

**SERIES 5000  
INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

INTEGRATED CURRICULUM	5100
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	5110
PASTOR	5111
PRINCIPAL	5112
INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF	5113
PARENTS	5114
STUDENTS	5115
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION	5120
DIOCESAN OBJECTIVE	5121
RELIGION COORDINATOR	5122
TEACHER RESPONSIBILITY	5123
PARENT INVOLVEMENT	5124
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM	5125
TEXTBOOKS	5125.1
SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION	5125.2
FAMILY LIFE PROGRAM	5125.3
SOCIAL JUSTICE	5125.4
LITURGY AND PRAYER	5125.5
RELIGIOUS SYMBOL	5125.6
STUDENT RETREATS	5125.7
GENERAL EDUCATION	5130
CURRICULUM	5131
CURRICULUM PLANNING	5131.1
REQUIREMENTS	5132
SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING FOR STUDENTS	5132.1
REQUIRED SUBJECTS – ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	5132.2
REQUIRED SUBJECTS – SECONDARY SCHOOLS	5132.3
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	5132.4
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – SECONDARY SCHOOLS	5132.5
ACADEMIC FREEDOM – CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES	5136
EXTRA CLASS ACTIVITIES	5140
ASSEMBLIES, PUBLIC PROGRAMS, AND PERFORMANCES	5141
FIELD TRIPS	5142
STUDENT TRIPS	5143
SCHOOL SPORTS PROGRAM	5144
PUBLICATIONS	5145
STUDENT GOVERNMENT	5146
INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATIONS	5200

Updated 7/1/2018

SCHOOL CALENDAR AND PROGRAMMING	5210
NORMAL SCHOOL DAY AND SCHEDULE	5211
MINIMUM SCHOOL DAY	5212
INSTRUCTIONAL DAY FOR TEACHERS	5213
TEACHER IN SERVICE DAYS	5214
EVALUATION OF SCHOOLS	5215
INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION	5220
CLASS SIZE	5221
CLASSROOM ARRANGEMENT	5222
LESSON PLANS	5223
GROUPING	5224
HOMEWORK	5225
ELECTIVES	5226
CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES	5230
PATRIOTIC SYMBOLS	5231
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND RESOURCES	5300
BOOKS	5310
TEXTBOOKS	5311
EVALUATION AND ADOPTION OF TEXTS	5311.1
LIBRARY BOOKS	5312
COPYRIGHT LAWS	5313
SUPPLIES AND OTHER MATERIALS	5320
EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES	5321
TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES	5322
ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM	5323
RESOURCES	5330
GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS	5331
TELEVISED PROGRAMMING	5332
COMMUNITY RESOURCES	5333
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES – COMMERCIAL	5334
INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES	5400
PUPIL SERVICES	5410
STANDARDIZED TESTING	5411
GUIDANCE	5412
REFERRAL TO PUBLIC AGENCIES	5413
CURRICULUM EXTENSION	5420
EXTENSION AND CHILD CARE PROGRAMS	5421
HOME TUTORING	5422
ON-SITE SUMMER SCHOOL	5423

## **5000 INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

*“While the home plays the most fundamental role in helping children develop, the school is the formal setting that educates the young members of society. The school provides this education through its program, its curriculum. A school’s curriculum, established by the school community, consists of an evolving plan of sequential learning opportunities which enable a particular population to achieve goals by a means of varied experience.”*

CURRICULUM IN THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL - NCEA

### **5100 INTEGRATED CURRICULUM**

#### **5110 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

##### **5111 PASTOR**

The pastor shall ensure that a distinctive Christian educational environment is maintained and is characterized by learning experiences integrating religious values with intellectual knowledge.

##### **5112 PRINCIPAL**

The principal or each school is responsible for seeing that the goals and objectives of the school are effectively developed and implemented by the staff through the curriculum, the learning climate, and the learning experiences that provide for the development of each student (see policy 2224).

##### **5113 INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF**

The instructional staff must give particular attention to the scope, sequence, continuity, and integration of learning experiences in the basic learning skills.

##### **5114 PARENTS**

Parents shall be made cognizant of the philosophy and program of the school as they apply for the admission of a student. They should understand that enrollment constitutes agreement that the student be taught according to these goals (see policy 1210).

##### **5115 STUDENTS**

Students should be made aware that each has a God-given power to think, to judge, and to make decisions based on both intellectual and spiritual experiences (see policy 1210).

#### **5120 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

The educational mission of the Church requires that the Catholic school be distinguished by Christian atmosphere and a formal program that relates religious belief and practice with the normal development of children. The religious character and goals of the school should be clearly reflected in the statement of school philosophy.

##### **5121 DIOCESAN OBJECTIVE**

Religious education in the diocesan school has a three-fold objective:

- A. To facilitate the spiritual development of the student and to nurture the student’s personal relationship with Christ.
- B. To build community through active participation in Christian service and through the promotion of global awareness.

C. To develop enlightened Catholics through the academic knowledge of the faith.

**5122 RELIGION COORDINATOR**

The principal of each school shall appoint a religion coordinator who shall act as a resource person and liaison to insure that the religious education goals of the school are accomplished.

**5123 TEACHER RESPONSIBILITY**

All teachers responsible for classroom instruction in religion have a responsibility to be certified in the area of religious education in keeping with diocesan guidelines, to be informed on the goals and objectives of the program, to support the role of parents as primary educators, and to correlate religion with other subjects through word and action.

**5124 PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

The rights and obligations of parents shall be clearly reflected in a religious program which orientates them to the philosophy, objectives, and methods of the school's adopted program, which provides educational sessions for sacramental preparation and family life education, and which calls for direct involvement of the parents in the instruction of their children.

**5125 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Regular religious instruction shall be an integral part of the educational program for all students at all grade levels. As each student progresses in acquiring an intellectual grasp of the religion course material, they are to be tested, graded, and reported according to the same procedures established by the school for other subjects in the curriculum.

**5125.1 TEXTBOOKS**

All schools shall only use those religious education and Family Life education texts and textbook series that authentically teach the faith and values of the Catholic Church in an accurate, age-appropriate, and doctrinally and educationally sound manner. Only texts approved and recommended by the Bishop of the Diocese of Fresno shall be selected for use in Catholic schools.

Other religious education and Family Life education texts, as they are in accord with the authentic magisterium of the Church, may be used as supplementary texts.

**5125.2 SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

The sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation are distinct sacraments. As such, each sacrament will receive its own concentrated preparation, separated from the other by an appropriate interval. The sacrament of Reconciliation should be celebrated prior to the reception of First Eucharist.

**5125.3 FAMILY LIFE PROGRAM**

Family Life education is an essential part of the curriculum of a Catholic school. Each school shall implement a comprehensive Family Life program that shall be taught as either a separate curriculum or integrated into the study of other appropriate subjects.

The Church recognized the primacy of parents in the education of their children especially regarding the teaching of human sexuality. Since human sexuality is incorporated into any comprehensive Family Life program, parents who do not wish their children to participate during the genitally explicit segments of the Family Life instructional program shall petition in writing the principal to remove their children during such instruction.

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Parents who do withdraw their children from the genitally explicit segments of the Family Life program shall be notified when these segments are taught. They will also be encouraged to provide their children a human sexuality education within the family setting.

The school shall notify parents at the beginning of each school year what options they have regarding the Family Life Program.

Parents shall be encouraged by the school to be actively involved in the formation, implementation, and evaluation of the Family Life program.

#### **5125.4 SOCIAL JUSTICE**

General characteristics of a social justice program should reflect an authentic involvement in faith and justice education. It is appropriate that its tenets be integrated throughout the curriculum and be suitable to the age of the student.

#### **5125.5 LITURGY AND PRAYER**

Regular planned liturgical and para liturgical experiences shall be carefully integrated into the school program. Time shall be given each day to formal and spontaneous prayer. It is imperative that students learn the formula of prayers commonly used by Catholics.

#### **5125.6 RELIGIOUS SYMBOL**

A crucifix shall be displayed in every classroom.

#### **5125.7 STUDENT RETREATS**

Elementary and secondary school retreats are highly recommended and encouraged. Programming for retreat says shall be the responsibility of the local administration and faculty.

### **5130 GENERAL EDUCATION**

#### **5131 CURRICULUM**

The school curriculum encompasses all the learning experiences planned and directed under the leadership of the principal. They are to be compatible with diocesan policy and the school philosophy. Along with religious instruction, each school shall provide a general education curriculum that satisfied private school requirements of the California Educational Code.

The curriculum should:

- A. Give witness to the message of Christ as it is revealed through a formal program integrating religious belief and practice.
- B. Provide an informational framework that will prepare the student to live in the twenty-first century by developing the life-learning tools of communication, problemsolving, and decision making.
- C. Encourage each student to develop his/her potential through responsibility and accountability to self.
- D. Affirm ethnic pride, appreciate cultural values, and allow diversity when applying the principles of peace and justice.
- E. Integrate parent and community talent into the school program though specifically defined role for which they will be prepared, made responsible, and held accountable.

### **5131.1 CURRICULUM PLANNING**

- A. The Office of Catholic Education has the responsibility for enabling schools to develop a process whereby instructional programs can be evaluated within the schools of the diocese.
- B. Diocesan Curriculum Committees of teachers and administrators shall at times be appointed;
  - 1. To establish guidelines for the selection of textbooks which reflect a Catholic philosophy of education.
  - 2. To review textbooks and materials and make recommendations concerning their use.
- C. The principal, in consultation with the faculty, is responsible for arranging a well-balanced curriculum including religious, academic, social, service, and athletic activities for the school. Local school program planning and textbook selection shall be conducted by defining clearly the school's philosophy, the needs of individual students, the school's organizational pattern, the strengths of the faculty, budgetary limitations, and diocesan guidelines.
- D. Every secondary school shall have a curriculum committee to assist and advise the principal in his/her responsibility for maintaining a balanced curriculum.

### **5132 REQUIREMENTS**

#### **5132.1 SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING FOR STUDENTS**

All K-12 students are required to be annually instructed in age-appropriate, diocesan approved, Safe Environment curriculum using the "Safe and Sacred" lesson plans. Instruction using any lessons other than those in "Safe and Sacred" must be approved the Safe Environment Office.

The K-12 Safe Environment lessons should be scheduled during the fall semester. Every effort should be made to provide make-up sessions and/or one-on-one tutoring for students who were absent when the lesson was initially presented.

Verification of the annual Safe Environment training is reported in the Principal's Annual SE Report due each April to the Safe Environment coordinator at the diocese.

#### **5132.2 REQUIRED SUBJECTS – ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

The curriculum for grades transitional kindergarten through eight shall include instruction in the following areas: Religion, Reading and literature, English, Spelling, Mathematics, Computer Education, Science, Health, Social Studies, Safety (including the diocesan Safe Environment Curriculum), Handwriting, Art, Music, and Physical Education. Family Life education is to be correlated with the appropriate subjects (see policy 5125ff). Within the curriculum, students shall receive age appropriate instruction on current health and disease issues in accord with the teaching magisterium of the Catholic Church.

#### **5232.3 REQUIRED SUBJECTS – SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

The curriculum for grades nine through twelve shall include the following areas: Religion, English, Foreign Language, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Health Education, Safety (including the diocesan Safe Environment Curriculum), Physical Education, and the Arts. Technology and Computer Education is an additional offering to be encouraged. Minimum requirements are to be established in accordance with state guidelines.

#### **5132.4 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

A complete list of graduation requirements shall be established and published by each school in the parent/student handbooks and made available to all students and their parents (see policy 4550).

### **5132.5 GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS – SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

No student shall receive a diploma of graduation from any secondary school unless the required course of study has been completed and the standards of competency prescribed by the school have been met (see policy 4550).

### **5136 ACADEMIC FREEDOM – CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES**

In training for effective citizenship, it is frequently necessary for students to study issues that are controversial. In considering such issues, it shall be the purpose of the schools to recognize the student's right and/or obligation:

- A. To study conflict issues under a competent instructor in an atmosphere of freedom and mutual respect.
- B. To receive adequate instruction regarding the teachings of the church.
- C. To study conflict issues at the level of the student's understanding.
- D. To form and express a judgment on a conflict issue without thereby jeopardizing his/her relation with the teacher, students, or the school.

The Principal shall:

- A. Notify the pastor or superintendent of any issue that might be considered controversial;
- B. Notify parents of intent to provide opportunity for study of controversial issues;
- C. Provide clear guidelines and safeguards for the study of conflict issues, selection of materials, use of off-campus speakers, and any other elements that are deemed potentially controversial;
- D. Protect and support teachers when unjustifiable complaints, requests, and demands are made; and
- E. Establish procedures that can be used to evaluate criticism.

Teachers shall:

- A. Keep the principal fully informed of the treatment of controversial issues and any parental or community reaction to the handling of such issues;
- B. Deal with conflict issues as impartially and as objectively as possible, recognize and, where necessary, acknowledge personal biases;
- C. Handle all such topics in a manner suited to the range of knowledge maturity and competence of the students;
- D. Have teaching material dealing with all possible aspects of the topics readily available according to the age and maturity of the students; and
- E. Supply information to the principal concerning the nature any controversial topic for approval prior to sending such information to parents.

### **5140 EXTRA CLASS ACTIVITIES**

Where feasible, a variety of extracurricular activities suitable to the age and needs of the students shall be offered. All school-sponsored activities must have the approval of the principal who is responsible for the general planning of the school program and the assignment of staff as moderators.

Such activities, under the supervision of regular teachers, ordinarily are to be scheduled at other than class times; however, they may be built into the class schedule when the good order of the school requires it or when the activity is integral or complementary to regular instruction.

Service activities in the school, parish, and community shall be encouraged. Nevertheless, care should be exercised to prevent excessive demands which would interfere with the student's academic progress.

#### **5141 ASSEMBLIES, PUBLIC PROGRAMS, AND PERFORMANCES**

A school shall provide opportunities for assemblies, public programs, and performances by school groups in educationally sound activities which benefit the students, the school, and the community.

#### **5142 FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips provide students with an extension to the regular classroom and, therefore, are encouraged. A field trip should flow naturally from a particular area of study or provide a learning opportunity that cannot be provided within the confines of the classroom. All field trips must be reviewed and approved by the school's administration and the diocesan insurance office (see policies 5143 and 6600ff).

#### **5143 STUDENT TRIPS**

A student trip is defined as any field trip that requires an overnight or longer stay. All school-sponsored student trips must:

- A. Be clearly identified as focused on the school mission and curriculum.
- B. Provide safe and reliable transportation.
- C. Provide adequate and appropriate housing and meals.
- D. Provide adequate and appropriate student supervision. All employees and volunteers who supervise student trips must have on file fingerprint clearance (see policies 3620ff).
- E. Be reviewed and approved by the school's administration and the diocesan Insurance Office.
- F. Ensure that any student who is unable to attend the student trip for a health or monetary reason acceptable to the school shall not suffer any adverse academic consequence.

No solicitation, advertising, planning, fundraising, or any other business related to a non-school-sponsored student trip shall be conducted on campus.

No non-school-sponsored student trip shall directly or indirectly imply that it is a school-sponsored activity nor shall it use the school's name, letterhead, logos, uniforms, or any other school identification in any publication or activity.

#### **5144 SCHOOL SPORTS PROGRAM**

The school sports program shall be proportionate to the students' needs, interests, and abilities. It must not interfere with the normal routine of the school program, nor should it encourage practices contrary to good sportsmanship.

Whenever an elementary school provides a team(s) in a particular sport for only boys or for only girls, children of the opposite gender shall not qualify for these team(s) unless the school does not provide equal opportunities in the total sports program of the school for either gender. An equal opportunity exists when both males and females may participate in an equal number of sports during a school year (e.g. boys' participation in flag football is matched with girls' participation in volleyball).

#### **5145 PUBLICATIONS**

With the approval of the principal, each secondary school may establish a school newspaper/yearbook for the students of the school and their parents. Such publications should conform to standards of good journalism. It is strongly recommended that the local administration adopt rules and regulations in the form of a written publications code which shall include guidelines concerning content, prior review, restrictions on time, place, and manner of distribution, and advertisements. Student participation in production and distribution shall be under the direction of a faculty moderator.

**5146 STUDENT GOVERNEMENT**

Student government deserves a place in the regular schedule of activities throughout all levels of education.

**5200 INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATIONS**

**5210 SCHOOL CALENDAR AND PROGRAMMING**

The Office of Catholic Education will issue an official school calendar annually. If local circumstances seem to warrant deviation from this calendar, the Office of Catholic Educations shall be notified in writing. There shall be 180 days of actual teacher-student participation each year.

**5122 NORMAL SCHOOL DAY AND SCHEDULE**

Every elementary school shall organize its daily and weekly schedule on a pattern that is most appropriate for its educational program, provided that at least 300 minutes per day are scheduled for grades three through eight exclusive of opening and closing ceremonies. The total weekly time allotment indicated in the Principal Guidebook is to be strictly observed.

**5212 MINIMUM SCHOOL DAY**

Minimum school days may be scheduled upon authorization of the Superintendent and should be indicated in the school calendar published at the beginning of the school year.

**5213 INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS FOR TEACHERS**

On all days listed in the school calendar, teachers shall be present for the full time of service as scheduled by the principal. In addition, teachers are responsible for normal supervisory services and moderator duties assigned by the school administration. Teachers who must leave the school grounds at any time during the scheduled day shall obtain the approval of the principal in advance.

Elementary school teachers shall report for duty not later than 30 minutes before the beginning of each school day. They shall be available for a minimum of 30 minutes after regular dismissal for assistance or conference with students, parents, and school officials.

**5214 TEACHER IN-SERVICE DAYS**

The official school calendar shall designate a minimum of two days of service for teacher in-service or planning in addition to the regular school calendar for students.

**5215 EVALUATION OF SCHOOLS**

Each school shall undergo a self-evaluation process sponsored by WCEA/WASC. The purpose of this evaluation is to improve and maintain professional standards and to develop future planning. Recommendations made by the visiting committee shall be implemented with care.

**5220 INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANIZATION**

**5221 CLASS SIZE**

Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten class size should not exceed 25 students. At all other grade levels, class size should not exceed 35 students. In determining the number of students in a classroom, careful consideration shall be given to:

- A. The physical size of the room;
- B. The use of paraprofessionals;

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- C. The heterogeneity of students requiring subgroups; and
- D. The management skills of the teacher.

**5222 CLASSROOM ARRANGEMENT**

Classrooms should be arranged to provide a safe, pleasant, and stimulating environment, adaptable to a variety of learning modes and arrangements (see policy 4750).

**5223 LESSON PLANS**

All teachers shall develop lesson plans with clearly instructional objectives. The principal should review them weekly.

**5224 GROUPING**

To stimulate creative and independent thinking as well as to accommodate different student learning styles and abilities, schools are encouraged to use a variety of grouping patterns. Grouping should emphasize practice in skills, problem solving techniques, and specific instructional objectives drawn from the school continuum.

**5225 HOMEWORK**

Teachers should assign homework for purposes of reinforcing learning that has taken place at school and of fostering habits of independent study. Assignments should be given with consideration for students' varying ability levels. Parents shall be informed concerning the schools' homework policy. The teacher should be sensitive to the home environment in which the student must do required assignments. Teachers in departmentalized situations should coordinate assignments.

**5226 ELECTIVES**

Electives are encouraged provided that:

- A. They enhance the curriculum; and
- B. They are within reasonable staff and budget allocations.

**5230 CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES**

Appropriate programs and commemorating civic and religious observances shall be consistent with the educational goals of the school.

**5231 PATRIOTIC SYMBOLS**

When school is in session, the American flag and the California State flag shall be on display outside the building, weather permitting. Each classroom shall display a suitable American flag.

**5300 INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND RESOURCES**

**5310 BOOKS**

**5311 TEXTBOOKS**

The textbook series shall be selected in accordance with a procedure developed by the principal and faculty to assure the achievement of basic objectives. It is important that there be a united, articulated program and a consistent methodology clearly agreed upon by all members of the school staff.

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It is strongly advised that the basal textbook series be used sequentially in grades K-6 in core curriculum subjects. The exception to this pertains to schools using an approved individualized management system in reading, mathematics, or other basic subjects.

Principals shall provide teachers' manuals for every basal textbook series and every available supplementary set used as part of the instructional program. Supplementary resources should be selected in accordance with the general curriculum policy of the school.

#### **5311.1 EVALUATION AND ADOPTION OF TEXTBOOKS**

Basal texts shall be reviewed and evaluated at least every 5 (five) years. Textbook series should be adopted after careful evaluation according to specific criteria. Care should be taken to eliminate the use of out dated texts in classroom instruction.

#### **5312 LIBRARY BOOKS**

An appropriate selection of printed materials and technology resources in a central library is a vital part of a school's instructional program. If a school does not have room for a central library, provision should be made for classroom libraries or centers.

Local criteria should be established for the selection of school and/or classroom library books. The materials selected shall be compatible with the educational goals of the school.

#### **5313 COPYRIGHT LAWS**

The duplication of materials covered by an exclusive copyright is subject to the specific guidelines and protections which accompany the copyright revision law. All faculty and staff members shall be knowledgeable concerning the law's provisions and guidelines.

#### **5320 SUPPLIES AND OTHER MATERIALS**

##### **5321 EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES**

Each school shall determine its requirements for supplies and equipment in accordance with the instructional program and methodology designated to serve the students in the school.

##### **5322 TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES**

Local criteria should be established for the selection of technology resources as acquisitions to a school resource center or classroom learning center. The resources selected shall be compatible with the educational goals of the school.

##### **5323 ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM**

Local school regulations shall govern the use of animals in the classroom, as pets or for study purposes. Teachers shall ensure that they be treated in a safe and humane manner. The presence and/or care of an animal are prohibited if it presents a health or safety hazard for students. Persons bringing animals into the school shall receive prior permission from the supervising teacher in consultation with the principal.

## **5330 RESOURCES**

### **5331 GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS**

In cooperation with local public agencies, diocesan schools participate in a number of government financed programs which provide benefits to students. Since new programs are constantly being developed and guidelines for existing programs are frequently changed, the basic principles are outlined:

- A. All schools are encouraged to secure for their students all public services to which they are entitled.
- B. Some government program forms, which must be filed annually, require the signature of a nonpublic school official before submission for approval to the State Department of Education or other agency.
- C. Principals shall follow the detailed instructions issued periodically by the Office of Catholic Education pertaining to specific government programs.

### **5332 TELEVISED PROGRAMMING**

Schools shall utilize the services and programs offered by Channel 49 in accordance with local needs and curriculum program outlines.

### **5333 COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

The principal and instructional staff shall acquaint themselves with the range and quality of services offered by community agencies, both public and private. Care should be taken to verify the expertise of the person rendering the service.

### **5334 EDUCATIONAL SERVICES – COMMERCIAL**

The student instruction is the responsibility of the school's faculty. Extra programs not directly related to or included in the required school subjects are left to the discretion of the local administrator. Nevertheless, no school contract for commercially provided educational services should be signed for any diocesan or parish school without the written approval of the Superintendent.

## **5400 INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES**

### **5410 PUPIL SERVICES**

#### **5411 STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Each diocesan elementary and secondary school shall participate in the standardized testing programs established by the Office of Catholic Education to insure an objective evaluation of each student, class, and school's achievement and progress (see policy 4520).

Neither the Office of Catholic Education nor any school shall release individual student test results to the public. A student's individual test scores shall be made available to the student's teachers and parent/guardian. These test scores shall be kept in the student's confidential CUM folder.

Each year the Office of Catholic Education will make public and publish the diocesan average test scores. Each school may decide whether to publish its own classroom averages or school results.

#### **5412 GUIDANCE**

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Every teacher shall be concerned with guidance. Consequently, all teaching personnel shall have as much knowledge of the basic facts as needed concerning each student, including attitudes, abilities, and environment.

On the secondary level, student guidance shall be an integral part of the curriculum of the school. The guidance program shall concern itself not only with curricular problems and vocational aspirations and abilities, but also with personal and religious counseling.

**5413 REFERRAL TO PUBLIC AGENCIES**

Administrative and guidance personnel should not hesitate to refer students to appropriate public agencies when needed services are lacking in the Catholic school. Such referral shall only be done in cases where parental consent is obtained.

**5420 CURRICULUM EXTENSION**

**5421 EXTENSION AND CHILD CARE PROGRAMS**

Extension programs are on-site, school operated programs of before-and-after school care, supervision, and enrichment which serve only children who are enrolled as regular students in grades Tk-12<sup>th</sup> at the school. Under current state regulations, such programs are exempt from licensing requirements of the State Department of Social Services.

Preschool programs which serve pre-transitional kindergarten or kindergarten children on a full or part-time basis, and Day Care Programs, which provide care for children on a full or part-time basis and enroll children other than just the students of the parochial school are subject to licensing requirements of the State of Department of Social Services (see policy 9400ff).

**5422 HOME TUTORING**

When a student will be confined to the home for a considerable period of time, he/she should be enrolled in the local public school district for that period of time, in order to obtain home tutoring.

**5423 ON-SITE SUMMER SCHOOL**

A summer school program may be conducted only after consultation with the principal and approval of the pastor. Care should be taken to abide by the insurance regulations of the diocese. Teachers offering individual programs to students enrolled in the school must consult with the principal and receive the approval of pastor and principal for such programs.