

# Curriculum



## Section 2 of

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## ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Through a commitment to academic excellence, the Catholic school educates the whole person so that students demonstrate the ability to acquire and apply skills, habits, and attitudes that enable them to perform to their fullest potential and to excel in academic and co-curricular activities. It is a process that nurtures the whole person by enhancing each student's capability for critical thinking, problem solving, Catholic moral decision making, and communication skills. Teaching and learning at a Catholic school occur when master-level lessons are designed to be integrated with Gospel values and adapted to the learning styles of students.

### 2.1 PRE K-12 CATHOLIC IDENTITY STANDARDS

*APPENDICES available at [ocsww.org/My Desk/Appendices/](http://ocsww.org/My Desk/Appendices/)*

*Family Life, Chaste Living Policy*

*Outside Speaker Approval Procedures*

*Policies for Category II Catholic Schools*

*WCEA Catholic Identity Standards*

*National Catholic Standards and Benchmarks*

*Christ in the Classroom Program*

*Catechetical Certification for Catholic Schools*

#### Teaching the Religion Curriculum

2.1 (A) The Catholic religious instruction and education in the Catholic school are subject to the Archbishop (Canon 804 ). Curriculum for religion will be consistent with the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, conform with the guidelines of the Archdiocese for curricula, and be developmentally appropriate and relevant to students' lives.

2.1 (B) The Christ in the Classroom Foundation (CIC Foundation) is required for ALL Catholic school administrators and teaching faculty (PreK-12) annually. The teaching and assessing of religion in all Catholic schools shall be subject to the same standards of professionalism and excellence as all subjects in the school to include, but not be restricted to, allocation of resources, teacher professional development, evaluation, assessment and hours of instruction.

2.1 (C) ALL teachers responsible for teaching the PreK-12 Religion Curriculum and Standards must be practicing Catholics, witnesses to the faith, and participating in the Christ in the Classroom Program – Level 1 Catechetical Certification for Catholic schools. Teachers shall have up to three years to complete Christ in the Classroom Program (CIC) Level 1 Catechetical Certification through a program that has been vetted and approved by OCS.

2.1 (D) ALL elementary school administrators must be practicing Catholics, witnesses to the faith, and participating in the Christ in the Classroom Program –CIC Foundation and Level 1 Catechetical Certification for Catholic schools.

2.1 (E) ALL secondary school administrators must be practicing Catholics, witnesses to the faith, and participating in the Christ in the Classroom Program –CIC Foundation. Level 1 Catechetical Certification for Catholic Schools is highly encouraged for secondary administrators.

2.1 (F) CIC Level 1 Catechetical Certification would be granted to those school administrators and teaching faculty who have attained the Office for Catholic Faith Formation (OCFF) Catechetical Certification Program (CCP) documentation or will attain the certification by July 31, 2018.

- It is highly recommended to seek out these leaders to serve as consultants on the local CIC Leadership Team.

2.1 (G) Teachers and administrators with advanced degrees in theology/religious studies from an accredited Catholic university, or those transferring into the Archdiocese with a Catechist Certification from another diocese, will participate in approved OCS or CIC programs as appropriate.

2.1 (H) All religion textbooks in all Catholic schools shall be chosen from the published Archdiocesan list of approved textbooks, which includes those texts judged to be in conformity with the Catechism of the Catholic Church by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Ad Hoc Committee to Oversee the Use of the Catechism. Adhering to USCCB guidelines, all supplementary material used in the curriculum must conform to Catholic moral teaching and doctrine.

2.1 (I) Each school will offer ongoing formation in chaste living, using an approved text, as part of Catholic moral formation, as required by the WCEA's Catholic Identity accreditation standards, and by standards published by the USCCB (2008): "Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living."

2.1 (J) All Catholic high school religion programs shall use curricula based upon, and in conformity with, the *Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age* (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2008) and Catechetical Formation in Chaste Living (USCCB, 2008).

2.1 (K) Catholic schools shall provide opportunities for students to participate in community service projects or service learning that will benefit the Christian community and all people. The principles of Catholic social teaching and stewardship shall be used to reflect on service projects and service learning.

2.1 (L) All Catholic school communities shall encourage an interest in and respect for all vocations, promoting vocations to religious life and the priesthood as real life options for students.

### Assessment

2.1 (M) The elementary religion curriculum will be evaluated by a uniform means of assessment, including national assessments, with oversight by the Office for Catholic Schools. Students in grades 5 (level 1) and 8 (level 2) will take the ACRE (Assessment of Children/Youth Religious Education) assessment offered by the NCEA in the month of April. The school will receive a group report for each ACRE leveled assessment used in the school.

2.1 (N) High Schools are held accountable to the ten Standards of Catholic identity stated in the protocols for accreditation and are assessed on a regular schedule by the Office for Catholic Schools, during the school's accreditation cycle.

### Artwork and the Physical Environment

2.1 (O) The Archdiocesan Catholic school physical environment shall include religious signs and symbols that reflect the Catholic identity of the school, including pictures of the Holy Father and the Archbishop and a statue of Mary. Every classroom shall have a crucifix and have visible prayer/sacred spaces.

### Sacramental Preparation and Practices

2.1 (P) Catholic liturgy, sacraments, traditions, and prayer shall be taught as an integral part of the school's curriculum. The liturgy should be celebrated regularly for the school, prayers said daily, and Catholic traditions celebrated according to liturgical season. The celebration of the sacraments in all Catholic schools shall occur in appropriate spaces that are respectful and well suited to authentic worship. School liturgies shall observe the norms of the liturgical books and the local directives of the Archbishop. Adaptations of the liturgy to the particular circumstances of schools shall be done in keeping with the church's liturgical life and norms.

2.1 (Q) All Catholic schools shall actively promote family participation in the Sunday Eucharist in the home parish. Liturgical formation shall be directed toward fostering active participation of the students in the Eucharist each Sunday.

2.1 (R) The school administrator shall designate a staff member or qualified volunteer as a coordinator of liturgy who is trained in the norms and preparation of the liturgy. The Liturgy Office will provide assistance to schools for training and resources.

2.1 (S) Sacramental preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation, Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation should be conducted according to the local parish's plan. Ordinarily, the sacraments should be celebrated within local parish communities; exceptions must be approved by the Archbishop or his delegate. Participation in school-based sacramental preparation does not substitute for full participation in the parish-based sacramental preparation program.

2.1 (T) The school administrator will schedule times and commit resources for retreat and reflection as an opportunity for teachers, staff, and students to deepen their faith and sense of community.

### Speaker Approval

2.1 (U) Speakers who come from outside the Archdiocese of Seattle to conduct retreats or presentations on religious or catechetical topics must receive approval through the speaker approval process. Lay speakers are approved through the OCFF; priests are approved through the Vicar for Clergy's office; religious men and women are approved through the Office of Vicar for Religious. It is advisable to allow at least three months for the approval process.

## 2.2 CURRICULUM STANDARDS

2.2 (A) The mission of Catholic schools requires excellent religious, academic, and co-curricular programs, so that the Catholic school will meet and exceed the standards of Washington State. The basic curriculum shall conform to the laws of the State of Washington as set forth in Chapter 28A.195 RCW and 180-90-160 WAC:

*Private school curriculum shall include instruction of the basic skills of occupational education, science, mathematics, language, social studies, history, health, reading, writing, spelling, and the development of appreciation of art and music, all in sufficient units for meeting the State Board of Education graduation requirements as set forth in Chapter 28A.195 RCW.*

2.2 (B) Learning expectations and topics pertinent to a Catholic education in each subject are developed by committees of teachers and principals, **convened by the Office for Catholic Schools**, integrated into the standards for the State of Washington, and published on the Office for Catholic Schools' website.

2.2 (C) Catholic Schools shall ensure that their curricula comply with the standards approved by Office for Catholic Schools and meet or exceed public and other private school educational standards for the local community.

### Elementary Schools

2.2 (D) In addition to the requirements of the State of Washington (Chapter 28A.195 RCW) Catholic elementary schools are also required to teach religion, personal safety, communication arts (speaking and listening), physical education, technology, and service. The elementary school in collaboration with the parish will offer the Family Life/ Chaste Living Program according to policy 2.1 (D).

### High Schools

2.2 (E) In addition to the requirements of the state of Washington (Chapter 21A.195 RCW) the Catholic High Schools are also required to teach religion, the Family Life/Chaste Living Program according to policy 2.1(D) technology, fine arts, service and physical education.

## 2.3 SAFE ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

2.3. (A) Each school is required to offer an Archdiocesan approved Safe Environment Program once each year to the school community. This may be offered in collaboration with the parish or other schools.

2.3 (B) Each school is required to implement safe environment training for students (children and youth) as outlined by the current terms of the Archdiocesan approved Safe Environment Program's training requirements.

2.3 (C) Each school year, the school's administration must complete all verification forms and file electronically the "Safe Environment Report".

## 2.4 CONTAGIOUS DISEASE EDUCATION

Catholic schools shall incorporate education about contagious diseases or life-threatening illnesses including but not limited to hepatitis, cancer, heart disease, HIV/AIDS, and other sexually transmitted diseases in an appropriate context such as health education programs. This education must be current in content and consistent with the moral teachings of the Catholic Church.

## 2.5 ACCREDITATION PROCESS

2.5 (A) To ensure regular review of schools' progress toward ongoing school improvement and accomplishment of goals, all Catholic Schools must be accredited and must participate in a long range planning process designed to address current concerns and future needs identified in this evaluation, including curriculum development, sound financial planning, and management practices.

1. Category I schools are accredited through WCEA (Western Catholic Education Association) on a regular schedule.
2. The following procedures are followed for accrediting Catholic Schools:
  - a. The school must be approved by the State of Washington.
  - b. The purchase of the booklets for the WCEA self-study and the staff in-service are coordinated by the Office for Catholic Schools.
  - c. The WCEA Commissioner in the Office for Catholic Schools works with the WCEA to obtain chairs for each of the on-site visiting teams and to assign teachers and principals to the teams.
  - d. After the on-site visit, two copies of the school's visiting team report are forwarded to the WCEA Commissioner in the Office for Catholic Schools. The Commissioner forwards the appropriate materials to WCEA.

2.5 (B) Category II schools may be accredited by another regionally recognized accreditation agency with the incorporation of the Catholic Identity standards and must complete an annual update on their accreditation "Action Plan" to the WCEA Commissioner in the Office for Catholic Schools.

## 2.6 INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

2.6 (A) Through consultation with teachers and school administrators, the Office for Catholic Schools shall regularly review and make recommendations for textbooks and materials in all areas of instruction.

2.6 (B) All textbooks and materials should conform to the highest standards of academic instructions.

2.6 (C) Trade books chosen for instruction and/or included in the school library should be approved by the school administrator or his/her delegate.

## 2.7 LIBRARY RESOURCE CENTERS

2.7 (A) The Library Resource Center should ensure that students and staff have access to materials and information and be provided with instructions on how to be effective users.

2.7 (B) Each school should have an instructional materials policy that describes the process and the criteria for the selection or deletion of instructional materials to be included in the Library Resource Center. The following areas should be defined:

- a. Objectives of selection;
- b. Responsibility for selection;
- c. Criteria for selection/withdrawal;
- d. Procedures for selection; and
- e. Challenged materials procedures.

## 2.8 ASSESSING AND REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

*FORMS available at [ocswv.org/My Desk/Personnel Forms/Awards/](http://ocswv.org/My_Desk/Personnel_Forms/Awards/)*

*Award Certificate Academic Template*

*Award Certificate Co-Curricular Template*

*Award Certificate Community Service*

*Award Certificate Faith Template*

2.8 (A) All schools shall implement the Archdiocesan approved academic assessment program to assess scholastic achievement and growth in the core academic content areas and religion.

2.8 (B) Annually the Office for Catholic Schools shall retrieve and report the composite assessment results. Schools shall submit the results of student assessments to the Superintendent each year and upon request.

2.8 (C) Test results for a specific school shall not be released to the public except with the permission of the school administrator.

2.8 (D) To ensure that parents are informed of the progress of their child (ren), schools issue report cards or student report documents at least four incremental times per academic year and provide opportunities for parent-teacher conferences. Report cards or students' reports should be designed to reflect the learning expectations and standards of the school. Online reports, protected by password, may be provided to parents and guardians at the school's discretion and must meet the criteria above.

## 2.9 SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES AND FIELD TRIPS

*FORMS available at [ocsw.org/My Desk/Personnel Forms/Field Trip/](http://ocsw.org/MyDesk/PersonnelForms/FieldTrip/)*

*Field Trip*

*Extended Field Trip*

*Field Trip Driver*

*International Travel*

2.9 (A) The school administrator is responsible for the coordination of all activities of the school, including student activities outside the school building or school day. If delegated, it should be clearly stated to whom the responsibility for the event is delegated.

2.9 (B) The school administrator is responsible for establishing clearly defined procedures to be used by student organizations for management of their funds. All funds must be deposited in the parish/school account.

2.9 (C) The school administrator must approve any school-sponsored social activity. These activities must have a clear purpose, be carefully planned, and well supervised by certificated staff. For such activities, all the areas of responsibility should be clearly defined. No parish or school sponsored events for students may be held in a private residence.

2.9 (D) The school administrator must ensure that adequate supervision is provided by at least one certificated faculty member for all school-sponsored activities and field trips. This includes field trips, rehearsals, performances by school students, dances, sporting events, community service projects, and other school activities. A ratio of at least one adult for each group of 5 to 8 children should be arranged. The guideline is that the younger the students the greater the need for supervision.

2.9 (E) All field trips must have the enrichment of the curriculum as their core purpose and must be carefully planned as an extension of the classroom experience.



2.9 (F) The school administrator must ensure that adequate insurance coverage is in place for all school-sponsored activities and field trips. The insurance carrier should be consulted regarding requirements for coverage.

2.9 (G) The school administrator must follow the established transportation policy, have drivers complete the “Field Trip Driver Information Sheet,” and keep it on file in the school office.

2.9 (H) In accordance with Washington state law, the following requirements must be met for all field trips and other school-sponsored events involving vehicles that are privately owned and driven:

- a. The driver must be at least 21 years old;
- b. The driver must submit to a background check and show no felony, DUI, or reckless driving convictions;
- c. The vehicle must be insured by the driver for the minimum limits required by the Archdiocese’s insurance company;
- d. Students must wear seat belts at all times; and
- e. Children under 4 feet 9 inches tall must be strapped into approved booster seats.

2.9 (I) Permission slips should be retained for one year after a trip. If a charter bus is used for transportation, school administrators must keep a copy of the signed contract on file in the school office.

2.9 (J). Permission to go on a field trip must be written on the field trip permission form approved by the Archdiocese. Verbal or email permission to travel on a field trip is not permitted; a completed permission slip received by fax is permitted. See the [ocsww.org](http://ocsww.org) website for the form(s) to use for field trips.

2.9 (K) The only time a signed permission slip is not required for each time that the child leaves the school is for walking activities that are frequent, regular, routine parts of the curriculum of the school and that cause students to leave the school building and property under the supervision of the teacher (s): For example, a nearby playfield is used frequently for physical education classes, and the students must walk to the playfield and back, crossing busy streets under the supervision of the teacher.

2.9 (L) The school administrator always reserves the right to exclude a student from participation in a field trip.

2.9 (M) Children not enrolled in the school shall not accompany the class field trip.

2.9 (N) Water activities during field trips require a certified lifeguard be present when swimming at a public or private pool, beach or other water venue. Students should not swim in an unrestricted body of water, even if supervised by a lifeguard.

2.9 (O) Overnight Field Trips involving facilities stays:

- Adjoining rooms should be shared only by youth of the same gender,
- When possible, all members of a group staying in a facility should stay on the same floor, along the same hallway,
- Adults are never to share rooms with youth that accommodate less than six people,
- Students when staying in private rooms with no adults, should be periodically checked by two (2) staff or chaperones.

2.9 (P) A first aid kit should accompany any group leaving school property.

2.9 (Q) Medication of any kind is to be administered only after checking the Parent/Legal Guardian Permission Slip for written permission.

2.9 (R) Staff and chaperones may not consume alcohol when accompanying students on a field trip.

**NOTE:** A permission slip signed by a parent for his/her child does not change the responsibility or liability of the teacher, the principal or the school for the safety and supervision of a student during any school sponsored activity in the school building, on school property, or at a location away from the school. As the professional educators, the teacher and the school administrator are responsible for children while engaged in school activities wherever and whenever they are held.