

## SERIES 9000 EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

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### **9000 EDUCATIONAL PLANNING**

Every Catholic school needs a coherent and well integrated educational plan to ensure the quality of its program. It should have a current, formal, long-range plan, effective budget development and monitoring processes, and a dynamic public relations program designed to reach the publics with which the school deals on a regular basis.

An effective Catholic school needs to look not simply at its current problems, but also to develop creative ways to involve the school's local community in the continued development of the ministry of Catholic education. A Catholic school's planning process needs to address the quality of education and Catholicity of the school and then build future plans that enhance these characteristics. The school's leadership must recognize that they are basically in a people-oriented business, they need to seek ever more effective ways to communicate with its various publics and broaden its base of support.

### **9100 EDUCATIONAL DECISIONS RESERVED TO THE BISHOP**

The opening, expansion (i.e., adding grade levels), consolidation (i.e., joining two or more schools into one school), reduction (i.e., closing grade levels), or closing of a Catholic school is a decision that is reserved to the Bishop of the Diocese of Fresno in consultation with the Superintendent of Catholic Schools and the Diocesan Advisory Board of Education.

To submit recommendations to the Bishop regarding reserved decisions, the following steps should be taken:

- A. When in the opinion of the school, parish, or other initiating group, there is cause to study and possibly recommend a decision that is reserved to the Bishop, the initiating group will meet with the Superintendent of Catholic Education to discuss this matter.
- B. The Superintendent of Catholic Education will assist the local initiating group to design a comprehensive study of the proposed reserved decision.
- C. This self study, the recommendation of the local initiating group, and the recommendation of all other parties affected by the proposed change will be submitted to the Superintendent of Catholic Education for his review.
- D. The Diocesan Advisory Board of Education will review in Executive Session all materials submitted and will make its own recommendation to the Bishop.
- E. The Bishop, after considering all information available to him, including the self study and all recommendations submitted, will render a decision on the matter.

## **9200 SCHOOL AFFILIATION WITH THE DIOCESE**

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All Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the Diocese of Fresno are canonically responsible to the Bishop. The Bishop of the Diocese of Fresno has sole authority to recognize and designate a school as "Catholic."

All Catholic school within the Diocese of Fresno must be affiliated with the diocese in one of three ways:

- A. Schools which are owned and operated by the Diocese of Fresno Education Corporation;
- B. Schools which are owned and/or operated by a Religious Community;
- C. Private schools which are formally recognized by the Bishop as "Catholic."

All affiliated Catholic schools shall meet the following Standards of Affiliation. They shall:

- A. Conform to the authority of the Bishop in all matters related to religious education and liturgical practice. With regard to religious education, each school shall:
  1. Ensure that the religious education program reflects the content of major Church documents (e.g., *Basic Teachings of Religious Education*, *The National Catechetical Directory*, *To Teach as Jesus Did*, *The Catholic School*, *To Teach Them*, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School*, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*).
  2. Ensure that all teachers of religion meet the requirements of the Religion Teacher Certification Program of the Diocese of Fresno.
- B. Have a written school philosophy in accord with the "Mission Statement" and "Philosophy of Education" of the Diocese of Fresno.
- C. Employ competent teachers who are supportive of the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- D. Adhere to diocesan policies regarding the opening, expansion, reduction, or closing of a school program.
- E. Pay an annual assessment to the Office of Catholic Education as determined by the Bishop.
- F. Seek and maintain the school's WCEA and WASC accreditations through the Office of Catholic Education.
- G. Adhere to the standards for private schools as established by the State of California.

## **9210 PROCESS TO GAIN AFFILIATION**

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To gain affiliation with the Diocese of Fresno the following process shall be followed:

- A. All schools sponsored by a parish, a group of parishes, the Diocese, or by a Religious Community shall be automatically affiliated with the Diocese provided that they have been established according to diocesan policy and continue to meet the Standards of Affiliation.
- B. Private schools seeking affiliation must submit to the Superintendent of Catholic Education the following:
  1. A letter that formally requests that the Bishop of the Diocese of Fresno formally recognizes the school as "Catholic."
  2. All documents requested by the Diocese to substantiate whether or not the school will be able to meet the Standards of Affiliation.

The Bishop shall determine whether recognition as "Catholic" shall be granted. This recognition may be

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withdrawn at any time by the Bishop if the private school substantially fails to meet the Standards of Affiliation. Normally private schools requesting affiliation for the first time shall be granted a probationary affiliation for two (2) years. At the end of this probationary period, the school must request continued affiliation. The Superintendent of Schools shall determine what steps, if any, must be taken to grant continued affiliation.

## **9300 SCHOOL CERTIFICATION/ACCREDITATION**

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All Catholic schools in the Diocese of Fresno shall seek and maintain certification/accreditation from the Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

## **9400 CHILD CARE PROGRAMS**

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### **9410 DEFINITIONS**

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Besides running Catholic schools for grades TK-12, the Diocese of Fresno has a number of other school and parish supported programs that provide care for children. To understand the distinctive nature of these programs, the following general definitions shall apply whenever these terms are used in diocesan policy:

- A. Child Care Programs are programs that care for children (under 18 years of age) other than the TK-12 educational programs.
- B. State Licensed or Licensed child care programs are those programs that the State of California requires to be licensed in order to be operated. Examples of these *licensed* child care programs are:
  1. Infant Care Programs refers to noncompulsory programs for infants (ages birth through 2) which provide care for an extended period of time.
  2. Day Care Programs refers to noncompulsory programs for young children (ages 2 through 6) which provide care for an extended period of time.
  3. Preschool Programs refers to noncompulsory programs for young children (ages 2 through 6) which are primarily instructional in character and which follow a school year calendar.
- C. Exempt child care programs are those child care programs that are not required by the State of California to be licensed in order to be operated. Examples of these exempt child care programs are:
  1. Extended Care Programs refers to noncompulsory, school-operated programs that provide care before- and/or after-school for school-age children.
  2. Recreational Programs refers to noncompulsory recreational programs for school-age children that must comply with certain limited hours of service.
- D. Director refers to a person designated by the school or parish to manage a child care program. Directors of both licensed and exempt programs must meet certain qualifications including those set by the state to hold this position.

### **9420 ACCOUNTABILITY**

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All licensed child care programs established in the Diocese of Fresno shall be licensed and accountable to the Diocese of Fresno Education Corporation and the Superintendent of Catholic Education. This accountability pertains to all licensed child care programs established and operated by a parish with or without a Catholic school.

The Office of Catholic Education shall insure that all state/county licensing requirements are met in those programs requiring such licensure. All employees, children, volunteers, and others involved with Diocesan Child Care Programs shall be under the auspices of the Diocese of Fresno Education Corporation and subject to the policies and practices established by the Diocese of Fresno and the Office of Catholic Education. The Office of Catholic Education shall provide ongoing professional training and direction to all Diocesan Child Care Programs within state and diocesan guidelines.

## **9421 SUPERVISION OF THE PROGRAM**

Parish-Based Programs: In parishes which do not have an established elementary school, child care programs shall be under the supervision of the pastor who has the responsibility to hire a child care director to manage each program.

School-Based Programs: In parishes which do have an established elementary school, child care programs are the responsibility of the school's pastor who shall delegate direct supervision of the program to the school's principal who has the responsibility to hire program directors and staff.

### **9421.1 PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

The Child Care Program Director shall be responsible to insure that the parish or school-based child care program meets all the requirements, policies, and practices set by the State of California, the Diocese of Fresno Education Corporation, the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, the local parish, and school (if applicable).

## **9430 LICENSED CHILD CARE PROGRAMS**

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### **9431 ESTABLISHING LICENSED CHILD CARE PROGRAMS**

The opening of a licensed Infant Care, Day Care, or Pre-School Program is a decision reserved to the Bishop of the Diocese of Fresno (see policy 9100). To gain the Bishop's permission, the diocesan institution planning such a program shall submit a formal proposal to the Superintendent of Catholic Education that includes the following items:

- A. Needs Assessment: This needs assessment shall demonstrate the local need for a licensed, Catholic, child care program in the area. The data in this needs assessment should reflect the family demand for such services in the community, the present services available in the community, and why these present services are not meeting the current demand.
- B. Program Outline: Before preparing a Program Outline, representatives from the planning institution shall attend the orientation provided by the State of California, Community Care Licensing Division which explains the state's prerequisites for establishing a child care program and the procedures required to submit an application for licensure. The Program Outline, which is the program's initial design, shall include the following:
  1. A description of the goals and objectives of the child care program
  2. The program's site preparation plan which includes: the estimated costs to prepare the site to meet the state's licensure demands, especially regarding enrollment/space minimums, fire, safety, and health requirements; conformity to local zoning requirements; and the availability of adequate financial resources to make these preparations
  3. A scale drawing of the site including both indoor and outdoor facilities
  4. The program's projected enrollment and the staffing plan to meet this enrollment
  5. A preliminary annual operating budget for the program
  6. A timetable listing all the necessary steps that must be accomplished to open the program
  7. Any licensure application materials already prepared

Upon submittal of the formal proposal, the Superintendent will critique it, draft recommendations, and submit it to the Bishop for his approval. Upon gaining the Bishop's formal approval, the diocesan institution shall assist the Superintendent of Catholic Schools in filing an application for a state child care license. It may also begin making necessary site improvements, hiring and inservicing staff, and taking those steps necessary to open the child care program.

**9440 EXEMPT CHILD CARE PROGRAM**

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**9441 EXTENDED CARE PROGRAMS**

A Catholic school may operate an exempt Extended Care Program that provides before- and/or after-school care for the school's regularly enrolled students in grades transitional kindergarten through eighth. A school's Extended Care Program shall meet the following minimum requirements:

- A. The program shall be opened according to the criteria specified in policy 9444.1 "Establishing an Extended Care Program."
- B. The program shall provide participating students with planned and professionally supervised recreational and learning activities.
- C. The program shall only be available to students who are regularly enrolled in the school.
- D. The program and its staff shall be directly supervised by an on-site Director who is appointed and supervised by the school's principal.
- E. The program should be financed by fees from participating families and should not be subsidized by the school.

**9441.1 ESTABLISHING AN EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM**

The opening of an exempt, school-operated Extended Care Program is a decision reserved to the school's pastor in consultation with the Superintendent of Catholic Schools. To gain the pastor's permission, the principal and board of education shall submit to the pastor a proposed program plan which shall include the following:

- A. An Implementation Plan which includes: a program needs assessment; implementation schedule; a program facility design; estimated costs to prepare the facility and for program equipment; and a first year operational budget (including income based on anticipated enrollment, staffing costs, and other program costs).
- B. A Parent Handbook which includes: the program's philosophy; participation levels and fees; description of typical program hours of operation, services, and activities (homework, recreational, nutritional, etc.); student behavior regulations; emergency plan; health and safety plan; student medical emergency treatment authorization; the after-school campus sweep procedure; sign in/out procedures including an authorization for persons to pick up a student; and parent involvement opportunities.
- C. A Program Handbook which includes the *Parent Handbook* topics and the following: the school principal's responsibilities; the parent registration agreement and annual fee schedule; the program's hiring standards and staffing design for the program's director, assistants, substitutes, volunteers; staff job descriptions (qualifications and duties); fiscal management (bookkeeping, fee collection, cash receipts, etc.) and reporting plan; an emergency management plan for students and facilities; nutritional plan; and marketing plan.