



**DIVINE MERCY**  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

# Policy Manual

Divine Mercy Catholic School  
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**Section Number: 3050**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: February 1998*

*Policy Revised: March 2018*

*Next Update Due: 2021-2022*

*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>FINANCIAL STATEMENT REPORTING</b>
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The Divine Mercy Catholic Church Parish Pastoral Council and the Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council require the Parish Accountant to provide monthly financial statements to the DMCC Finance Committee. This reporting allows for the timely review of the status of the budget, as well as accountability and adjustments of the budget as needed. This policy includes the following provisions:

- A. Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School will utilize, as applicable, the Archdiocesan standard chart of accounts for schools for accurate accounting of the budget.
- B. This policy includes financial statement reporting for the following areas within Divine Mercy Catholic School:
  - 1. School
  - 2. Scrip Program
  - 3. Hot Lunch Program
- C. Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School will use accrual-based accounting for all financial statement reporting.
- D. The following information will be presented to the DMCC Finance Committee on a monthly basis for the three areas defined in #2 above:
  - 1. Profit and Loss Statement including:
    - a. Current Month
    - b. Year to Date
    - c. Budget Comparison
  - 2. Balance Sheet

A monthly update will be provided to the Divine Mercy School Advisory Council.

**Section Number: 3100**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: July 1991*  
*Policy Revised: March 2018*  
*Next Update Due: 2021-2022*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>ANNUAL BUDGET DEVELOPMENT</b>
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A. The following is the timeline for the budget cycle for the following fiscal year:

October	Ministries of the Parish and school submit department budgets. This includes enrollment for the school. This projected budget should incorporate the annual subsidy amount as between Divine Mercy School and Church.
November	Projected for Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School will be provided to the Finance Committee at the November meeting. The proposed budget will be reviewed, discussed and commented on at the November Finance Committee meeting.
December	The finance committee will make changes to the budget as necessary.

January	The projected budget must be approved by the Finance Committee at the January meeting(s).
February	Tuition and other fees are announced to the families. The goal is to have the number available prior to Catholic Schools Week.
April	Based on enrollment numbers, classes and faculty, the budget is finalized at the April Finance Committee meeting and inputted into the accounting system prior to the start of the fiscal year on July 1 <sup>st</sup> .
May	The final budget must be approved by the Finance Committee at the May meeting(s).

**Section Number: 3150**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: April 1994*  
*Policy Revised: March 2018*  
*Next Update Due: 2021-2022*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## **SALARY GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS**

### **Religious Sisters**

The salary and benefits for religious Sisters are to be consistent with salaries and benefits for lay employees. The Pastor and Principal will consult with the Archdiocese regarding specific requirements on the method of payment for religious sisters, if applicable.

### **Lay Teachers**

In conjunction with the development of the budget, the Principal and Finance Committee must utilize a compensation protocol for the lay teachers.

Salaries and benefits for lay teachers in Catholic schools shall be determined by the Finance Committee in collaboration with the Divine Mercy Catholic School Administration. Compensation protocol must give recognition to years of service and additional credits or degrees.

### **Substitute Teachers**

In conjunction with the approval of the budget, the Principal must propose to the Finance Committee the rate of payment for substitute teachers (daily and long-term). The Finance Committee must approve the rate for substitute teachers annually in conjunction with the development of the budget.

**Section Number: 3160**

**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: June 1991*

*Policy Revised: April 2018*

*Next Update Due: 2021-2022*

*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION</b>
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Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School do NOT participate in the Minnesota Unemployment Compensation Program.

**Section Number: 3200**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: June 1991*  
*Policy Revised: June 2013*  
*Next Update Due: 2018-2019*  
*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: May 2014*  
*Next Update Due: 2018-2019*  
*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 3 members. One member of the Tuition Committee will be the liaison from the DMCS Finance Committee. Additional members include the Principal and DMCS Office Manager.
  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 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 2014*  
*Next Update Due: 2018-2019*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE</b>
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**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 and the DMCS Office Manager.

**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 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: Jan. 2013*

*Policy Revised: June 2013*

*Next Update Due: 2018-2019*

*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>PARENT PAID POSITIONS</b>
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- 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: 3200.4**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: February 1995*

*Policy Revised: February 2013*

*Next Update Due: 2018-2019*

*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>TUITION BREAK</b>
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IT IS THE POLICY OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL TO OFFER TUITION BENEFITS TO THE EMPLOYEES OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SCHOOL AND BETHLEHEM ACADEMY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING PROVISIONS:

**Employee Definitions.**

- a) Full time employee. A full-time employee must work a minimum of 25 hours per week for a minimum of 9 months of the year to be eligible for this discount.
- b) Part time employee. A part time employee must work a minimum of 20 hours per week and a maximum of 24 hours per week for a minimum of 9 months of the year to be eligible for this discount.

**Employees of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School are eligible to receive a tuition credit at DMCS as follows:**

- a) Tuition Credit. The following details the tuition credit(s) available for each child enrolled in DMCS grades preschool through 6<sup>th</sup> grade:
  1. First year of employment:
    - ✓ Full time employees will receive ½ off tuition.
    - ✓ Part time employees will receive ¼ off tuition.
  2. Second year of employment and thereafter:
    - ✓ Full time employees will receive free tuition.
    - ✓ Part time employees will receive ½ off tuition.

**Employees of Bethlehem Academy are eligible to receive a tuition credit at DMCS as follows:**

- b) Tuition Credit. The following details the tuition credit(s) available for each child enrolled in DMCS grades preschool through 6<sup>th</sup> grade:
  1. First year of employment:
    - ✓ Full time employees will receive ¼ off tuition.
    - ✓ Part time employees will receive 1/8 off tuition.
  2. Second year of employment and thereafter:
    - ✓ Full time employees will receive ½ off tuition.
    - ✓ Part time employees will receive ¼ off tuition.

**Additional Requirements (all Employees):**

- a) Employees are responsible for payment of all required fees as may be charged by DMCS.

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

*Policy Adopted: April 2003*  
*Policy Revised: April 2018*  
*Next Update Due: 2020-2021*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

#### **TUITION REDUCTION INCENTIVE PLAN**

The Scrip program at DMCS operates on a plan year running from May 1st through April 30th. 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. Preschool families who accrue scrip will be banked for kindergarten tuition.

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. However, for a family having only a senior, they will be eligible to accrue scrip profits through December of their student’s senior year.

If a family withdraws from DMCA, or BA, they automatically forfeit their scrip profit.

**Section Number: 3300**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: June 1991*

*Policy Revised: June 2013*

*Next Update Due: 2018-2019*

*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## **FUNDRAISING POLICY**

The Divine Mercy School Advisory Council must approve all fundraising at DMCS.

Fundraising proposals from students, staff or organizations (example: Home and School Association) will be submitted to the School Advisory Council in writing ninety (90) days prior to the planned event. The proposals should include the following information:

- 1) Proposed event.
- 2) Date, time, location.
- 3) Purpose of fundraising.
- 4) Who is participating in the fundraising
- 5) Proposed use of fundraising dollars.
- 6) Budget for the fundraiser, including income, expenses and proposed profit.

Fundraising is to be done according to the Guidelines for Parish and School Fundraising established by the Stewardship Committee and approved by the Parish Pastoral Council and School Advisory Council.

**Section Number: 3350**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: February 1994*  
*Policy Revised: April 2018*  
*Next Update Due: 2020-2021*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## ACCEPTANCE OF FINANCIAL GIFTS

The Divine Mercy School Advisory Council adopts the following policy to direct the administration of the school in the acceptance of gifts. Gifts will be evaluated upon the ability to meet the following criteria:

- Supportive of the mission and philosophy of Divine Mercy Catholic School;
- Appropriate to the mission and purpose of the local program;
- Appropriate to the development level of the students affected;
- Creates no unanticipated or excessive financial burden for the school/program (construction, wiring, additional equipment, etc.); all expenses related to the gift are to be borne by the donor;
- Complies with all tax rules and regulations concerning gifts;
- Requires limited maintenance;
- Compatible with other equipment/property currently owned by the school/program;
- Carries no unreasonable restrictions by the donor;
- Becomes the property of the recipient;
- Creates no unanticipated additional staff requirements;

The Principal will provide a recommendation on the use of the gifts to the Finance Committee and School Advisory Council. The Finance Committee will provide the information to the School Advisory Council on the monies received and any specific requests of the donor. The Finance Committee will also provide any budget considerations to the School Advisory Council. The School Advisory Council will make the final recommendations on the usage on any undesignated monies.



**Section Number: 3400**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: February 1996*

*Policy Revised: June 2013*

*Next Update Due: 2019-2020*

*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>DMCS HOT LUNCH PROGRAM</b>
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**A. Administrative**

- 1) The Principal has direction over the Hot Lunch Program and is responsible for hiring a Food Service Director.
- 2) The Food Service Director:
  - a) Is authorized as the school Food Authority (SFA) and required forms as related to the school lunch program.
  - b) Will determine eligibility of free and reduced meal applications.
- 3) The Hot Lunch Department is obligated to:
  - a) Supply the necessary food service personnel at their expense.
  - b) Be a self-sufficient program.
  - c) Pay all minor repairs. All major repairs (over \$500) are to be presented to the Finance Committee.
- 4) The school unit (DMCS) being served agrees to:
  - a) Supervise the students in the lunchroom and handle discipline problems.
  - b) Provide duplicating materials required, through its office.
  - c) Make necessary major repairs and handle purchasing equipment.
  - d) Maintain an effective insect and rodent control program in all schools that store foods during the summer.
  - e) Have custodian sign for shipment of USDA commodities if they arrive when the Head Cook is not present; the shipping statement will be checked and cases of food counted before signing any receipt. During holidays, Spring Break, Summer Vacation, etc., it is the duty of the custodian(s) to check all freezers and walk-in coolers to make sure they are operating properly.

**B. Food Service Operation**

Our Hot Lunch Program is audited by the Federal Department of Agriculture and by the State of Minnesota office. The policies below are a direct result of the requirements of the Federal Government and the state regarding hot lunch programs.

- 1) All five components required for a Type A lunch MUST be given to each student. K-4 is offered 5 components from the food groups. Grades 5-6 participate in Offer vs. Serve Program, which offers 5 components. Students are allowed to choose 4 of the 5. We are NOT allowed to collect and/or reuse foods not eaten by students.
- 2) The accountability of the meal and milk counts is computerized.
- 3) All adults MUST pay for their lunch according to current regulations.

- 4) The Hot Lunch Program sends each family a computerized statement weekly. Any account that falls below negative ten dollars is notified that their child (ren) are to bring a bag lunch until account is current. Bag lunches are offered to the students in the event that they don't bring one.
- 5) All kitchen workers must wear hairnets and plastic gloves. The lunch staff should inspect lunchroom tables and chairs ensuring proper cleaning and sanitation.
- 6) All usage of the lunch facilities must be either:
  - a) By a licensed caterer OR
  - b) Under the direct supervision of the DMCS hot lunch personnel.

**Section Number: 3500**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted:* June 2013  
*Policy Revised:* May 2018  
*Next Update Due:* 2020-2021  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>RELATED ORGANIZATIONS</b>
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Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School may establish related organizations that operate under the umbrella of the Church and School. An example of a related organization is the Divine Mercy Catholic School Parent/Teacher organization. These organizations operate as a ministry of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School and they are responsible to the leadership of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School.

- A. The business aspects related organization shall operate under the following guidelines:
  - 1. Submit an annual budget to the Finance Committee and School Advisory Council for approval in conjunction with the prescribed budget timelines.
  - 2. Operate under the fiscal year from July 1st through June 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - 3. Follow the Fundraising Policy (#3300) for approval on all fundraisers.
  - 4. Follow all internal control guidelines for the receipt of income and the payment of expenses. All income and expenses are tracked through Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School business office.
  - 5. The Divine Mercy business may establish a savings account on behalf of the related organization. This is subject to the approval and direction of the Finance Committee.
  
- B. Excess funding at the end of the fiscal year.
  - 1. The funds generated by the related organization are for the benefit of Divine Mercy Catholic Church (if a parish organization) or Divine Mercy Catholic School (if a school organization).
  - 2. The related organization may carry a balance of \$500 forward at the end of the fiscal year to the upcoming fiscal year. Any excess balance will be transferred to Divine Mercy Catholic Church (for a parish organization) or Divine Mercy Catholic School's (for a school organization) operating budget.
  - 3. The related organization may request a carryover of specific funds which are being raised across multiple years to be reserved for a specific purpose. This request should be made to the finance committee for approval.

**Section Number: 3600**  
**Section Title: Business**

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

<b>PARTNER IN MINISTRY (VOLUNTEER) REQUIREMENTS FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH</b>
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Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School must follow all Archdiocese requirements for partners in ministry (volunteers) in our church and school. This is for all partners in ministry (volunteers) that are in contact with our children and youth. This includes accompanying a class or group on a school or parish sponsored field trip or event.

These requirements are to be completed before they can volunteer.

As of the date of this policy, these requirements include:

- A. VIRTUS Training.
- B. Background Check (see policy #3600.1).
- C. Code of Conduct. The code of conduct is to be signed annually by all partners in ministry (volunteers).

**Section Number: 3600.01**  
**Section Title: Business**

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*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

**PARTNER IN MINISTRY (VOLUNTEER) BACKGROUND CHECK PROCEDURES**

Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School follow the Archdiocese requirements for partners in ministry (volunteers) in our church and school. One of these requirements is to conduct a background check on all individuals.

**A. Background Check Requirements:**

- 1) The comprehensive background check includes background check records, sex offender database, driving record and credit check.
- 2) All individuals must complete the background check records and sex offender database to volunteer in our school or church.
- 3) A credit check must be conducted on any individuals routinely handling money.
- 4) A driver's check must be conducted on any individual driving for church or school business. This includes all field trip and/or youth outings.
- 5) Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School may, at any time, request from a volunteer permission to run an updated background check. This may follow guidelines from the Archdiocese on updating background checks or be done at the discretion of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School.

**B. Background Check Process.**

- 1) Staff persons are responsible for making sure an area's partners in ministry (volunteers) have been informed and received the necessary forms for completing background checks.
- 2) Background check paperwork will be submitted to the Administrative Assistant at Divine Mercy Catholic Church for processing. This must include the purpose(s) or ministries for which the individual wishes to volunteer.
- 3) The Administrative Assistant will process the paperwork and submit the completed background check to the Lead Steward of Administration for review.
- 4) If no concerns or flags surface on the background check, the Lead Steward of Administration will sign off on it. The Administrative Assistant will then finalize processing of the volunteer's file. The Administrative Assistant will notify the requesting department that the individual's background check has been cleared.
- 5) If there are any concerns or flags on the background check, the Lead Steward of Administration will take it to committee for discussion. The committee will include the Pastor, Associate Pastor, Principal, and Lead Steward of Administration. If the

volunteer is in the area of youth ministry, the Lead Steward of Faith Formation will also be present.

- a. The committee will review the concerns and/or flags.
- b. The committee will take into consideration the following information:
  - i. What is the offense?
  - ii. Is it a misdemeanor or a felony?
  - iii. Is the offense against children or vulnerable adults?
  - iv. The age of the offense? How long ago did it occur?
  - v. Is there a pattern of recurrence?
  - vi. Is the person on probation?
- c. The committee may do one of the following:
  - i. Based on the factors, approve the background check. All committee members will sign off on it.
  - ii. Based on the factors, send a letter to the individual outlining the offenses on their background check and ask for additional information or circumstances relating to the offense before it can be considered further. This information should be provided by the individual in writing so that there is documentation for the individual's file. This information would then be reviewed by the committee, which may or may not approve the individual for volunteering. The pastor may also request a meeting with the individual.
  - iii. Disapprove the background check and the individual from volunteering. A letter will then be sent to the individual explaining that information. The Administrative Assistant will inform the requesting department that the individual is not cleared to volunteer.
  - iv. The committee may request other information or documentation or input regarding the circumstances as it might deem helpful.

**Section Number: 3700**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: June 2013*  
*Policy Revised: January 2018*  
*Next Update Due: 2020-2021*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>PROCEDURES TO UPDATE POLICIES</b>
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Divine Mercy Catholic School will utilize the following procedures to update policies at the school:

- A. Annual Review of Policies. The DMCS Policy Committee will conduct an annual review of policies to ensure accuracy and relevance.
- B. Updating existing policies or adding new policies.
  - 1. All requests to review existing policies or requests to add a new policy will be submitted to the DMCS Policy Committee for review.
  - 2. The DMCS Policy Committee will submit the revised or proposed policy to the Divine Mercy School Advisory Council.
  - 3. The Divine Mercy School Advisory Council will conduct a first reading of the policy at a monthly meeting.
  - 4. Following the first reading, the proposed policy will be distributed for review and comment as follows:
    - a. Principal will distribute to DMCS faculty and staff.
    - b. The Divine Mercy School Advisory Council Secretary will include in the SAC minutes the reading of the policies and the proposed policy will be attached to the minutes. The SAC minutes will be posted on the DMCS web site for parent review and comment.
    - c. All staff and/or parent input and/or comment must be submitted in writing to the SAC Chair or the Principal.
  - 5. The School Advisory Council will review any input and comments at the next SAC meeting. Based on the review and comment, the School Advisory Council may:
    - a. Conduct a second reading of the policy at the monthly meeting.
    - b. Send the policy back to the Policy Committee for further review. It would then be submitted for a first reading again.
  - 6. Following the approval of the policies by the School Advisory Council at the second reading, the Principal will be responsible for distribution of the final policies and implementation.
- C. Policy Manuals will be available to constituents as follows:
  - 1. A copy will be incorporated into all employee policy binders.
  - 2. A copy will be available for parents on the website.
  - 3. A copy will be available for parents and staff in the DMCS Business Office.

**Section Number: 3800**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: June 2013*  
*Policy Revised: May 2015*  
*Next Update Due: 2019-2020*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AND PROTOCOL (“SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY”)**

All Users who are Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School employees or clergy working directly for the parish and/or school who utilize social media for or on behalf of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School must abide by this Social Media Policy, the Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School Acceptable Use and Responsibility Policy for Electronic Communications, the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis Code of Pastoral Conduct, the Code of Canon Law and complementary legislation, applicable state and federal law, and the policies of the social media sites they use.

Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School will engage in social media in a thoughtful way, focusing its efforts in specific, Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School – approved virtual venues.

Social media presences will be established for Divine Mercy Catholic Church School departments and initiatives following the “Site Establishment” policy below.

Certain Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School employees and/or volunteers will be identified as site administrators for these Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School – approved social media venues.

Recognizing that certain Users currently maintain their own personal social media presences (including Facebook pages, Twitter accounts and blogs), it is recommended that such Users abide by this Social Media Policy, the Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School Acceptable Use Policy, the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis Code of Pastoral Conduct, the Code of Canon Law and complementary legislation, applicable state and federal law, and the policies of the social media sites they use.

Social media site visitors are also asked to abide by the Site Code of Conduct (below) and will be blocked from use of the site if they violate the Code more than once.

### **Site Code of Conduct:**

All posts and comments should be marked by Christian charity and respect for the truth. They should be on topic and presume the good will of other posters. Discussion should take place primarily from a faith perspective. No ads please.



### **Site Establishment:**

Websites or social networking profile pages are the centerpiece of any social media activity. These guidelines apply to a profile, or fan, page on Facebook, a Twitter account, a video sharing site account, and any future sites determined for use as noted below.

1. Any site establishment for or on behalf of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School will be approved by the Principal or Pastor.
2. All Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School social media site administrators will be identified by the Principal or Pastor.
3. There should be at least 2 site administrators for each social media site, to allow rapid response and continuous monitoring of the site.
  - a. Social media site administrators must monitor a site at least daily and take prompt remedial action if the administrator notices inappropriate posts or other inappropriate interactions, including, but not limited to: bullying, harassment, vulgar language, sexual innuendos, and inappropriate personal information.
4. Do not use personal sites for Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School programs or other purposes for or on behalf of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School.

Note: Be advised that a parish or school leader or staff person's inappropriate personal posts may be seen by parish, school or archdiocesan leadership which could result in employment consequences if the comments are deemed to be in violation of the school or parish code of conduct.

### **Social Media Site Posting Guidelines**

1. Do not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School
2. Write in thoughtful language consistent with the message of the Catholic faith (no insults, slurs or obscenities)
3. Do not instigate conflict, and be the first to admit and correct a mistake
4. Reread your comments for tone and accuracy before posting

Examples of topics for acceptable and encouraged posts:

1. Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School information – blog posts, current campaigns, new initiatives, etc.
2. Upcoming Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School events
3. Links to articles believed to be of interest to the audience
4. Recent news releases
5. Anything appropriate that fans or followers would benefit from knowing

### **Social Networking with Minors**

Users must have appropriate permission from a minor's parent or guardian before contacting a minor via social media or before posting pictures, video, or other information that may identify

that minor. Do not tag minors in visual images or otherwise post minors' name in connection with visual images of those minors.

If any User knowingly communicates privately with a minor as part of his or her duties for or on behalf of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School, reasonable steps must be taken to send the minor's parent/guardian the same communication content, not necessarily via the same technology.

### **Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School's Facebook Comment Policy to be Posted on All Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School's Facebook Sites**

The purpose of this Facebook page is to provide an interactive forum where readers can gather and discuss information about the wide range of issues involving Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School.

Followers are encouraged to post questions, comments and concerns, but should remember this is a moderated online discussion hosted by Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School.

Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School appreciates healthy, constructive debate and discussion; that means we ask that comments be kept civil in tone and reflect the charity and respect that marks Christian discourse.

It is understood that comments made by visitors do not necessarily reflect the positions of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School and/or teachings of the Catholic Church. Comments will not be removed simply because they express opinions in disagreement with the teachings of the Catholic Church. However, comments that may be deleted include those that contain:

1. Vulgar language
2. Personal attacks/bullying/harassment/inflammatory remarks against a person or group
3. Links to sites that contain offensive material or attack the Catholic Church
4. Spam
5. Promotion of services, products, political organizations/agendas
6. Information that is factually incorrect
7. Content/comments off topic

Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School reserves the right to remove posts and block posters who violate this policy. The removal of posts or comments deemed inappropriate by the designated site administrator will be removed at the discretion of the site administrator.

**Section Number: 3800.1**  
**Section Title: Business**

*Policy Adopted: June 2013*

*Policy Revised: May 2015*

*Next Update Due: 2019-2020*

*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>ACCEPTABLE USE AND RESPONSIBILITY POLICY FOR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS</b>
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All information used in the course and scope of activities for or on behalf of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School is an asset of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School. Electronic information and communications require particular safeguards and impose unique responsibilities on all Users. Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School maintain a system of information security to protect our proprietary data. Integral parts of this system are the policies, standards and procedures designed for Users. All Users must adhere to these policies, standards and procedures for the complete system to remain viable.

These policies, standards and procedures apply to all Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School employees and clergy working directly for Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School who are users of technology (“Users”) for or on behalf of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School.

These policies, standards and procedures include, but are not limited to, maintaining data confidentiality, maintaining the confidentiality of data security controls and passwords, and immediately reporting any suspected or actual security violations. Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School prohibit the use or alteration of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School data and/or information technology without property authorization. All Users have an obligation to protect the confidentiality and nondisclosure of proprietary, confidential and privileged data, as well as personally identifiable information.

1. Definitions

- a. Electronic communication systems include, but are not limited to, electronic mail, telecommunications systems including telephone, voicemail, video, facsimile transmissions, stand-alone or networked computers, intranets, extranets, the Internet and any other communication systems that may be created in the future.
- b. Electronic communication devices include, but are not limited to, regular and mobile telephones (cell phones, smart phones, walkie-talkies), facsimile machines, computers, laptops, electronic notebooks, audio and video equipment, flash drives, memory sticks, media players, and any other communication devices that may be created in the future.
- c. Electronic communication materials include, but are not limited to, DVDs, CDs, laser discs, audio and video-tape, audio and visual recordings, films, microfiche, audio and

visual broadcasts, computer operating systems, software programs, electronically stored data and text files, computer applications, emails, text messages, instant messages, and all other downloaded, uploaded, retrieved, opened, saved, forwarded or otherwise accessed or stored content.

2. Electronic Communications Systems, Devices and Material and Users Covered

- a. All electronic communication systems, devices and materials located on Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School property (the Premises) or belonging to Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School.
- b. All school or parish owned electronic communication devices and materials taken from the Premises for use at home or elsewhere.
- c. All personal devices and materials brought from home and used on the Premises during regular business hours.
- d. All personal devices and materials, regardless of where they are situated, that are used in such a manner that Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School may be implicated in their use.
- e. All Users of electronic communication systems, devices and materials.

3. Ownership and Control of Communications

- a. All systems, devices and materials located on the Premises, and all work performed on them, are property of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School. These systems, devices, and materials are to be used primarily to conduct official Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School business, not personal business.
- b. The principal of Divine Mercy Catholic School or the pastor of Divine Mercy Catholic Church reserves the right to monitor, access, retrieve, read and disclose all content created, sent, received, or stored on Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School systems, devices, and materials, included connections made and sites visited to law enforcement officials or others, without prior notice.
- c. Communications conducted on personally owned during school/work hours are included.

4. Guidelines for Electronic Communications

- a. All Users of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School's communication systems and devices should use care in creating email, text, video, still images, instant, or voicemail messages or in any postings on any social networking site. Even when a message has been deleted, it may still exist on a backup system, be stored, downloaded, recorded, printed out, or may have been forwarded to someone else without its creator's knowledge. The contents of email and text messages are the same as other written documentation and cannot be considered private or confidential.

- b. Email and other electronic communications are not necessarily secure, and therefore should be treated accordingly.
- c. As with paper records, proper care should be taken in creating and retaining electronic records for future use, reference and disclosure.
- d. Mass emails or intranet/extranet/Internet postings to “All Employees,” “All Parents” and the like must be approved by the principal or pastor before they are sent.
- e. Use of personal electronic communications devices and materials during regular business hours should be kept to a minimum and limited mainly to emergencies.
- f. Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School systems, devices, and materials are not private and security cannot be guaranteed. Passwords and user IDs are intended to enhance system security; not to provide Users with personal privacy. In addition, all Users do not have an expectation of privacy.
- g. User IDs and passwords should not be disclosed to unauthorized parties. User accounts are intended to be used only by the assigned party.
- h. All information systems that create, store, transmit or otherwise publish data or information must have authentication and authorization systems, as approved or provided by Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School, in place to prevent unauthorized use, access, and modification of data and applications. Systems that transmit or publish approved information that is intended for the general public may allow unauthenticated (anonymous) access as long as such systems do not allow unauthorized posting and modification of the published information.
- i. Computer networks must be protected from unauthorized use. Both local physical access and remote access must be controlled.
- j. Information systems hardware should be secure against unauthorized physical access.
- k. Minors are prohibited from using Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School systems, devices, or materials unless appropriate permission is given.
- l. If any User knowingly communicates privately with a minor as a part of his or her duties for or on behalf of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School, reasonable steps must be taken to send the minor’s parent/guardian the same communication content, not necessarily via the same technology.
- m. All files downloaded from the Internet, all data received from outside sources, and all content downloaded from portable memory devices must be scanned with updated or current virus detection software. Immediately report any viruses, tampering, or other system breaches to the principal or pastor.
- n. It is the responsibility of Users to ensure that they save important content to a Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School approved location in accord with Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School policy.
- o. Only certain individuals, identified per Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School Social Media Policy and Protocol, may post information to social media sites or

Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School's website as an official representative of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School.

- p. If a User identifies himself or herself or has reason to be identified as a Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School employee or clergy working directly for Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School in any personal posting or distribution or communication, that User must post the following disclaimer: "The views expressed on this site are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School or the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis."

## 5. Prohibited Practices

Users of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School electronic communication systems, devices, or materials and Users of personal devices and materials on the Premises under circumstances when Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School may become implicated in the use may not:

- a. Violate any federal, state or local laws or regulations.
- b. Violate any archdiocesan codes of conduct, Archdiocesan code of ethics, Archdiocesan safe environment or other archdiocesan policies, or policies of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School, including but not limited to those that apply to communications or the use of information.
- c. Post or cause to be distributed any personally identifying information about a person without permission or review by the person or the person's parent or guardian, if the person is under age 18, unless required by the User's job duties or assigned responsibilities. Personal identify information includes, but is not limited to, images, names or screen names; telephone numbers; home or workplace addresses; email addresses, and web addresses or social networking sites or blogs.
- d. Post or distribute any communications, video, music, or pictures which a reasonable person may consider to be defamatory, discriminatory, offensive, harassing, disruptive, derogatory, or bullying.
- e. Post or distribute any communications, video, music, or pictures which are inconsistent with the faith or moral teachings of the Catholic Church.
- f. Engage in improper fraternizing or socializing.
- g. Engage in pirating or unauthorized copying, acquisition, or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, patented materials, music, video, or file or upload, download, view, or otherwise receive or transmit trade secrets, or other confidential, private, or proprietary information or other materials to which the User does not have access rights. Regarding copyrighted materials, certain exceptions are given for educational and liturgical purposes. It is the responsibility of the User to determine copyright status.

- h. Use electronic communication devices for designing, developing, distributing, or storing any works of programming or software unless required by the duties of the job or assignment.
- i. Post or send chain letters or engage in “spamming” (sending annoying, unnecessary, or unsolicited commercial messages).
- j. Record any telephone, video, or other conversation or communication without the express permission of the other participants to the conversation or communication, except where allowed by law.
- k. Arrange for the purchase or sale of any drugs, alcohol, or regulated substances and goods, or participate in Internet gambling.
- l. Upload, download, view, or otherwise receive or transmit indecent, sexually explicit, or pornographic material.
- m. Make fraudulent offers of products, items, or services originating from any Divine Mercy Catholic Church or School account.
- n. Damage, alter, disrupt, or gain unauthorized access to computers or others’ systems; e.g. use others’ passwords, trespass on others’ folders, work, or files or alter or forward email messages in a manner that misrepresents the original message or a message chain.
- o. Give unauthorized persons access to Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School systems, provide access to confidential information, or otherwise jeopardize the security of the electronic communications system (e.g. by unauthorized use of disclosure or passwords).
- p. Transmit confidential, proprietary, or sensitive information unless the transmission falls within the scope of the User’s job duties or assigned responsibilities.
- q. Introduce or install any unauthorized software, virus, malware, tracking devices or recording devices onto any system.
- r. Bypass, defeat or otherwise render inoperative any network security systems, firewalls or content filters.
- s. Allow any minor to use the Divine Mercy Catholic systems, devices, or materials without appropriate permission.
- t. Use electronic communication devices or systems to transmit any radio frequency signal that is not permitted and/or licensed by the Federal Communication Commission (“FCC”) or that would violate FCC rules or policies.
- u. Access or manipulate services, networks, or hardware without express authority.
- v. Provide information about, or lists of Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School employees, clergy or other proprietary information from the Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School database to outside parties. Certain exceptions to this prohibition may be made with written approval from the principal and/or pastor. Mailing addresses should only be provided in hardcopy (in label or other format as appropriate).

6. Consequences of Violations of Electronic Communications Policy

- a. Violations of this policy, including breaches of confidentiality or security, may result in suspension of electronic communication privileges, confiscation of any electronic communication device or materials, and disciplinary action, pursuant to Justice in Employment, up to and including termination of employment, canonical review, referral to law enforcement, and other appropriate disciplinary action.

The Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis and Divine Mercy Catholic Church and School gratefully acknowledge the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, which has made its Acceptable Use and Responsibility Policy available for reference, guidance and copying.



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

*Policy Adopted:* April 2003  
*Policy Revised:* June 2013  
*Next Update Due:* 2018-19  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>GRIEVANCE POLICY / CONCILIATION PROCEDURE</b>
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**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: June 2013*

*Next Update Due: 2018-2019*

*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

**POLICY:** IT THE POLICY OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL TO PROVIDE AND 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*  
*Next Update Due: 2019-2020*  
*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: June 2013*  
*Next Update Due: 2018-2019*  
*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*  
*Next Update Due: 2018-2019*  
*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: Jan. 2013*  
*Next Update Due: 2018-2019*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>HARASSMENT PHYSICAL ABUSE 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:**

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 executive director/canonical administrator. 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 later 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.

1.2 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, are 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*  
*Policy Revised: November 2011*  
*Next Update Due: 2019-2020*  
*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: Jan. 2013*  
*Next Update Due: 2018-2019*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY</b>
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**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*  
*Next Update Due: 2018-2019*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

**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: April 2018*  
*Next Update Due: 2020-2021*  
*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, Khaki/Tan, or uniform plaid from Donald's 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.

**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: May 2015*  
*Next Update Due: 2019-2020*  
*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, which 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 Board 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. Zero tolerance for bullying. DMCS desires to promote a positive approach to discipline. Early intervention in attempting to improve a student's behavior is strongly encouraged.

### Hallway

Walk  
Use whisper voices  
Each teacher supervises their class  
Keep hands to self

### Restrooms

Wait your turn  
Use whisper voices  
Flush  
Paper toweling is put in waste basket  
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. Parent Communication
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 guard rail 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 PRIDE folder.
6. 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.

## **STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

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

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

*Policy Adopted: December 2011*

*Policy Revised: May 2015*

*Next Update Due: 2019-2020*

*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: May 2015*  
*Next Update Due: 2019-2020*  
*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.

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

*Policy Adopted: August 2006*  
*Policy Revised: May 2015*  
*Next Update Due: 2019-2020*  
*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: May 2015*  
*Next Update Due: 2019-2020*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

## **TOBACCO FREE POLICY**

**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: May 2015*  
*Next Update Due: 2019-2020*  
*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>WEAPONS POLICY</b>
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**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.



**Section Number: 5530**  
**Section Title: Students**

*Policy Adopted: May 2006*

*Policy Revised: May 2015*

*Next Update Due: 2019-2020*

*Divine Mercy Catholic School Advisory Council*

<b>WELLNESS</b>
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**POLICY:** IT IS THE POLICY OF DIVINE MERCY CATHOLIC SCHOOL TO ENSURE A SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT THAT PROTECTS STUDENT'S HEALTH, WELL-BEING, AND ABILITY TO LEARN BY SUPPORTING HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

**PROVISIONS:**

1. General Statement of Policy
  - A. The School Board recognizes that 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-6 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 health and nutrition needs of students. Food service will try to accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning.
2. Guidelines
  - A. Nutritional Guidelines Goals
    - a. Food service will gradually incorporate more whole and fresh foods into the school menus and decrease the amount of processed foods.
    - b. Food service has improved the nutritional value of the lunch menus by making the following changes:
      1. 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 next year.
      2. Food service at this time only offers a 1 oz cookie and desserts once a week.
      3. Food service will reduce the amounts of fat added while preparing meals.
      4. Food service will work to improve the nutritional value of snacks.

- c. Food service will calculate the nutritional value and calorie count of a typical lunch on a quarterly basis and report information to the wellness designee, the school nurse.
  - d. The school will make every effort to provide students with sufficient time to eat from the time the student is seated.
- B. Physical Activity Guidelines Goals
  - a. Keep Physical Education classes in regular school year and explore the possibility of adding more Physical Education options.
  - b. Whenever possible the school will provide daily recess with adequate equipment that encourages physical activity.
- C. Nutritional Education and Promotion Goals
  - a. The school will encourage all students to age appropriate, healthy selections of foods and beverages, including those sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal program.
  - b. 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 a punishment.
  - c. School programs should ensure that students in kindergarten through sixth grade 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.
  - d. Efforts will be made to reduce pop and carbonated beverages sold on school premises.
- D. Conditions Governing Vending Machines
  - a. The School is committed to assisting students to make healthy beverage choices through the implementation of the vending machine contract. The product mix, hours of operation, equipment, and pricing specifications listed below were determined with that goal in mind.
  - b. Vending Machine Location & Hours of Operation
    - 1. Staff lounge – All times
    - 2. Gymnasium – Water & Gatorade products only. Available during after school hours.
- E. Communication with Parents
  - a. The School recognized that parents and guardians have a primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and well-being.
  - b. The School will support parent's efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
  - c. 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.
  - d. The school menu will provide nutritional information for parents and students.
  - e. The classroom snacks and celebrations should encourage healthy choices and portions.
- F. Implementation
  - a. After approval by the school board, the wellness policy will be implemented throughout the school.
  - b. The principal will ensure compliance with the wellness policy and report to the school board on a yearly basis.