy Revised: June 2017*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

**SCHOOL ATTIRE**

**POLICY:** IT IS A POLICY OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL THAT STUDENTS WILL DRESS IN DRESS CODE APPROPRIATE ATTIRE.

**PROVISIONS:**

**Boys' pants** — Black, or Khaki/Tan full-length dress pants or walking shorts of knee length. No low rider or hip hugger, side cargo pockets, side zippers, decals, beads, carpenter loop, rivets, decorative stitching, or corduroy.

**Girls' pants/skirt/jumper** — Black, or Khaki/Tan full-length dress pants, capris, skorts, skirt, walking shorts, or jumper of knee length. No low rider or hip hugger, side cargo pockets, side zippers, decals, beads, carpenter loop, rivets, decorative stitching, or corduroy.

**Shirts** — Solid color red, white, or black shirt with or without DMCS logo. Must have collar and be **long enough to be tucked in**. Turtleneck or mock turtleneck shirts may be worn. No tee shirts.

**School sweatshirt** — embroidered with DMCS logo in Red or Black. Must be worn over a collared shirt. **NO** hooded sweatshirts.

**Sweater or sweater vest** — solid red, white, or black with or without DMCS embroidered logo. **No** belts, fringe, or hoods.

**Belts** (optional) — must be solid color (black, brown, or tan). No distracting buckles, embellishments, or fringe.

**Footwear** — **White, red, black, or tan solid colored** socks, tights or leggings must be worn at all times. Shoes must be clean, safe, and in good condition. Shoes must have backs or straps.

**\*\*\*NAVY** colored pants, skirts, skorts, jumpers, shirts, sweaters, sweatshirts, socks and belts allowed for the **FINAL** year in **2017-18**. This color is being phased out of our dress code.

**SEE BACK for more information...**

**Accessories** — No accessories that are distracting or a safety concern are allowed (ie hat, bandanas, jewelry, or make-up)

**Personal Hygiene** — Students are always to be neat, clean, and presentable in appearance and hygiene. **No** distracting hairstyles (i.e., mohawks or non-traditional colored hair).

**Dress Down Day Attire**

Throughout the year different days will be designated as Care and Share Days or Reward Dress Down Days. On these days students may wear attire of their choice provided it falls within the following guidelines:

- \* No sleeveless shirts or low necklines
- \* No offensive words, phrases, or pictures
- \* No bare midriffs
- \* Knee length shorts, skirts, and dresses only
- \* All clothes must be clean, neat, and in good repair
- \* The same sock and shoe criteria applies

“DMCS students are expected to wear clothing of appropriate size, fit, clean, and in good repair. Parental discretion is encouraged at all times. All parents NEED to support this policy. Parents will be contacted when their child(ren) are in violation of the above school attire code.”



**Section Number: 5350**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*Policy Revised:*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## **SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY**

**POLICY:** IT IS THE POLICY OF DMCS TO MAINTAIN A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, WHICH PROVIDES A SAFE, SECURE SETTING FOR STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND ADMINISTRATORS. IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A CHRISTIAN LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IT IS NECESSARY TO HAVE A CODE OF CONDUCT, WHICH PROVIDES A SAFE AND SECURE SETTING FOR STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND ADMINISTRATION.

### **PROVISIONS:**

In order to maintain a Christian learning environment it is necessary to have a Code of Conduct, which provides a safe and secure setting for students, faculty, and administration. Students are given clear and specific expectations as they are led toward becoming self-disciplined individuals. Students are responsible and accountable for their behavior and must accept the consequences for their actions.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

At Divine Mercy Catholic School (DMCS), a Christian faith community, each person must be willing to accept responsibility for creating an atmosphere for teaching and learning. It is the right of every individual to develop his/her potential as a person. It is likewise the responsibility of every individual to respect this right in others.

The teaching and example of Jesus is a model for our behavior. It becomes necessary, however, to establish some rules to allow faculty and students to live and work together effectively and to promote the well being of every individual.

An environment conducive to learning must be maintained to insure equal educational opportunity for all students. All teachers will expect each student to show respect for teachers, other students and themselves, and all school property and materials.

Disciplinary action will be taken when irresponsible behavior occurs that disrupts good order or violates the rights of others. This action will be conducted in a way that is respectful of the person and due process. Fairness and justice will be the guidelines.

We the staff at DMCS believe:

- a. All children can behave appropriately.
- b. Students choose and are held responsible for choices.
- c. Rules and consequences apply to all students.
- d. Consequences need to come from school and be administered as soon as possible.
- e. Teachers need support of administration and parents.
- f. Rules need to be in the best interest of the students.

## **MASS GUIDELINES**

Throughout the year students will be attending Mass and Prayer Services. Please review the following guidelines with your child(ren):

- Participate - prayers and singing
- Genuflect entering and leaving pew
- Keep hands to self
- Move kneelers quietly, when necessary
- Keep "Bumper" off pew (kneel straight up)
- Keep eyes to front of Church
- Fold hands to and from Communion
- Handshake Sign of Peace only to those around you
- Handshake Sign of Peace done reverently
- Not a time to visit with anyone but God and Jesus

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

A student may be removed from class, suspended, excluded, or expelled from school for:

1. Willful conduct, which disrupts the rights of other students to an education.
2. Willful conduct, which endangers the student or other students, or the property of the school.
3. Willful violation of any School Policy and school rules.
4. Possession, use, and/or transmission (including being under the influence) of any unauthorized drug or substance.
5. Possession, use, and/or transmission of tobacco in any form.
6. Possession, use, and/or transmission of a weapon/s or any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon/s. Weapon means a knife, firearm, or an item that looks like a firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, in any working or nonworking condition.
7. Violations against persons such as verbal threats, harassment, and fighting.
8. Violations of school procedures, rules or acts that disrupt the educational process, including disobedience, disruptive and disrespectful behavior, and defiance of authority.
9. The habitual use of profanity or obscene language.
10. Willful conduct that injures other individuals.

Disciplinary action or consequences for these offenses may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Student conference
2. Parent contact
3. Parent conference
4. In-school monitoring
5. Individual discipline plan
6. Referral to the District for testing, or to community service or outside agency services
7. Detention
8. Removal from class
9. In-school suspension
10. Suspension from school
11. Expulsion or exclusion from school

When determining an appropriate action, the administrator will consider the extent of the disruption of the safety of an individual or a group, or the disruption of the learning environment in the school.

## **DISCIPLINE EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES**

The following behavior expectations are designed to promote a safe and orderly environment, which will demonstrate respect for one another. DMCS desires to promote a positive approach to discipline. Early intervention in attempting to improve a student's behavior is strongly encouraged.

### **Hallway Line Basics**

Walk in a straight line  
Use whisper voices No talking  
Eyes facing forward  
Keep hands to self, Hands to our sides

### **Restrooms**

Wait your turn  
Use whisper voices  
Flush  
Paper toweling is put in wastebasket  
Wash your hands with soap and water

### **Language**

Use appropriate language  
No obscenities  
Respect each other

### **Lunchroom**

Fill in spaces  
Talk socially and quietly at tables  
Walk  
No throwing food  
Raise hand to be excused  
Clean everything off the table (napkins, etc.)

### **Consequences**

1. Verbal warning
2. Remark in C.A.R.E. folder
3. Notify the homeroom teacher

## **PLAYGROUND RULES**

1. Respect the playground supervisors.
2. Rough play is not acceptable on our playground. Examples of rough play are fighting, tackling, spitting, pushing and unnecessary shoving of others.
3. Rocks and other hazardous materials may not be tossed or kicked around the playground.
4. Use playground equipment away from the school windows.
5. Students may not leave the playground without checking in with the playground supervisor.
6. All playground equipment is to be returned to the classroom.
7. In the winter, no throwing of snow, snowballs, ice chunks, ice balls on school grounds. An offense carries a fine.
8. There is no gum or candy allowed on the playground.
9. If a student emergency occurs, a student should be sent to obtain help. The playground supervisor should stay on the playground for supervision purposes at all times.
10. Students will line up near the church. Lines will be dismissed as the students settle down and quiet down for re-entry.

## **PLAYGROUND CONSEQUENCES**

1. Verbal warning
2. Time out - sit on guardrail for 5 minutes.
3. Time out for the rest of the recess (the student will be done playing and on the guard rail or against the building). At the end of recess, the playground supervisor will take the student/s to the homeroom and describe the incident to the homeroom teacher. Teacher will talk to each student separately.
4. Homeroom teacher rules will take effect.
5. Remark in the CARE folder. The playground supervisor or the classroom teacher will contact the principal when offenses are serious.

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

**Detention** is when a student serves a period of time outside the regular school day at the request of a specific teacher to remedy a problem. May be served before or after school.

**In-School Suspension** prohibits a student from attending classes and interacting with other students for a definite period of time. Parents shall be notified if a student is put on in-school suspension.

**Suspension** is the short-term exclusion of the student from school during which time the school is relieved of the custody of the child. All suspensions are temporary in nature and include readmission plans as part of the action. Parents shall be notified of all charges leading to suspension.

**Expulsion** is an action taken to prohibit an enrolled student from further attendance at school.

**Exclusion** is an action taken to prevent enrollment or re-enrollment of a student.

## **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION/EXCLUSION**

The following action will take place when a student's action results in suspension, expulsion, or exclusion from DMCS:

1. The student will be notified of the violation,
2. The parents/guardians of the student will be notified of the violation,
3. A conference will be scheduled with the parents/guardians, student, teacher, and principal, if necessary to discuss the incident.

To insure that the rights of the individual are taken into consideration, a Local - Conciliation Procedure has been established as a policy (see policy 4119.d) to address a complaint, dispute, or disagreement of any adult, teacher, or administrator.

## **HANDICAPPED STUDENTS**

Special provisions may need to be made for handicapped students. The disciplinary guidelines or other actions will be written in the student's Individualized Education Plan.

**Section Number: 5360**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: December 2011*  
*Policy Revised:*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

**DMCS POLICY AGAINST BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING**

**POLICY:** DMCS IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING A SAFE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR ITS STUDENTS AND TEACHERS. DMCS ACKNOWLEDGES THAT IT CANNOT MONITOR ALL ACTIVITIES AND ELIMINATE ALL INCIDENTS OF BULLYING BETWEEN STUDENTS, PARTICULARLY WHEN ONE OR MORE OF THE STUDENTS INVOLVED IS NOT ON SCHOOL PROPERTY OR UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL. THE PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY IS TO ASSIST DMCS IN ITS GOAL OF PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO ACTS OF BULLYING, INTIMIDATION, HARASSMENT, VIOLENCE AND SIMILAR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR.

**PROVISIONS:**

- A. DMCS expressly prohibits bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, on school property or at school-related functions. DMCS also expressly prohibits cyber-bullying, regardless of whether such acts are committed on or off school property or with or without the use of school resources. These prohibitions apply to students who directly engage in an act of bullying and to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. This policy also applies to any student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school or the safety or welfare of the students, other students, volunteers or employees.
- B. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- C. A person who observes and act of bullying or becomes aware of such an act must report it to a teacher or school personnel member. Anyone with any bullying related concerns may also contact the principal.
- D. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of a bullying event, is prohibited.
- E. False accusations or reports of bullying are prohibited.
- F. A student who violates this policy shall be subject to discipline for that act in accordance with DMCS' school policies and procedures. DMCS may take into account all factors it determines to be relevant. Depending on the circumstances, such might include:
  - 1. The age, development, and maturity levels of the parties involved;
  - 2. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, nature and severity of the behavior;
  - 3. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior;
  - 4. The relationship between the parties involved; and
  - 5. The context in which the alleged conduct occurred.
- G. Depending on the level and severity of the offences, discipline may range from positive behavioral interventions to more serious consequences, including suspension or expulsion. Consequences for

other individuals engaging in particular acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from school property and events or termination of services or contracts.

- H. Please see pages 13-16 on Student Conduct. Bullying will be handled as a serious matter. Consequences for bullying could result in removal from Divine Mercy Catholic School.

## **DEFINITIONS**

- A. For purposes of this policy, “bullying” means deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions that is intended to cause or that does cause fear, distress, intimidation, or harm. Bullying may be repeated behavior or a pattern of behavior, and it may involve an imbalance of power. Bullying can take different forms, including but not limited to:
1. Verbal conduct (e.g., using threatening or intimidating language, teasing or name calling);
  2. Social (e.g., spreading rumors, ostracizing or socially excluding others, breaking up friendships);
  3. Physical (e.g., physical acts and gestures, including hitting, kicking, tripping, theft, damaging property, threatening or intimidating behavior); and
  4. Cyber-bullying.
- B. For purposes of this policy, “Cyber-bullying” means the use of any electronic means to harass, intimidate or bully, whether on or off school grounds. “Cyber-bullying” is a form of bullying and provisions of this policy that refer to “bullying” are intended to refer to cyber-bullying as well.
- C. For the purposes of this policy, “on school property or at school related functions; means all DMCS school buildings, school grounds, school property or property adjacent to school grounds, school busses, school contracted vehicles, the area of entrance or departure from school grounds, premises, or school related trips, functions, activities, or events. While prohibiting bullying at these locations and events, the school does not represent that it will provide supervision or assume liability at these locations and events.

**Section Number: 5375**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*Policy Revised:*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY</b>
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**POLICY:** IT IS THE POLICY OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL TO PROVIDE LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT THAT IS SAFE AND RESPECTFUL OF ALL PERSONS. THEREFORE, NO STUDENT OR EMPLOYEE SHALL BE SUBJECTED TO HARASSMENT OF ANY TYPE. THIS BEHAVIOR COMPROMISES THE SAFE ENVIRONMENT OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.

**PROVISIONS:**

Definition: Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication. Sexual violence is a physical act of aggression that includes a sexual act or sexual purpose.

Statement of Policy: Divine Mercy Catholic School shall maintain a learning environment and working environment that is free from sexual harassment and sexual violence.

It shall be in violation of this policy for any student or employee to harass a student or an employee through conduct or communication of a sexual nature.

It shall be in violation of this policy for any student or employee to be sexually violent to a student or employee. Divine Mercy Catholic School will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, student or employee who sexually harasses or is sexually violent to a student or employee of the school.

Procedure: Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment or sexual violence by a student or an employee of Divine Mercy Catholic School should report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school official (principal or Canonical Administrator).

A timely and proper investigation of student-to-student sexual harassment complaints is essential. A detailed investigation report documenting interviews, conclusions and recommendations will be placed in a school sexual harassment file. This file will be kept confidentially in the DMCS business office.

Complainant, alleged harasser and parents will be advised of the outcome of the investigation, including actions to be taken, in writing. The harasser will be warned in writing that he/she must not retaliate against the victim. The complainant will be invited to report reoccurrences or retaliation. The appropriate school official will further monitor the situation.

**Section Number: 5400**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*Policy Revised:*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

**STUDENT RECORDS**

**POLICY:** IT IS THE POLICY OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL TO COLLECT AND MAINTAIN THE RECORDS OF STUDENTS WHILE THEY ATTEND SCHOOL.

**PROVISIONS:**

The school shall collect and maintain the records of students while they attend the school. To transfer records, parents/guardians are asked to inform the school office as soon as possible when transferring a child to another school. If the tuition and other financial obligations of the student have been paid in full, school records will be sent directly to the new school upon request of that school. Parent/guardian must sign a release authorizing the transfer of records to the student's new school. Parent/guardian and student understand, acknowledge, and agree that in the event the tuition or other financial obligations have not been paid in full Divine Mercy Catholic School shall have the right to withhold all records, including grades and academic transcript.

No one except appropriate school personnel, parents/guardians of minors, and students who have reached legal age, shall have access to individual pupil records without either a subpoena or appropriate written authorization either from the parent/guardian (in the case of a minor student), or from the adult student or former student.

Parents/guardians may ask to review the contents of any records or data collected regarding their child. A written request to view student records must be made to the principal. Records or data may mean any or all the following:

1. Identifying data
2. Academic work completed
3. Level of achievement (grades, standardized achievement test scores)
4. Attendance data
5. Scores on standardized intelligence
6. Health data
7. Family background information
8. Teacher or counselor ratings and observations
9. Verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns (may be maintained separately)

In accordance with state and federal laws, parents/guardians are entitled to see their child(ren)'s records. An appointment with the principal should be made in advance. The principal is to respond to the request in a reasonable amount of time.



**Section Number: 5425**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*Policy Revised:*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>TOBACCO FREE POLICY</b>
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**POLICY:** IT IS THE POLICY OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL TO PROVIDE A TOBACCO FREE ENVIRONMENT.

**PROVISIONS:**

In accordance with the Minnesota Clean Air Act, all school related activities controlled by Consolidated Catholic Board of Education are tobacco free. The Divine Mercy Catholic School Board must approve any exceptions.

**Section Number: 5500**  
**Section Title: Student**

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*Policy Revised:*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## **WEAPONS POLICY**

**POLICY:** IT IS THE POLICY OF DMCS TO MAINTAIN A LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, WHICH PROVIDES A SAFE, SECURE SETTING FOR STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND ADMINISTRATORS.

### **PROVISIONS:**

It is the policy of DMCS to maintain a learning environment, which provides a safe, secure setting for students, faculty, and administrators. The school will take such action, as it deems necessary and appropriate to provide such an environment, including the immediate suspension or expulsion of students enrolled in the school under certain circumstances.

All weapons are prohibited within the school environment and school zones, except for educational purposes as authorized in advance by the building principal or designee.

A weapon includes any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon, such as a knife, firearm, explosive, or any device that can be used to threaten, intimidate, or cause bodily harm or fear of such.

Any student attending DMCS found possessing, or using a weapon while on DMCS grounds or within 300 feet of the school grounds, or any school sponsored activity, will face immediate suspension by the principal.

The principal in such instances will:

1. confiscate the weapon,
2. immediately notify the parents/guardians of their child's suspension,
3. schedule a conference with the parents/guardians and student to discuss the incident,
4. make a referral to the police or other law enforcement agency.

Before the suspension is lifted, the parents/guardians and student will be required to:

1. Agree to being placed on six months' probation at DMCS (If summer vacation intervenes, the probationary period will extend to the next school year),
2. Agree to immediate expulsion and/or exclusion from DMCS if a second offense against the school's weapon policy should occur.

When determining appropriate action, the administrator will consider the extent of the disruption of the safety of an individual or a group or the disruption of the learning environment in the school.

A student who finds a weapon on the way to school or in the building and takes the weapon immediately to the principal's office shall not be considered in possession of a weapon.