

POLICY MANUAL

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SCHOOL

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WELCOME

As a new school year begins, the Immaculate Conception School Board would like to welcome each student and family to Immaculate Conception Catholic School. Your choice of Immaculate Conception as your school will provide the environment needed to nurture the educational and religious growth of your child. We hope your years at I.C. will involve your entire family through your time, talents, and treasures!

HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL

Immaculate Conception School is located at 223 South 14th Street. It consists of grades K-6. The grade school building was opened in 1930 under the guidance of Monsignor Patrick F. Horan, housing grades K-8. In 1973, when St. Anne's High School closed, the parish made the decision to add the ninth grade to its program, thereby adding a junior high, which remained a part of the parish school until June of 1986 when Trinity Junior High opened. In August 2007, a three and four year old preschool program began in the building located at 300 Lexington Avenue. Since its beginning in 1930, the Sisters of Mercy have formed a part of the faculty. Under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary in whose name our school is dedicated, we pray that our efforts to educate and love the young people who come to us may be blessed

MISSION STATEMENT

Immaculate Conception Catholic School, following the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, develops the whole child, instills Gospel values, inspires a love of learning, and promotes academic excellence in a diverse nurturing community.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

WE BELIEVE that each child is a person of worth with a personal dignity and a heavenly calling since each child is so loved by God that He sent His Son to save each one. To safeguard this dignity requires the education of the whole person - spiritually, mentally, socially, and physically.

WE BELIEVE that the hallmark of quality education is learning and the appreciation of learning. Therefore, the teachers and the administrators of the Immaculate Conception Catholic School, in partnership with the parents, pledge themselves to achieve and maintain professional and personal excellence in order to share knowledge, develop useful skills, teach Catholic doctrine, and instill a high Christian value system that reflects Christ-like attitudes.

With its wide scope of academic subjects, church and community service projects, liturgical celebrations, organizations, and athletic activities, Immaculate Conception Catholic School seeks to develop in each student a love for God, a respect for all God's creation, and a thirst for knowledge that will prepare him/her to be the Christian citizen of tomorrow.

*NON-DISCRIMINATION/STUDENTS

Immaculate Conception School will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, handicap, or national or ethnic origin in administration of their educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic, or other school administered programs.

*TRANSFER STUDENTS

No students will be admitted from another school at any time after the school year begins unless the family is moving into the area from another city, or the family has obtained permission from the pastor.

*IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

No student will be admitted to school unless he/she shows evidence of completing the required immunizations. For immunization requirements, please refer to p. 23.

DISCIPLINE

One of the assets of a Catholic education is the opportunity for students to learn the value and practice of self-discipline. The meaning of self-discipline is: a person's ability to wait, think, and delay personal gratification for the good of the individual, other persons, or a group.

In contrast to self-discipline, discipline is defined as the direct control of behavior by persons in authority through consequences and/or rewards. Discipline is imposed when a student chooses not to be self-disciplined. The purpose of discipline is to develop personal responsibility, to communicate rules and regulations, to teach courtesy and respect for self and others, to establish order, and to instill in students self-discipline.

Reasons for rules should be clearly understood by adults and students. Rules are designed to uphold the purpose and mission of the school, to ensure the safety of each person, and to build an environment where learning occurs.

A student is an Immaculate Conception School student at all times. A student who engages in conduct, whether inside or outside the school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, may be disciplined by school officials.

Below are SCHOOL RULES that affect the daily working together of the school community:

1. RESPECT YOURSELF, OTHERS, AND ALL PROPERTY
2. CONTRIBUTE TO THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
3. FOLLOW SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM PROCEDURES
4. PRACTICE SELF-DISCIPLINE

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE CYCLE

The School Discipline Cycle will be used if a student:

- a) Has serious or continuous violations of classroom/school rules and procedures
- b) Must be removed from the group in order to protect a student and/or the learning environment of the school.

This is necessary when a student:

- 1) is in physical or psychological danger or puts another in danger,
- 2) is irrational or unreasonable, or
- 3) pushes beyond the limits of respect in speech or actions.

Step One: If a student receives a first detention:

1. Parents are notified in writing of the reason for the detention and the day, time, and place the detention will be served.
2. The student serves the detention.

Step Two: If a student receives a second detention within the school year:

1. Parents are notified in writing of the reason for the detention and the day, time and place the detention will be served.
2. The student serves the detention.
3. Student may appear before the School Discipline Board.
4. Parents are notified in writing if the student is to appear before the School Discipline Board and are invited to attend the meeting.
5. The School Discipline Board addresses the inappropriate behavior and develops a plan of action to assist the student to improve his/her behavior.
6. The plan of action is discussed with the student and the student is held responsible for the plan.
7. Parents are notified in writing of the actions taken by the board.

Step Three: If a student receives a third detention during the school year or *in extreme cases when the principal determines the seriousness of the action warrants starting at Step Three:*

1. Parents are notified in writing of the reason for the detention and the day, time, and place the detention will be served.
2. The student serves the detention.
3. The student and parents *are may be asked* to meet with the School Discipline Board.
4. Parents will be notified in writing of the day and time of the Board meeting.
5. The previous behavior plan will be reviewed and modifications made or a new plan of action will be developed if necessary.
6. The principal or Board may recommend in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension at this time.
7. Parents will receive written notification of the Board's decision.

Step Three can be repeated as long as the student demonstrates positive progress and a willingness to contribute to a positive learning environment. When little or no change is evident and school personnel have exhausted all available means to affect change, the student will move to Step Four of the School Discipline Cycle.

Step Four: The School Discipline Board will recommend expulsion.

1. The decision to expel a student rests with the principal and the pastor.
2. If expulsion is the decision, the student's parents will be notified in writing, the reasons for the expulsion given, and the right to request a hearing explained.
3. The expulsion may be reconsidered by the principal and pastor if a written request for a special hearing is made by a parent.

Serious infractions such as possession of drugs or weapons or severe physical or moral misconduct could result in an immediate move to Step Four.

Some behaviors which would result in a student directly beginning the School Discipline Cycle and that could possibly lead to Step Three or Step Four of the School Discipline Cycle are listed below.

Conduct not tolerated:

- 1) Any disorderly conduct or destruction of property (Students will pay for any damage to school or parish property.)
- 2) Disrespect to or abuse of school staff or students (including use of abusive or vulgar language)
- 3) Possession of firearms or other weapons
- 4) Theft
- 5) Bullying
- 6) Possession of or use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- 7) Cheating
- 8) Fighting, violence, or physical abuse
- 9) Other conduct deemed inappropriate by school administration or conduct unbecoming a student in a Catholic school

The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule for just cause at her discretion.

Academic penalties will not be used for disciplinary violations. Students will be allowed to make up work missed during a suspension.

CLASSROOM RULES AND CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE

Each teacher has adopted some version of the school rules for his/her classroom. The teachers work with the students to make sure the rules are understood and the reasons for rules are taught. The classroom rules are posted.

In addition, each classroom teacher has an established Classroom Management Plan that lists consequences for failure to follow the rules. Teachers work with the students to determine acceptable consequences as well as rewards and recognition for appropriate behavior and use of the self-discipline skills.

The written rules and self-discipline cycle for the child's classroom will be sent to the parents during the first week of school. Parents are asked to review these rules with their children, sign the form stating they have read and agree to comply with the Classroom Management Plan, and return it to school.

Serious or continuous violations of the Classroom Management Plan will be referred to the principal at which time the student will begin the School Discipline Cycle.

DETENTION

1. Detention will be served on the day scheduled by the homeroom teacher.
2. Detention will begin at 3:20 p.m. on the assigned day, allowing the student time to use the restroom and get a drink before reporting.
3. If the student fails to serve the detention on the assigned day, further consequences will be incurred. Only previously scheduled doctor or dentist appointments will excuse a student from serving a detention on the assigned day.
4. Detention consists of sitting quietly at a desk. No work, talking, or reading is allowed. If a student talks or is disruptive during detention, an additional day of detention may be given.

*DRUGS

If any student brings to school or has in his/her possession on the school grounds or at any school related function, during or after school hours, any illegal drug or alcohol, he/she will be suspended and is liable for expulsion.

*PORNOGRAPHY

If any student brings to school or has in his/her possession on the school grounds or at any school related function, during or after school hours, pornographic material, he/she will be suspended and is liable for expulsion.

*SMOKING

Smoking or the possession of smoking materials is not permitted on the school grounds or at any school-sponsored activities. Violation of this regulation will result in suspension and the possibility of expulsion.

*CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are responsible for the proper care of all books, supplies, and furniture supplied by the school. Students who vandalize school property or equipment will be required to pay for the damage done or replace the item.

*INSPECTION OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

School authorities in the interest of maintenance, health, and safety may inspect school properties. The location of drugs, narcotics, alcohol, weapons, poisons, and missing properties is a matter relating to health and safety and may be regarded as a reasonable purpose for inspection by school personnel.

*HARASSMENT

Immaculate Conception School does not condone any form of harassment. All individuals are to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment in any form is prohibited. The prohibition against acts of harassment applies to

all individuals involved in the school.

Harassment is defined but not limited to the following:

1. verbal conduct such as epithets, derogatory jokes or comments, slurs or unwanted sexual advances, imitations or comments
2. visual contact such as derogatory and/or sexually orientated posters, photography, cartoons, drawings or gestures
3. physical contact such as assault, unwanted touching, blocking normal movements or interfering with work, study or play because of some sexual matter
4. threats and demands to submit to sexual requests for certain benefits
5. retaliation for having reported or threatened to report sexual harassment

CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying is cruelty to others through electronic means; it can be done through texting, email, instant messaging, chat rooms, or postings on social network sites. Immaculate Conception School will not tolerate harassment in any form whether conducted on or off campus. Harassment will be handled as outlined in the school discipline policy.

*POSSESSION OF WEAPON

The Catholic Schools of Arkansas have a no tolerance policy involving possession of weapons. The school's responsibility is the protection of all its students. The school takes this responsibility very seriously. Therefore, if a student brings a weapon to school or to a school function, or has a weapon on is/her person, the school will immediately expel the student. Parents are advised that the school will contact local police or appropriate authorities, and will note in the student's permanent record that he/she was expelled for possession of a weapon on school premises or at a school function. Possession includes, but is not necessarily limited to, having a weapon in a locker, book bag, purse, or vehicle.

*THREAT OF VIOLENCE

All threats of violence will be taken seriously. If the school determines that a threat of violence has been directed toward particular students or staff and that the threat is credible, the administration will report the threat to the student and/or staff member threatened. The school will also report the threat to appropriate authorities. Students making such threats will be expelled. For purposes of this policy, credible means a reasonable belief or suspicion, determined at the sole discretion of school administration, that the threat was or might be genuine, or that the student was or might be capable of carrying out the threat. The student's permanent record will reflect the expulsion for making threats of violence.

*SUSPENSION OF STUDENTS

Suspension from school will be a decision of the principal in consultation with the pastor. The principal, for serious reasons, may suspend students for a period of time not to exceed ten (10) days. This may be an in-school suspension. The principal will notify the student and the student's parents of the reason for the suspension, the length of the suspension, and the requirements for reinstatement.

*EXPULSION OF STUDENTS

Expulsion of the student will be the decision of the principal in consultation with the pastor. Notification of this expulsion will be sent to the school board president. A written report to the parents will contain the information concerning the process of appeal. If parents wish to appeal the decision, they will contact the president of the school board who will arrange a hearing with an arbitration committee.

*CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment is contrary to diocesan policy and will not be used as a means of student control. Serious or continuous disciplinary problems will be referred to the principal and School Disciplinary Board, and parents will

be notified of the infraction and of the disciplinary actions taken. If a student cannot be helped through these actions, the principal will follow the procedure for suspension and/or expulsion.

*CHILD ABUSE LIABILITY

If any administrator, teacher, paraprofessional, custodian, or anyone in the employ of a Catholic school in Arkansas shall be named as the person responsible for child abuse or sexual abuse in a report to a county or state office of the Department of Human Services, he or she will be immediately suspended with pay until the investigation of the report is completed.

*CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

Any employee of Immaculate Conception School having reason to believe that a child under the age of eighteen (18) years has had mental or physical injury or injuries inflicted upon him or her by other than accidental means, where the injury appears to have been caused as a result of abuse or neglect, shall report the matter promptly to the county SCAN (Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect) or Social Services Offices in the county wherein the suspected injury occurred. It shall be a misdemeanor for any person to knowingly and willfully fail to report any such incident promptly as provided above.

*PREGNANCY

In keeping with our Catholic philosophy regarding respect for human life, the unmarried girl who becomes pregnant and the boy who causes her to become pregnant before they graduate from school will be treated with dignity, compassion, and concern for their feelings. Pregnancy is not a reason for dismissal from school.

*COMPLAINTS

Any person feeling aggrieved concerning any matter connected with the school will contact the individual concerned before discussing it with others.

1. CONTACT THE TEACHER

If a person has a complaint about a teacher, the individual will go first to the teacher to seek a solution to the problem.

2. CONTACT THE PRINCIPAL

If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, the person will contact the principal for an appointment.

3. CONTACT THE PASTOR

If the problem is still not resolved, the person will contact the pastor to discuss the matter.

4. CONTACT THE SUPERINTENDENT

If no solution is found to the problem, the matter will be referred to the superintendent.

DO NOT CONTACT THE SCHOOL BOARD

School board members are not to attempt to solve school problems but are to refer the aggrieved person to the above procedure. If a board member is approached, he/she will notify the principal.

*RIGHT TO APPEAL

If parents or guardians wish to appeal a decision of expulsion, or if a teacher wishes to appeal a decision of terminating a contract, they will contact the president of the school board and request a hearing with an arbitration committee.

ORGANIZATIONS

*PARENT/TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Immaculate Conception School will have an active Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) to ensure an effective working relationship between the home and the school and to provide parents the opportunity to exercise their roles as partners in educating their children. It is highly recommended that the Parent/Teacher Organization join the NCEA organization for parents, the National Forum of Catholic Parent Organizations.

The Immaculate Conception Parent/Teacher Organization will meet 3 times each year. Notice will be sent home to inform parents of the date, time of the meeting and the topic to be discussed or event scheduled. Parents of children in school are automatically members. Dues of \$10.00 per family are included on the student book bill.

Parents and teachers are urged to attend Parent/Teacher Organization meetings, as they are a means of keeping the doors of communication open between the home and the school.

PTO Officers for 2012- 2013 are:

President	Elise Cooley
President-elect	Courtney Castaneda
Secretary	Patty Wortley
Treasurer	Joanie Gramlich

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The volunteer program is under the direction of the PTO and the principal. It is a program for parents to become more involved in school activities and the education of their children. It is devoted to helping the children in our school. Volunteers are involved in activities such as helping the teacher with projects, working with individual students in need of special help in particular subjects, supervising recess, clerical work, etc. The only requirement is the LOVE OF CHILDREN.

All volunteers and staff who have the opportunity for individual contact with children must attend the VIRTUS, Protecting God's Children, training. This program provides adults with the tools needed to gain awareness of child sexual abuse and to identify the traits of an abuser. The three-hour training sessions are offered through the school and the reading of monthly bulletins is required.

Volunteers are required to check in and out through the school office, sign the volunteer register, and wear a volunteer badge. Volunteering is important in determining adequate use of Time, Talent, and Treasure. Each month, a volunteer report form is included in the principal's letter. The form is to be completed and returned to school. The form is kept on file to validate T, T, and T. Parents may also record volunteer hours in a log book located in the school office. **Each family is required to volunteer a minimum of 15 hours per year in addition to required Festival booth shifts.**

FUNDRAISERS

The primary fundraisers sponsored by the PTO are pie sales in the fall and a spaghetti dinner in February. Parents are expected to support and participate in these fundraisers through the use of their time, talents, and treasure.

The Immaculate Conception Spring Festival is the major fundraiser for our school. **All families are REQUIRED to commit one work shift to EACH of their children's homeroom booths.** This obligation must be scheduled before other booth commitments. Through this parental involvement, approximately \$350.00 income per student is provided by Festival profits each year.