

*This model employee handbook is presented as a guide for diocesan schools. Bracketed and italicized sections may not be applicable to every school.*

## **ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK**

This Employee Handbook is a summary of the personnel and office policies of \_\_\_\_\_ School (the “School”) regarding your employment and the benefits provided for you and your family. It is designed to be a resource and guide for employees. Employees should bring the Handbook home so that their family can become more familiar with the School. If any questions arise regarding the implementation or interpretation of any benefit plan, please refer to the actual plan documents and summary plan descriptions maintained in the Human Resources Office of the Diocese of Manchester, as they will control any provision contained in this Handbook.

This Employee Handbook governs the employment of employees of the School. Separate policies govern the assignment of priests by the Bishop of Manchester to a school.

The policies, benefits, and rules contained in this Handbook may be changed from time to time as church or school policy, business, employment legislation, and economic conditions dictate. The Handbook and other plan documents are not contractual in nature and do not guarantee any continuance of benefits.

If and when provisions are changed, the School will, as soon as possible, provide you with replacement pages for those policies that have become outdated. If any employee has any questions regarding the policies, benefits, and rules of the School, they should feel free to contact the Principal (or in the case of the Principal, the Superintendent).

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### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK**

The Employee Handbook and its appendices are important documents intended to help you become acquainted with the School. This Handbook will serve as a guide; it is not the final word in all cases. Individual circumstances may call for individual attention.

Please read the following statements and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgement of the Employee Handbook. Return one copy of this document to the Principal. The second copy should remain in your handbook.

- I have received a copy and understand it as my obligation to read the Employee Handbook. I understand that the policies described in the Handbook are subject to change at the School's sole discretion at any time.
- I understand that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand the above statements and have received a copy of the Employee Handbook and its appendices.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Employee (please print)

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Date

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Signature of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Employee (please print)

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## **I. THE WAY WE WORK**

### **EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

The School is committed to a policy of equal employment opportunity to all persons based on individual merit, competence, need, and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. The School therefore will not discriminate against any applicant or employee because of military or veteran status, physical or mental disability, race, age, color, sex, pregnancy, genetic information, or national origin. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment including but not limited to hiring, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

There are certain positions in the School for which it is necessary to be a practicing member of the Roman Catholic Church, and some positions for which preference in hiring is given to those who are practicing members of the Roman Catholic Church. Practicing members of the Roman Catholic Church are expected to be registered and active members of a parish community. Likewise, practicing Roman Catholics agree to adhere to and uphold the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church in what they say and do.

It is also the policy of the School to prohibit harassment of one employee by another employee or administrator on the basis of any of the classifications discussed above. While it is not easy to identify precisely what conduct constitutes prohibited harassment, prohibited conduct certainly includes slurs, epithets, derogatory comments, unwelcome jokes, teasing, sexual advances, or other similar verbal or physical conduct. Any employee who harasses another employee on any of those bases may be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge.

Any employee who believes that s/he has been a victim of such harassment or discrimination or retaliation for making a good faith complaint of discrimination or harassment should follow the Reporting Procedure for sexual and other unlawful harassment detailed in the Serving Christ, Serving Others Code of Ministerial Conduct (Appendix I). In addition, all employees are free to discuss any equal employment opportunity-related questions with the Principal or the Director of Human Resources for the Diocese of Manchester.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

It is the goal of the School to promote a workplace that is free of sexual misconduct. In this regard, the Diocese of Manchester has established The Promise to Protect, Pledge to Heal Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People (“Policy”) and the Serving Christ, Serving Others Code of Ministerial Conduct (“Code”), copies of which are provided in the Appendix I of this Handbook. The Code is intended to provide a broader context in which to view ministerial relationships by church personnel, while the Policy is solely focused on preventing, investigating, and remedying sexual abuse of minors.

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Sexual harassment of employees is a form of sexual misconduct and will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, and nonphysical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting that individual, or for awarding or withholding favorable employment opportunity, evaluation, or assistance; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance at work, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment includes a wide range of behaviors from the actual coercion of sexual relations to unwelcome offensive comments, jokes, innuendoes, and other sexually-oriented statements and unwelcome emphasis of sexual identity. Sexual harassment may be indirect and even unintentional. Employees are prohibited from bringing into the workplace or otherwise displaying any written materials or pictures that are sexually suggestive or offensive in nature.

An individual who believes that s/he has been subjected to sexual harassment or retaliation for making a complaint should report the incident in accordance with the Reporting Procedure for Violations of the Code of Ministerial Conduct (Appendix I).

## **WHISTLEBLOWER POLICY**

Employees are expected to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of the School, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Employees must also report violations or suspected violations of ethics or civil law in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

### **Reporting Procedure**

1. Employees with concerns about ethics violations or violations of the law should speak with the Principal. If the employee prefers not to discuss the matter with the Principal, s/he may report the incident directly to the Superintendent of Schools or the Diocese of Manchester Delegate for Ministerial Conduct. Reports can be submitted anonymously, and confidentiality will be preserved to the extent possible to complete an accurate and thorough investigation.
2. Principals who become aware of concerns about violations of ethics or civil law will report the conduct and/or complaint to the Superintendent of Schools and the Delegate for Ministerial Conduct.
3. The Delegate for Ministerial Conduct will conduct an investigation in a discreet manner and will make any necessary or appropriate reports to the civil authorities.

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4. Any employee, including the complaining employee, who participates in good faith in any investigation under this policy has the assurance that no reprisals will be taken as a result of a report. It is the policy of the School to encourage the reporting of violations. If an employee believes that retaliation has occurred following a report, s/he should report the retaliation in accordance with the Reporting Procedure for violations of the Code of Ministerial Conduct (Appendix I).

### **VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE POLICY**

The School will not refuse to hire an otherwise qualified individual or discharge, threaten to discharge, demote, suspend, or in any manner discriminate or retaliate against an individual with regard to promotion, compensation or other terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because the individual is a victim of domestic violence, harassment, sexual assault, or stalking. An individual who believes that the School has violated this policy should report the matter to the Principal or the Diocese of Manchester Director of Human Resources.

### **IMMIGRATION LAW COMPLIANCE**

The School complies with the *Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986* by employing only individuals who are authorized to work in the United States. All employees will be asked on or before their first day of employment to provide original documents verifying the right to work in the United States and to sign a verification form required by federal law. The law requires that if an individual cannot verify his or her right to work within three days of hire, the School must terminate the employment relationship.

### **THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

The School complies with Title I of the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* (ADA) which prohibits any form of discrimination in hiring as well as in all terms and conditions of employment against individuals with disabilities. The School will make every effort to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity in the application process, to enable employees to perform their essential job functions, and to enable disabled employees to enjoy the same benefits and privileges of employment as those enjoyed by employees without disabilities. Please notify the Principal (or in the case of a Principal, the Superintendent) if, because of a disability, you require an accommodation to perform the functions of your job. The School will maintain all medical information in a confidential manner in accordance with the ADA.

### **SAFETY AND HEALTH POLICY**

The School is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for its employees. With the assistance of all employees, the School can use its resources to

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identify and control work-related hazards. All employees are required to bring known and potential hazards and safety issues to the attention of the Principal or an employee who serves on the Joint Loss Safety Committee for the School building. Failure to bring a known safety hazard to the attention of the Principal may result in an injury to others.

The cooperative effort of each employee and administrator in the awareness, acceptance, participation, and preservation of a functional *Health and Safety Program* is essential and welcomed. Employees are asked to bring any suggestion they may have to improve safety to the Principal or an employee representative on the Joint Loss Management Committee.

## **II. EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

### **EMPLOYMENT AT WILL**

Some School faculty and administrators enter into contracts with the School that contain specific provisions regarding their employment. School staff, administrators, and faculty members who do not have contracts are considered to be employees at will and therefore can resign from their employment at any time, for any reason. Likewise, with respect to employees who have not entered into employment contracts, the School can terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or reason. Neither the policies contained in this Handbook nor any other written or verbal communication by an administrator are intended to change the at-will relationship or create a contract of employment.

### **EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATIONS**

At the time of hire, employees are classified as full-time, part-time, or temporary and informed as to whether they qualify for overtime pay. Unless otherwise specified in writing or as required by law, the benefits described in this Handbook apply to all employees, with the exception of certain wage, salary, and time off limitations. If employees are unsure of the job classification into which their position fits, they should ask the appropriate department head.

FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES: Individuals who work thirty (30) or more hours per week.

PART-TIME EMPLOYEES: Individuals who work fewer than thirty (30) hours per week. Part-time employees are not eligible for benefits described in the Handbook except where noted or to the extent required by state or federal law.

TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES: Individuals who are hired for specific periods of time or for the completion of a specific project. Temporary employees are not eligible for benefits described in this Handbook except to the extent required by state or federal law or by contract with the employee. Generally, substitute teachers are considered to be temporary employees.

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**NON-EXEMPT AND EXEMPT EMPLOYEES:** Exempt Employees are those who, because of the nature of their job, are not entitled to overtime pay and minimum wage in accordance with the *Fair Labor Standards Act* (FLSA). Non-exempt Employees are entitled to be paid one and one-half (1 ½) times their regular hourly wage for any time worked over forty (40) hours per week. Time away from work (including, but not limited to, time away related to a job-related injury, bereavement leave, vacation, or sick time) are not counted as hours worked for the purpose of computing eligibility for overtime pay. You will be advised when you are hired if you are entitled to overtime pay.

### **III. TIME AWAY FROM WORK AND OTHER BENEFITS**

#### **HOLIDAYS**

The School observes certain holidays and Holy Days each year as set forth on the school calendar. Full-time employees will be compensated in accordance with their regular work schedule for those days.

#### **VACATION**

Vacation is a time to rest, relax, and pursue special interests. The School provides paid vacation to express appreciation for the loyalty and dedicated service of employees and to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to rest from their labor.

Upon separation from employment, employees will receive earned, unused vacation pay if (1) they have been actively employed for at least six (6) months prior to their termination; and (2) in the event of resignation, they have given two weeks notice of intent to resign, or in the event of involuntary discharge, their termination was not “for cause” as determined by the School.

#### **PERSONAL DAYS**

The School will provide two (2) personal days to all full-time and part-time employees at the start of each new school year. Part-time employees will be paid for personal days on a pro-rated basis. Personal days may not be carried to the next school year, and employees will not be paid for unused personal days during employment or upon separation from employment. All personal days must be approved in advance by the appropriate supervisor (Principal or Superintendent).

#### **SICK LEAVE AND DISABILITY**

The health and wellbeing of the employees of the School is of paramount concern. When illness, short-term or long-term disability prevent an employee from working, the School must balance this concern with the requirement to proceed with its work and ministry. The following policies recognize the value of employee health and the requisite stewardship of the School.

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Full-time and part-time employees are eligible for sick pay from the date of hire. [*Full-time and part-time employees are eligible for short-term disability income benefits after one (1) year of employment with the School. Full-time employees are eligible for long-term disability insurance after the first ninety (90) days of employment with the School.*] There are no sick pay, short-term, or long-term disability income benefits for temporary employees.

### **Sick Pay**

The School provides up to [*ten (10) paid*] sick days to all full-time [*and part-time*] employees at the start of each new school year. Sick time must be used in full or half day increments, and employees will be paid at the normal straight time rate for the number of hours regularly scheduled to work. Sick pay may not exceed the employee's regular workday and/or workweek hours. The School may require that you provide certification from a healthcare provider regarding the necessity for taking a sick day and/or authorization to return to work.

Sick pay is available to all eligible employees from date of hire. Sick days may not be accumulated from year-to-year, and employees will not be paid for sick days not taken during employment or upon separation from employment.

Employees who are unable to work due to illness must contact the appropriate supervisor (Principal or Superintendent) on a daily basis relative to the need for and status of their absences, unless otherwise directed. Reporting an absence to any employee other than the Principal (or in the case of a Principal, the Superintendent) will not be accepted as compliance with the daily reporting requirement. Employees who fail to report to work or call the Principal (or Superintendent) for three (3) consecutive work days will be considered to have voluntarily resigned from employment.

### **[Short-Term Disability]**

*A short-term disability is defined as a medical condition that necessitates the absence of an employee from his/her work or ministry for eight (8) consecutive calendar days to ninety (90) consecutive calendar days. When an eligible employee's medical condition rises to the level of short-term disability, the School will require that the employee provide certification from a healthcare provider regarding the necessity for taking short-term disability leave.*

*Eligible employees whose illness exceeds eight (8) consecutive calendar days must contact their Principal on the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) day and on a weekly basis thereafter relative to the need for and status of their absence, unless otherwise directed. Reporting of the absence to any employee other than the Principal will not be accepted as compliance with the daily or weekly reporting requirement.*

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*Full-time and part-time employees who have completed one (1) year of employment with the School are eligible for short-term disability income benefits. Short-term disability income benefits are not available for leaves resulting from elective or cosmetic surgery. In addition, short-term disability income benefits will be reduced by the amount of Workers Compensation indemnity benefits paid, if applicable. The short-term disability income benefits are as follows:*

- 1) 60% of regular full-time or part-time wages;*
- 2) 100% of employer-funded benefits.*

*Upon the eighth consecutive calendar day of illness, the School will administratively invoke the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provisions for eligible employees. The specific rights and responsibilities of employees under the FMLA are detailed in the FMLA Policy, a copy of which is found in Appendix II of this Handbook. ]*

### **[Long-Term Disability Income Insurance**

*A long-term disability is defined as a medical condition that necessitates the absence of an employee from his/her work or ministry for more than 90 consecutive calendar days. Only full-time employees who have completed their 90 day entry period are eligible for long-term disability income insurance.*

*When an eligible employee's medical condition rises to the level of long-term disability, the School will require the employee to provide all requisite documentation to the insurance carrier with whom the Diocese of Manchester contracts for coverage in this regard. Failure to comply with the conditions of the long-term disability insurance policy voids the employee's right to all long-term disability income benefits.*

*Eligible employees whose illness exceeds 90 consecutive calendar days must contact the Director of Human Resources on a weekly basis relative to the need for and status of their absence, unless otherwise directed. Reporting an absence to any employee other than the Director of Human Resources will not be accepted as compliance with the weekly reporting requirement.*

*Long-term disability income insurance benefits are as follows:*

- 1) equivalent of 60% of regular weekly wages to a maximum of \$3,000.00 per month;*
- 2) opportunity to continue health and dental insurance coverage at employee expense;*
- 3) applicable disability rights for retirement benefit(s).*

*Upon the initiation of a long-term disability, the School will initiate the process for coverage continuation of health and dental insurance (at employee expense). Likewise, the applicable disability provisions for retirement benefit(s) will be evaluated and appropriately executed. In certain circumstances, an employee may retain the right to*

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*return to his/her previous position following a period of long-term disability in accordance with any applicable state or federal law.]*

## **FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

### General Provisions

Employees are eligible for a Family and Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA) if they have been employed by the School for at least one year and worked at least 1,250 hours in the year preceding the leave. Under the FMLA, an unpaid leave of absence for up to 12 weeks in a 12 month period may be taken by eligible employees for the following reasons:

- (a) The birth of a child, in order to care for the child (leave must be taken within twelve (12) months of the birth of an employee's child);
- (b) An adoption or foster care placement of a child, in order to care for the child (leave must be taken within twelve (12) months of the adoption or placement in the employee's home);
- (c) A serious health condition of the employee's spouse, child or parent when the ill person is incapable of self-care and the employee is needed for such care;
- (d) A serious health condition of the employee which results in the employee's inability to perform his or her job;
- (e) Any "qualifying exigency" that stems from the fact an employee's spouse, child or parent is on or has been called to active duty in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation; or
- (f) The serious injury or illness of a "covered service member" who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, or is on outpatient status or on the temporary disability retired list and who is the employee's spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin ("nearest blood relative"), in order to care for the service member.

FMLA may run concurrently with other types of leave. Further information about the Diocese of Manchester's FMLA policy, including the specific rights and responsibilities of employees and a sample request form, is provided in the Family and Medical Leave of Absence Policy (Appendix II).

## **MATERNITY LEAVE**

The School provides female employees with a leave of absence for the period of temporary physical disability resulting from pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. This leave of absence may be paid or unpaid in whole or in part. The

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employee is required to use all earned, unused personal and vacation days (if applicable) before taking any unpaid leave. *[An eligible full-time or part-time female employee of the School who has completed one year of service will be paid short-term disability income benefits for the period of physical disability related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related conditions.]* If eligible for FMLA, FMLA will run concurrently with maternity leave.

When the employee on maternity leave is physically able to return to work, she will be reinstated to her original job or a comparable position unless business necessity makes this impossible or unreasonable. An employee who cannot be returned to her former or comparable position remains eligible to apply for any available position with the School. An employee on maternity leave who states she will not return to work will be considered to have resigned her position as of the date her leave was commenced.

### ***[DISCRETIONARY LEAVE OF ABSENCE***

*Full time employees may apply for an unpaid, discretionary leave of absence of up to six (6) months if they have exhausted all other leave time or are not eligible for any other leave of absence. Requests for such unpaid leaves are granted at the sole discretion of the School.*

*Discretionary leaves of absence will not ordinarily be granted to employees with less than one (1) year of continuous service. In determining whether to grant a discretionary leave, the School will consider, among other factors, the employee's length of service, the employee's work record, the reason(s) for the leave, and staffing needs.*

*Discretionary leaves will be unpaid, and the employee on discretionary leave does not earn or accrue any benefits, including vacation, sick leave, holidays, and/or personal days. The period of discretionary leave will be considered a suspension of employment for the purposes of calculating years of employment. In addition, participation in any medical or dental insurance coverage must be entirely paid by the employee during the leave. The employee must make arrangements with the Diocese of Manchester Director of Human Resources to make the insurance premium payments.*

*If a vacancy exists at the time of the expiration of the approved discretionary leave, the employee will be reinstated to his/her prior position or a comparable position unless business necessity makes reinstatement impossible or unreasonable. If a vacancy does not exist, the employee will be considered for the next available position for which s/he qualifies. Failure to return to work on the workday following expiration of the approved leave is equivalent to a voluntary resignation.*

*Requests for discretionary leave should be submitted to the Principal at least thirty (30) days prior to the requested date of leave. The request should be made in writing, stating the length of the leave, and a brief description of the reason for the request. All considerations and approval for discretionary leave are handled on a case by case basis.]*

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## **MILITARY LEAVE**

The School observes all laws and regulations governing military service. The School will grant leaves of absence without pay to full-time and part-time employees who enlist, are drafted, commissioned, or recalled to active service in the armed forces of the United States in accordance with the provisions of the *Universal Military Training and Service Act* and the *Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994*. In addition, as discussed above, eligible family members of military personnel may have certain leave benefits under the Family and Medical Leave of Absence policy (see FMLA policy in Appendix II).

If any employee is in the military reserve, s/he will receive the required time off to complete the annual two-week military training. If possible, this military training should be scheduled during school vacation times. If the employee must complete annual military training during a time when the employee is scheduled to work, the employee must present a copy of official orders or instructions to the Principal (or in the case of the Principal, to the Superintendent). This information shall be made a part of the employee's permanent personnel record. *[If an employee's military pay is less than regular pay, s/he will be paid the difference for up to two (2) weeks per twelve (12) months for the period of reserve service.]*

If an employee is involuntarily called to active military duty for a time period beyond normal annual training, the employee has certain reemployment rights as prescribed by laws with which the School will comply. These employees must notify the Principal (or in the case of the Principal, the Superintendent) of their availability to return to work.

The School reserves the right to replace an employee's position with another employee for the duration of the leave of absence. Every effort will be made to place the employee on leave in his/her previous position. If this is not possible, the employee will be placed in a position with comparable status, pay, and responsibility.

## ***[BEREAVEMENT LEAVE***

*The death of a loved one is a time of particular grief. Full-time and part-time employees bereaved by the death of an immediate relative will be granted time off from work without loss of pay in accordance with the following policy.*

*If the event of the death of a member of a full-time or part-time employee's immediate family, the School provides up to three (3) days paid leave. The three workdays usually include the day before the funeral and a day after. "Immediate family" includes spouse, children, step-children, parents, brothers, sisters, step-parents, step-brothers, step-sisters, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandparents, and grandchildren of the employee.*

*Additional unpaid time off due to bereavement may be granted for a specified and limited period of time with the approval of the Principal. Employees seeking such additional unpaid time off must demonstrate a need for this situation.*

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*In the event that an employee is on paid vacation at the time of the death of a relative, the bereavement leave will not be charged against vacation credit. Additional vacation days may be granted to compensate for those days used as bereavement leave.]*

### **JURY DUTY LEAVE**

The School considers it a civic duty to serve on a jury if summoned and will grant employees leave in order to serve on a jury. *[In the case of unpaid leave, employees summoned for jury duty will be paid the difference between their regular rate of pay and the pay provided by the government for jury service.]* An employee must show a jury summons to the Principal as soon as such notice is received. *[In order to receive jury duty pay, employees will be required to furnish the Principal with copies of the checks received for jury duty pay.]*

While serving on a jury, employees are expected to call the Principal daily to advise them of their status. In addition, employees are expected to return to their job if they are excused from jury duty during regular work hours.

### **CRIME VICTIM LEAVE TIME**

Any employee who is the victim of a crime (felony or misdemeanor) may be entitled to unpaid leave time to attend court or other legal or investigative proceedings associated with the prosecution of the crime. An employee who leaves work pursuant to this provision may elect to take accrued paid vacation time (if applicable) or personal leave time. Employees who seek crime victim leave time shall provide the Principal (or in the case of the Principal, the Superintendent) with a copy of the notice of each scheduled hearing, conference, or meeting that is provided to the employee by the court or agency responsible for providing notice to the employee. Leave time may be denied if it causes the School undue hardship.

### **STATE OF EMERGENCY LEAVE**

When the Governor of the State of New Hampshire or the General Court declares a state of emergency under NH law, any employee who is also a member of a fire department, rescue squad, or emergency medical services agency who is called into service of the state or a political subdivision may take leave without pay from the School to respond to the emergency. An employee who takes State of Emergency leave may elect to take accrued paid vacation time or personal leave time, but is not required to do so.

### **EDUCATIONAL LEAVE**

At the sole discretion of the Principal (or in the case of the Principal, the Superintendent), full-time employees may be granted paid or unpaid leave to attend workshops related to their work. All considerations and approval for educational leave are handled on a case by case basis.

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## **TUITION SUBSIDY**

The School will offer a tuition subsidy for personnel with children enrolled in the School. The School will determine the amount of the subsidy.

## **WORKERS COMPENSATION**

The School provides Workers Compensation coverage for all employees. This insurance coverage protects employees from a loss of income and pays medical expenses clearly resulting from a workplace accident or injury. All employees are required to immediately report work-related injuries to the Principal (or in the case of the Principal, the Superintendent).

Employees with work-related injuries may be entitled to temporary alternative duty in accordance with the New Hampshire Workers Compensation law. Employees with non-work-related injuries or other physical or mental impairments who require accommodations to perform their jobs should make any accommodation requests to their department heads. The School will consider the request in accordance with the *Americans With Disabilities Act*.

## ***[SECTION 125 FLEXIBLE BENEFIT PLAN***

*The School has a Section 125 Flexible Benefit Plan on file in compliance with the Internal Revenue Service regulations. This plan allows for employee contributions for certain employee benefits to be paid prior to the calculation of employment taxes. Details concerning the Section 125 Plan may be obtained from the Principal.*

## **MEDICAL AND DENTAL INSURANCE BENEFIT PLANS**

The School provides all full-time employees who have met the eligibility requirements of the selected insurance plan with health insurance coverage. The terms of coverage and co-payment for the employee are available upon application and are subject to change. An agreement for payroll deduction(s) of the appropriate premium by the employee must be signed either at date of hire or subsequent annual open enrollment period(s). Details concerning the health and dental insurance plans may be obtained from the Diocese of Manchester Director of Human Resources.

## **CONTINUATION OF GROUP HEALTH AND DENTAL INSURANCE**

The federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) requires that most employers sponsoring group health plans offer employees and their families the opportunity for a temporary extension of health insurance at group rates in certain circumstances when coverage would otherwise end. The Catholic Church is

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exempt from the federal COBRA law. In addition, the plans offered by the Diocese of Manchester are exempt from New Hampshire's insurance laws regarding continuation of health coverage. However, the Diocese of Manchester voluntarily offers continuation of health insurance under certain circumstances for a limited period. Please refer to the Continuation of Health and Dental Insurance Policy in Appendix III of this handbook.

#### ***[TERM LIFE INSURANCE***

*The School provides all full-time employees who have completed the ninety (90) day entry period with term life insurance in an amount equal to the employee's annual regular wages but not to exceed \$75,000. Employees may also elect additional life insurance for themselves and their dependents at their own expense through payroll deductions. Details of this program may be obtained from the Principal.]*

#### ***[403(b) RETIREMENT PLAN***

*The School provides and funds a retirement plan for all lay employees who work 1,000 or more hours per year to assist in planning for retirement. The retirement assets are held and all benefits are paid by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Manchester 403(b) Retirement Plan. Employees will be 100% vested after five (5) years of continuous employment of 1,000 or more hours worked each year. In addition to receiving the 3% Employer Contribution, each employee can voluntarily contribute from their wages on a pre-tax basis (provided it does not exceed the maximum amount allowed annually by the IRS). Details of this program may be obtained from the Director of Human Resources and additional information may be found in Appendix IV.]*

### **IV. PAY AND PROGRESS**

#### **PERSONNEL FILES**

The School maintains certain records containing job-related information on all employees to ensure compliance with state and federal law and to keep a record of your progress as an employee. The personnel file is a continuous record of information relative to employment. The School will provide a reasonable opportunity for employees to inspect their own personnel files. However, an employee may not be permitted to review his or her personnel file if the employee is subject to an investigation at the time of the request and disclosure of such information would prejudice law enforcement. File inspection must be done on the employee's own time, and must be arranged through the Principal, or in the case of the Principal, the Superintendent. Employees may read their personnel files but are not permitted to remove any portion of the files. Upon request, employees will be provided with a copy of all or part of their personnel files.

If, upon inspection of the personnel file, an employee disagrees with any of the information contained in such file, the employee may submit a written statement

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explaining his/her version of the information together with evidence supporting such version. Such statement shall be maintained as part of the employee's personnel file and will be included in any transmittal of the file to a third party.

It is important that an employee's personnel file includes accurate information regarding who should be contacted in case of emergency. Please notify the Principal (or in the case of the Principal, the Superintendent) as soon as possible of any changes in name, address, telephone number, marital status, dependents, an appropriate emergency contact, or alternate contact.

## **PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS**

In order for employees to improve performance and better understand the School's expectations, the performance of employees will be periodically reviewed. The Principal determines the method of supervision and assessment to be used for School employees. Generally, the Principal will discuss with the employee his or her job performance to examine strengths as well as areas needing improvement. The Principal and employee will also discuss appropriate opportunities for growth as a Catholic school faculty or staff member. The employee will have the opportunity to comment on any performance appraisal or assessment document.

A performance appraisal or assessment is not a contract or a commitment to provide a compensation adjustment, a bonus, or continued employment. Appraisals are only one of a number of factors that the School uses in connection with compensation, promotion, and retention decisions.

## **PAY AND PAY PERIODS**

Employees are informed in writing as to their rates of pay and pay period at the time they are hired and any time the rates or pay period changes. Rates of pay are reviewed periodically and may be adjusted. Employees with questions regarding their rates of pay should see the Principal.

*[Employees are paid on a bi-weekly basis for all hours worked during the two calendar weeks prior to the payday. All **non-exempt** employees must complete and submit to the Principal a timesheet on a bi-weekly basis. All **exempt** employees must complete and submit to the Principal a Statement of Paid Time Used on a monthly basis.]*

Please review each paycheck for accuracy. If an employee finds a mistake, including an improper deduction from pay, s/he should immediately report it to the Principal, so that the mistake can be corrected.

Paychecks may be distributed only to the employee. Only in the case of an employee's absence may a previously authorized individual receive the paycheck. The employee must write, sign, and date a note to authorize pick-up of the paycheck by an alternate. *[The School encourages participation in the direct deposit plan.]*

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Employees with questions or concerns about their rates of pay or pay discrepancies or discrimination based on gender should notify the principal or the Director of Human Resources for the Diocese of Manchester. Employees who inquire or complain about pay discrepancies or who participate in investigations or formal proceedings regarding the same will not be subject to retaliation.

### **BREAK AND MEAL PERIODS**

Employees who work more than five (5) consecutive hours will receive a minimum thirty (30) minute and maximum sixty (60) minute meal break. Part-time employees will receive breaks consistent with their work schedules and duties.

### **PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

The School is required by law to make certain deductions from an employee's paycheck each time one is prepared. Among these are federal income taxes and contributions to Social Security as required by law. The School may also be required to make deductions from an employee's paycheck pursuant to a federal or state agency or court order, such as child support. These deductions are itemized on the paycheck.

With the written authorization of the employee, the School may make additional deductions for other purposes that benefit the employee in accordance with New Hampshire Department of Labor regulations. Arrangements for these voluntary deductions can be made with the Director of Human Resources.

No deductions that are prohibited by state or federal law will be made from an employee's paycheck. Employees with a question about a payroll deduction or concerns about an improper deduction should immediately contact the Principal. Any improper deductions from pay will be corrected as soon as possible.

### **OVERTIME**

Periodically, it may be necessary for non-exempt employees to perform overtime work. Overtime (time worked in excess of forty (40) hours in a work week) by non-exempt employees must be approved in advance by the Principal. To the extent possible, the School will attempt to provide advance notice of the necessity for overtime work. *Non-exempt* employees are entitled to be paid one and one-half (1 ½) times their regular rate of pay for all time worked in excess of forty (40) hours per week. Sick days, holidays, vacation time, leaves of absences, and other time off benefits are not counted as time worked for purposes of overtime.

## **V. ON THE JOB**

### ***[EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE***

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*The School understands that some people may experience stress and other personal difficulties because of family, financial, and other problems. In order to help you address such problems, the School maintains on file and, upon request, will provide employees information on drug, alcohol, and other counseling and assistance programs available in the community. Your conscientious efforts to seek such help will not jeopardize your employment or be noted in your personnel record. Your health insurance policy may pay for the services. Contact the Principal for more information.]*

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All school personnel must respect the confidentiality of information received during the course of employment with the school. This provision does not prohibit employees from discussing their own compensation and benefits information. In situations where reporting is required by law or School policy, employees must comply with the law and school policy. In addition, in life-threatening instances or in cases where the health and well-being of an individual is involved, the appropriate supervisor (Principal or Superintendent) must be notified.

## **SMOKING POLICY**

The School is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and smoke-free work environment for our students, employees, visitors, and vendors. Consistent with this commitment, a no smoking policy has been instituted on School property and in School vehicles.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS**

Administrators, faculty, and staff generally are expected to report to work during inclement weather. However, there may be occasions on which the school building is closed due to severe inclement weather. The School will announce any school closures on \_\_\_\_\_. *[If School buildings are closed due to inclement weather on a day that an employee is scheduled to work, s/he will be paid for the hours they were expected to work that day.]*

## **PERSONAL DRESS**

Discretion in style of dress and behavior is extremely important to the School. Employees are therefore required to dress in appropriate attire that best represents the School and the Catholic Church. Administrators, instructional staff, and office staff are required to dress in attire consistent with professional standards. For other positions, such as maintenance positions, clothing must not be torn, must meet safety requirements, and must not contain inappropriate language or graphics.

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All employees should use good judgment in the choice of business attire and hygiene and remember to conduct themselves at all times in a way that best represents them and the School.

The following are guidelines of what attire is considered to be appropriate and inappropriate. (Please note that these guidelines do not apply to the maintenance staff.) Any questions regarding appropriate dress should be addressed to the Principal.

*[Appropriate:*

- *Dresses and skirts (length no more than 3 inches above the knee)*
- *Suits/pantsuits/ties*
- *Blouses/shirts*
- *Blazers*
- *Pants in business suitable fabrics*
- *Dress shoes, loafers, dress boots, dress sandals*

*Inappropriate:*

- *Any type of denim in any color (including jean/denim dresses, shirts, pants, skirts)*
- *Casual/sport t-shirts*
- *Shorts*
- *Flip-flops, sport sandals]*

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT**

Employees must not use their positions with the School for private gain for themselves or for persons with whom they have personal, business, or financial ties. As representatives of the School, employees must avoid any actions that could reasonably be expected to adversely affect, or to give the appearance of adversely affecting, the independence and objectivity of their judgment, interfere with the timely and effective performance of their duties and responsibilities, or discredit the School, the Diocese of Manchester, or the Roman Catholic Church.

Consistent with this conflict of interest policy, employees are permitted to engage in outside employment, consulting, or business activities, provided that no actual or potential conflict of interest or appearance of such conflict exists, and the activity does not adversely affect their ability to perform their jobs with the School.

## **WORKPLACE OR SCHOOL VIOLENCE**

Unfortunately, violence in the workplace has become a reality for many employers. We hope that we never have to face this growing problem. The School therefore prohibits

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employees from bringing weapons on its premises, including its parking lots. Moreover, violence and verbal and physical threats of violence of any kind on or off School property will not be tolerated. Employees engaging in such conduct will be subject to discipline, including separation from employment. Any employee who becomes aware of any violence or threat of violence must immediately report the matter to the Principal.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Good communications are vital for efficient and effective operations. Bulletin boards are maintained within the facilities of the School to bring to the attention of employees any matter relating to federal and state regulations, safety and health, diocesan policies, and announcements. No notices, posters, or other material may be displayed on these boards without the approval of the Principal. All employees are urged to check these boards daily. Failure to read bulletins will not serve as an excuse for violations of posted policies.

Electronic communications are governed by the Electronic Communications Policy (Appendix V) and the use of equipment for these communications is detailed below under **School Equipment, Telephones, Facsimiles and Computer Hardware and Software**.

## **DISTRACTED DRIVING POLICY**

Employees of the School are prohibited from engaging in behaviors that distract them while driving during the course of their duties. In order to avoid distracted driving, employees are prohibited from using hand-held devices to place calls or send text messages or email messages while operating vehicles in the course of their duties. Such calls or messages may be sent using a hands-free device in an urgent situation. Conversations should be as brief as possible, and employees should refrain from making unnecessary calls or sending unnecessary messages. Where possible, even with a hands-free device, phone calls and messages should be made when the vehicle is parked in a safe location.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Every employee is a valuable and contributing member of the School. Regular attendance is important to the success of any organization. The School must be able to depend on the fact that employees will report to work regularly and on time

Every employee is expected

- 1) to work all scheduled hours;
- 2) to report for work on time; and
- 3) to work until the end of the work period.

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Excessive absence, tardiness, and/or leaving early, are grounds for disciplinary action, including separation from employment. If an employee is absent or late for work, s/he must contact [*the Principal*] either verbally or in writing, at least one (1) hour before and no later than thirty (30) minutes after starting time, to explain why they will be absent or late and how long they expect to remain absent. An employee who fails to call in on the day of an absence, or does not have an excuse for calling in late, may be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge. If an employee is absent or expects to be absent from work for more than one day, s/he must contact the Principal.

Unless there are proven extenuating circumstances, an employee will be considered to have resigned from the School if no notification is received within three (3) consecutive working days from the beginning of the absence. Before returning to work, an employee who is absent five (5) or more consecutive workdays due to illness must obtain and submit to the Principal certification from a healthcare provider that authorizes them to return to work.

## **SOLICITATIONS**

No solicitation of any kind is permitted during work hours, unless first approved by the Principal. “Solicitation” is defined as requests for contributions, donations, raffles, lotteries, membership in organizations, attendance at events, or other similar conduct. “Work hours” is defined as time during which the employee is scheduled to be working, exclusive of established break periods, meal times, or time before or after work hours and only in designated break areas. This rule applies to solicitation for both charitable and non-charitable causes.

No distribution of any non-work-related materials is permitted in any work area at any time, unless first approved by the Principal. “Work areas” are defined as any School office or facility, other than designated break areas. Without prior approval by the Principal, employees may solicit or distribute materials only during break time or outside of scheduled work hours in the break room. Persons not employed by the School are prohibited from distributing materials or soliciting employees on School premises at any time, unless authorized by the Principal. Any employee who violates these rules will be subject to disciplinary action.

## **SCHOOL PROPERTY**

School property of any type or value shall not be used or removed from School premises without authorization of the Principal. All School equipment, memoranda, records, communications, computer data, disks, or other documents made or compiled by you or made available to you in connection with your teaching responsibilities or the business of the School shall be delivered to the School promptly upon separation of your employment or at any other time upon request.

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## **SCHOOL EQUIPMENT, TELEPHONES, FACSIMILE AND COMPUTER HARDWARE/SOFTWARE**

All electronic and telephonic communication systems and all communications and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in School equipment and systems are the property of the School and as such, employees should not have an expectation of privacy in the use of these systems. They are to be used solely for job-related purposes.

Employees are not permitted to use a code, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication unless authorized to do so or unless they have received prior clearance from the Principal. All pass codes are the property of the School. No employee may use a pass code that has not been issued to that employee or that is unknown to the School. Moreover, improper use of the e-mail system (e.g., spreading offensive jokes or remarks) will not be tolerated. Employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including separation from employment.

To ensure that the use of electronic and telephonic communications systems and business equipment is consistent with the School's legitimate interests, and to ensure quality service to those whom we serve, authorized representatives of the School may monitor the use of such equipment from time to time.

No unauthorized equipment or computer hardware/software may be installed or used on the premises of the School building without the express permission of the Principal. Further information about the policy on electronic communications can be found in the Electronic Communications Policy ([Appendix V](#)).

## **DATA SECURITY**

The School has established and implemented a comprehensive written information security program (WISP), is to create effective administrative, technical and physical safeguards for the protection of certain personal information about employees, parents, students, parishioners and others. This WISP ([Appendix VI](#)) sets forth our procedure for evaluating our electronic and physical methods of accessing, collecting, storing, using, transmitting, and protecting such personal information.

## **RECORDS RETENTION**

The School creates, maintains, and preserves records every day to assist in fulfilling the School's mission. Bearing this in mind, a Records Retention Policy has been established ([Appendix VI](#)) to provide guidance in determining the manner and length of time for maintaining records.

## **WORKPLACE SEARCHES**

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To safeguard the safety and property of our students, employees, visitors, and School, and to help prevent the possession and use of weapons and illegal drugs on the School's premises, it may become necessary to question students, employees, or all other persons entering and leaving our premises, and to inspect any packages, parcels, purses, handbags, backpacks, briefcases, lunch boxes, or any other possessions or articles carried to and from the School's property. In addition, the School reserves the right to search any student's locker or employee's office, desk, files, locker, or any other area or article on our premises in pursuit of its concern to safeguard the safety and property of students, employees, visitors, and the School. Employees should understand that all offices, desks, files, lockers, and other furniture and containers are the property of the School and are issued for the use of employees only during their employment with the School.

Employees working on or entering or leaving the premises who refuse to cooperate in an inspection, as well as employees who after the inspection are believed to be in possession of stolen property, weapons, or illegal drugs, will be sent immediately to the Principal, and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge if, after investigation, they are found to be in violation of the School's security procedures or any other School rules and regulations.

### **SCHOOL BUILDING SECURITY**

It is each employee's responsibility to help ensure that proper security measures are exercised at all times. All employees should be familiar with emergency exits, the alarm systems, and the proper steps to take upon hearing them. *[No visitors are permitted to leave the reception area(s) unescorted.]* Any suspicious person or events should be called to the immediate attention of the Principal. *[No visitors are permitted to enter the School building using entrances marked for employees. Employees should enter through employee entrances.]*

### **PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE**

The School is justifiably proud of its faculty and staff members and the manner in which they conduct themselves. We rely on individual good judgment and sense of responsibility. Employees are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and must comply with the *Serving Christ, Serving Others Code of Ministerial Conduct* ("Code") (see Appendix I). Likewise, quality work and contribution to the mission of the School is expected of every employee.

When an employee's work performance or personal conduct is unacceptable, certain guidelines generally will be followed to ensure fair and consistent treatment for all employees. Where a problem exists, the Principal or another administrator will discuss the problem with the employee, identify the causes, outline corrective action steps, and establish a time in which to correct the problem. The employee will be made aware of the consequences of repeated infractions or continued deficient performance. A notation of the incident will be made by the Principal or administrator and filed in the employee's personnel file.

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It is the policy of the School to discipline an employee whenever s/he violates the Code or a policy, rule, or regulation, endangers the safety of others, or performs unsatisfactorily. In each instance, the disciplinary action taken will be just and in proportion to the seriousness of the violation, as determined by the School. Generally, there are four types of discipline used by the School: verbal warning, written warning, suspension, and dismissal. A progressive discipline system will be used except in those cases where the Administration, at its discretion, determines immediate termination is necessary. Furthermore, if circumstances warrant, the School at its discretion may skip or repeat steps in the progressive discipline system.

## **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

The respect of everyone's human dignity is the cornerstone of the life of the Catholic Church. As an ecclesial community, the School recognizes the value of an ordered public life. As a community that has come together for a common purpose, the School must have rules that promote consistency, harmony, and support its objectives and missions. There are certain standards of common honesty and decent behavior that all employees are expected to follow. Many of these standards are set forth in the *Serving Christ, Serving Others Code of Ministerial Conduct* (see Appendix I).

The following are examples of unacceptable conduct or performance, and they represent some of the types of actions for which employees may be disciplined, up to and including termination from employment. These examples, however, do not cover all of the types of performance or conduct that are considered unacceptable.

- Excessive absenteeism, unexcused absences, tardiness
- Unlawful discrimination or harassment
- Violation of any diocesan policy or procedure, including, but not limited to the *Serving Christ, Serving Others Code of Ministerial Conduct* and the *Promise to Protect, Pledge to Heal Policy*
- Unprofessional or discourteous conduct toward others
- Poor work performance, including, but not limited to, missing deadlines, failing to demonstrate the requisite skills or abilities, failing to cooperate with and be helpful to others, and inaccurate or incomplete work product
- Falsification of records
- Dishonesty
- Conviction of a crime that in the discretion of the School adversely impacts the employee's position
- Insubordination
- Conduct contrary to the accepted teachings of the Roman Catholic Church or that would, in the discretion of the School, adversely impact the employee's position or the School.

## **UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION**

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The School is exempt from federal and state laws related to unemployment compensation. As a result, the School does not participate or provide unemployment compensation insurance benefits.

## **VI. FEEDBACK/COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

### ***[SUGGESTIONS AND IDEAS***

*The School is always interested in constructive ideas and suggestions for improvement. Constructive suggestions should be submitted, in writing, to the appropriate administrator or the Principal.*

*After suggestions are reviewed, if any employee's name is on the suggestion, s/he will be notified whether or not it is feasible to put it into practice.*

*The School believes that constructive suggestions indicate initiative on the part of an employee and are encouraged. A constructive suggestion notes an issue and offers a reasonable suggestion for improvement.]*

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

Employees are encouraged to discuss any work-related problems with the appropriate administrator or the Principal to try to reach a satisfactory resolution.<sup>1</sup> Expectations are that the administrator will be able to satisfactorily resolve most matters.

An employee aggrieved by a decision of a Principal may appeal the decision to the Superintendent if the employee believes that the decision has violated diocesan or school policy or procedures. This process is not intended for the resolution of conflicts of interest or for the resolution of grievances which result due to a prudential disagreement with the judgment, policy, or decision of the Principal. This process likewise is not intended for the resolution of conflicts of personality or the daily problems which often arise among people and which must properly be resolved by them.

The aggrieved employee must first attempt to resolve the matter directly with the Principal. If unable to reach resolution, the aggrieved party may submit in writing to the Superintendent a description of the issue and the diocesan or school policy or procedure alleged to have been violated.

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<sup>1</sup> The School has established specific reporting procedures for certain complaints. These procedures are contained in this handbook or Appendix I.