

4000 SERIES

THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL TEACHER

Whoever makes himself lowly, becoming like this child, is of greatest importance in that heavenly reign. Whoever welcomes one such child for my sake welcomes me.

Matthew 18:4-5

Qualifications and Expectations For Teachers

#4000

Teachers have a special calling to personal holiness and apostolic mission. They reveal the message of Christ not only by word but also by every action of their lives.

It is important, therefore, that teachers understand that first and foremost they are catechists, regardless of their teaching assignment.

To fulfill this religious ministry, the Catholic school teacher must be a person of faith; he/she must be one who believes in God and strives to live a life of virtue in and out of school, following the example of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Church*. A Catholic school teacher cannot personally be a part of a group or organization that advocates for activities that are contrary to the moral teaching of the Catholic Church*. Except under extreme and unusual circumstances, all teachers should be practicing Roman Catholics. As such they should be active in their parishes with respect to time, talent and treasure.

All teachers in Catholic schools must be able to accept and convey both the religious and educational goals of the Catholic school and to give service in accord with the Sacred Scriptures and teachings of the Church*. They must model Christian behaviors and attitudes; display professional attitudes and a dedication to Church teaching; participate in ongoing spiritual and professional formation; use instructional strategies that are most effective in promoting learning; communicate effectively with students, parents/guardians, teachers and administrators; present content using a variety of methods that are sensitive to the individual needs of our students as well as the Archdiocesan curriculum outcomes; and maintain a classroom conducive to learning. Thus, except in extreme and unusual circumstances, teachers should be licensed by the State of Kansas. Above all, teachers in Catholic schools must understand that their primary role is to, along with parents, bring children to know and develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a love for His Church.

(*Catholic Church teachings are described in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and various documents from the Vatican and United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Also see Appendix, “Church’s Teachings on Topics of Special Concern”.)

Equal Opportunity

#4010

See policy # 1020.

HIRING

Teacher Hiring Protocol and Background Checks for Teachers Currently Employed in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas #4100

- If a teacher who is currently teaching in a Catholic school in the Archdiocese in Kansas City in Kansas seeks employment in another school in the Archdiocese, the principal of that school shall direct the teachers to make a formal application via the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools online teacher application to the new school and inform his or her current principal of the application.
- Once an application from such a teacher is received, the new principal shall call the current principal to make sure the principal is aware of the application and to check references.
- Principals shall not initiate or participate in conversations with teachers who are under contract at other Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas without first talking with the current principal, as noted above.

For all Teacher Candidates #4110

- Principals must check references as well as former employers (especially any former Archdiocesan principals) and be sure to follow all other requirements under the Archdiocesan Code of Ethical Standards, Sexual Harassment Policy, and the Abuse Prevention Policy when hiring staff. (See policy #5320, Background Checks/Child Protection)

For information on criminal background checks, contact Sandy Vielhauer at svielhauer@archkck.org or Amy Lanham at alanham@archkckcs.org.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Certification of Health

#4200

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas shall comply with State of Kansas health requirements for teachers.

Before commencement of any services subsequent to employment, any teacher employed in the Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas shall submit certification by a licensed physician verifying that the physical condition of the teacher is such as to permit full performance of all duties for which the teacher is employed. If at any time there is reasonable cause to believe that any teacher is suffering from an illness detrimental to the well-being of the school and/or health of the students, the teacher may be required to obtain a new Certification of Health. State law requires teachers to have evidence of a TB test on file.

Any required Statement of Physical Condition shall fully state any limiting condition or handicap which may impair the performance of services or which may endanger the health of any student or employee.

Faith Development

#4210

Teachers will participate in ongoing faith formation activities each semester, as made available to their schools by the Holy Family School of Faith. The purpose of these activities is, first and foremost, to assist teachers in increasing their knowledge of the Catholic faith and enhancing their own relationships with Jesus Christ so that they can be witnesses for Christ to their students, as well as others in their school communities.

As a component of this faith formation, teachers shall participate in the school-provided review of Catholic Church teachings that are described in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and various documents from the Vatican and United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, including but not limited to, Church teachings related to the dignity of life from conception to natural death, sanctity of marriage, and the beauty of chastity. Specific Church teachings related to abortion, In Vitro Fertilization, artificial insemination, sterilization, contraception, homosexual lifestyle, marriage, transgender issues, and chastity, as well as Church teachings regarding social issues such as racism, care for the poor, religious liberty, and sharing of goods shall be included in this review. (See Appendix, “Church’s Teachings on Topics of Special Concern”.)

Teaching License

#4220

Teachers in the Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas shall be licensed by the state of Kansas. Exceptions must have approval of the superintendent or associate superintendent. The responsibility for acquiring and maintaining proper licensure from the State Department of Education rests with the teacher. A copy of this license shall be kept on file in the local school office. License information is available at www.ksde.org (click Teachers and Learning).

CONTRACTS - TEACHERS

Contract – Minimum Hours

#4300

All full-time teachers shall be contracted at a minimum beginning in August and ending at the close of the academic year. In Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas, instructional time is calculated based upon hours rather than days (as allowed by State law). At the local level, additional hours may be contracted by the president/principal in order to fulfill the mission of the school. Because teachers have numerous built-in vacation times (e.g. summer, Christmas, spring; and/or Easter), teachers are expected to be present during contract times. Therefore, family trips, etc. are to be scheduled during times when school is not in session in order to provide instructional continuity for students. (See policy #5400 for Health Leave provisions.)

Contracts – Yearly Issue

#4310

- Contract forms are available online to the schools from the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools.
- In elementary schools, **the pastor/board chair (in the case of consolidated schools) and the principal must sign contracts before the contracts are offered to the teachers.**
- In secondary schools, the president must sign contracts before the contracts are offered to the teachers.
- Teachers who are being renewed must be given contracts between April 1st and May 1st. Teachers must sign contracts and return to principals within one week of receiving the contract. If no definitive written contract is completed and signed by the all parties designated on the contract, it shall be presumed that the parties will not contract for the next school year and both parties may pursue other options to fill the teaching position on the part of the school or seeking employment elsewhere on the part of the teacher. However, nothing in policy #4310 should be interpreted to preclude the parties from reaching an agreement for continued employment of the teacher after May 1st.
- Any requests for extensions shall be made in writing by teachers, and the responses to such requests shall also be made in writing.
- Copies of the contracts shall be distributed as designated on the contract.
- In the event that a teacher breaks the contract prior to the beginning of or during the academic year, the teacher will pay the school for hiring a replacement. Given the difficulty of ascertaining these additional costs, and to limit the teacher's exposure to what could be substantial damages, the teacher shall pay the liquidated damages in the amount of \$2,500 to the school as described in the contract as fair and reasonable compensation if such a breach occurs.
- Contracts are for one year only.

Evaluation of Teacher Performance

#4320

Evaluation of performance for teachers in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas shall be in compliance with the laws of Kansas. The evaluation process is determined by the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools and intended to convey the degree to which teachers meet employment expectations and to communicate the status of future employment. **Each teacher is responsible for delivery of acceptable professional service, and failure of a supervisor or a principal to comply with the technical details of the evaluation procedure does not relieve the teacher of responsibilities for full, complete and competent performance of duties.**

- Teachers employed by Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas for the

- first and second year of service shall be evaluated at least one time per semester by his/her immediate supervisor by not later than the date established by Kansas law on teacher evaluation (the 60th school day of the semester), except that any teacher who is not employed for the entire semester shall not be required to be evaluated.
- Teachers employed by Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas for the third and fourth year of service and thereafter shall be evaluated at least one time each school year by the date February 15th, established by Kansas law on teacher evaluation, for third and fourth year teachers. Teachers should receive a copy of the evaluation by April 15th no later than May 1st.
 - Copies of these evaluations shall be maintained in the teachers' personnel files at the schools where employed; Copies of evaluations also shall be provided to the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools.

Teacher Performance Evaluation and Goal Setting Procedures

#4320.1

General dates for '23-'24 (Note: if the due date falls on a weekend the due date will extend to Monday after the due date)

August	Local orientation re: evaluation process. Archdiocesan New teacher orientation re: Professional Development Committee plan and evaluation process.
Sept.	New teachers set Professional Development Goals (kept at school).
Sept./Oct.	First formal evaluation of 1 st and 2 nd year teachers. Begin evaluation process for all staff.
Nov./Jan.	Evaluation process continues.
Feb./March	Evaluation of all staff continues, 2 nd formal evaluation of 1 st and 2 nd year teachers.
March	Teachers reflection responses to current year's goals are due. principals complete evaluation forms. Formal evaluation conferences are held when necessary and appropriate. Teachers have 2 weeks to respond in writing to the formal evaluation.
April 1st	Principals shall begin to offer contracts to renewing teachers.
May 1st	Deadline for principals to offer contracts to renewing teachers, as appropriate. The offered contracts must be signed as described in policy #4310. Teachers must be notified of non-renewal by this date. Teachers have one week from the time they receive contracts to return contracts signed or unsigned with letters of resignation. Any requests for extensions shall be made in writing by teachers, and the responses to such requests shall also be made in writing.
May 8th	Teachers begin formulating goals for the next year.
May 15th	Teachers submit professional development goals for next year. Principals provide feedback as appropriate.
May 29th	Teachers submit revised goals. These are kept at the local schools.

Contract Suspension/Cancellation For Default Under Contract - Teachers**#4330**

A teacher shall be deemed to be in default under contract in the event of any serious breach of an important duty hereunder including but not limited to any of the following:

- a. Failure to be or to remain qualified under the laws of Kansas, to perform the prescribed duties of the Contract; or, failure to have a currently valid Teacher's Certificate pursuant to Kansas law.
- b. Failure or refusal to complete the Term of Employment or to perform the prescribed services hereunder for all or any part of the school year.
- c. Failure to follow the requirements of Policies and Procedures for Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas after reasonable warnings given by the school administration.
- d. Involvement in the commission of any serious crime, public scandal, or conduct substantially impairing the Teacher's professional effectiveness or the Teacher's portrayal of an example for pupil emulation, or promulgating teachings inconsistent with established Catholic teachings or adopting a way of life inconsistent with Catholic moral standards.
- e. Failure to follow the requirements of the Archdiocesan Code of Ethical Standards, Sexual Harassment Policy, and the Abuse Prevention Policy.

Procedures Upon Default-Elementary Schools**#4330.1**

Upon defaults regarding a. through d. in policy #4330, the school principal and the pastor/board chair (in the case of consolidated schools) shall consult concerning the default of contract. Additionally, the principal shall consult with the superintendent or associate superintendent regarding suspensions or terminations. The superintendents may refer the principal or pastor/board chair (in the case of consolidated schools) to the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas general counsel or human resources director. The decision to terminate a teacher must be documented.

Upon defaults regarding e. in policy #4330, the procedures in the specified policies shall be followed.

Procedures Upon Default-Secondary Schools

#4330.2

Upon defaults regarding a. through d. in policy #4330, the school president and principal shall consult concerning the default of contract. Additionally, the president or principal shall consult with the superintendent or associate superintendent regarding suspensions or terminations. The superintendents may refer the president or principal to the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas general counsel or human resources director. The decision to suspend or terminate must be documented.

Under defaults regarding e. in policy #4330, the procedures in the specified policies shall be followed.

Contract Modification and Cancellation - Teachers

#4340

Teacher contracts are contingent upon sufficient school enrollment and the ability of the school's financial conditions. If the enrollment or the school's financial condition does not justify the contracted salary levels, the president/principal, in consultation with the board chair/pastor, may modify or cancel the teacher contract upon not less than thirty (30) days' notice. If modified terms are offered, refusal of teacher to accept such terms will not be deemed a default on the part of the teacher as defined in policy #4330. If cancellation is necessary under this provision, the annual compensation will be prorated to the date of cancellation.

GENERAL POLICIES - TEACHERS

Curriculum and Instruction

#4400

Teachers shall follow the Archdiocesan curriculum, planning instruction to ensure that students meet the expected outcomes. Lesson plans should be written, and in all subjects should reflect the Catholic faith. Care should be taken to attend to individual student needs. Written documentation of student progress and attendance should be kept.

Standards for Communication

#4405

Teachers are expected to conduct themselves in and out of the classroom in a manner consistent with the Church's teachings, as well as the Archdiocesan Code of Ethical Standards and Child Protection Policies. Thus, any and all forms of communication, including electronic (e.g. social networking media, text messages, e-mail), used by the teacher must reflect these standards. The school reserves the right to review any communication by a teacher on a school-sponsored platform and/or device and may take action if deemed necessary. This also applies to platform/devices other than what is school sponsored if it is brought to the school's attention.

In addition, except in cases of emergency, teachers should not engage in communication during teaching and/or supervisory time (e.g. recess, before and after school duty) in order to ensure that students are properly supervised at all times.

Communication with Students

#4405.1

No teacher shall initiate or respond to communication with a student unless the student is enrolled in the school and the communication is related to school matters and the communication is conducted through a school device or school-sponsored platform. Teachers may send and/or respond to student letters, provided that the letter/response is sent to the student in care of the parent/legal guardian and such correspondence is approved by principal. Communication conducted via a personal device may be appropriate in certain instances (e.g. a coach texting a last minute practice or game change) as long as such communication is restricted to school matters and available for review by the school principal.

Furthermore, with regard to electronic social media (including virtual gaming) teachers shall not "befriend" or otherwise engage with students unless those individuals are family members. Teachers may create professional social media accounts through the school's technology system in order to communicate with students for school purposes. Such professional accounts are acceptable provided that principals are included in and/or have access to the communication. All professional accounts are subject to monitoring by school officials.

See policy #8100 for use of technology for instructional purposes.

Communication with Parents/Legal Guardians

#4405.2

With regard to communication of student progress to parents and/or legal guardians, teachers are strongly encouraged to utilize in-person and/or videoconferences and phone calls in order to better facilitate effective communication. Care should be taken when utilizing email and/or text messaging in order to avoid misunderstanding and confusion.

Behavior with Students

#4405.3

As teachers are called to "reveal the message of Christ not only by word but also by every action

of their lives” and “...model Christian behaviors and attitudes; [and] display professional[ism]...” (policy #4000), they must ensure that their interactions with students in and out of the classroom are consistent with the Code of Ethical Standards and Child Protection Policies of the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas specifically, teachers must ensure that any physical interactions with students is safe and appropriate. Examples of safe and appropriate contact would be: handshakes/”high five’s”/”knuckle-bumps”, holding hands while walking young children (pre-primary), holding hands while praying in a group, implementation of Emergency Safety Interventions by trained staff (ESI). Note: Any contact that a student may report as making him/her uncomfortable must be discontinued immediately even if it is one of these examples.

Except in cases of emergency, teachers are not to be alone with individual students. If a teacher must meet with an individual student, the meeting should take place in a classroom, conference room, or office with the door open. An exception to open doors may be made only if a teacher and student are in a clear line of sight through a wall or door window. At no time should doors or windows be covered (unless there is an emergency and the school’s emergency protocols require that). If a principal determines that a staff member is in violation of this policy, the principal shall review Safe Environment Policies, as well as, consult with the Archdiocesan Safe Environment Coordinator and/or the Superintendent of Schools in order to appropriately address the issue.

Standards of Grooming and Dress

#4410

Teachers of schools of the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas always shall maintain high standards of dress and grooming so as to reflect Christian virtue, maintain professional dignity and command the respect of students, peers and patrons and to establish a standard worthy of emulation by students. Excessive and/or inappropriate piercings and body markings are not acceptable for Catholic school teachers. Standards of dress and grooming shall be established and appropriately modified (by the principal of the school) to conform to the demands of the specific assignment and/or activity. Local administrations have the right to determine what is and what is not in keeping with this policy.

Teacher Files – Active and Archive

#4420

Each school shall maintain an active file on every teacher currently employed. In addition, schools shall provide to the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools copies of all current teacher contracts and performance reviews. For the purposes of verifying employment for formerly employed teachers (i.e. for those employed up to 20 years previous to the current year), schools should keep an archive record of employment that includes the teacher’s name, dates of service, performance reviews, and contracts.

Teacher Records and Confidentiality

#4430

Personnel records are confidential. Information contained in these records may not be disclosed without the consent of the person concerned, unless otherwise required or permitted by law.

Teacher References

#4440

No information concerning a current or former teacher should be disclosed to a prospective employer or other inquiring entity except as provided in this policy unless required or permitted by law or Archdiocesan policy or with the express written consent of the teacher.

In response to a written inquiry from a prospective employer or other entity regarding a teacher or former teacher, a school may disclose the following information if specifically requested: 1) dates of the teacher’s employment; 2) the teacher’s current or last pay level; 3) the teacher’s job description and duties; and 4) the teacher’s wage history; 5) positive statements that accurately reflect job performance. If

requested, a job description given pursuant to this policy should be brief, e.g., third grade teacher with 23 students, elementary reading specialist, high school physics teacher (5 periods of juniors and seniors taught) and assistant girls' basketball coach, etc. This is the only information that may be given in response to a written request, including form requests, for information from a prospective employer. No information may be disclosed in response to oral requests for information. Note: Exceptions to this restriction shall be made if there were concerns regarding unlawful or potentially unlawful conduct with students.

A copy of the request of the prospective employer and the school's response shall be maintained in the teacher's file. The school should notify current teachers and make a reasonable attempt to notify former teachers of any such requests for information.

If requested in writing by a current or former teacher, a school **may provide a letter of reference** to the teacher's prospective employer/other entity. Such a requested letter may contain positive accurate statements regarding a teacher's performance. The teacher should receive a copy of any letter sent to a prospective employer. Principals should consult with the Superintendent of Schools if there are questions regarding references/reference procedures.

No other information about a teacher shall be disclosed to prospective employers/others unless required or permitted by law or Archdiocesan policy. For example, a school should never respond to a question asking whether or not a teacher is eligible for rehire.

Note: Principals are encouraged to also write a cover letter explaining the policy to the inquiring party. (See Reference Policy Cover Letter Sample, Form #C142)

Teachers – Mandated Reporters

#4450

Any teacher or other school employee who has reason to suspect that a child has been harmed as a result of physical, mental, or emotional abuse or neglect or sexual abuse, is considered a mandated reporter by the State of Kansas. Such reports must be made by the teacher or employee to the Department for Children and Families (DCF). When DCF is not open for business, the appropriate law enforcement agency shall be notified. While the teacher/employee also should inform the principal of suspected abuse, communication to the principal does not relieve the teacher/employee of the duty to report to DCF/law enforcement.

Teachers - Weapons

See policy #5470