

THE DIOCESE OF HELENA



Policy Manual

SECTION 7000

SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS AND RECORDS

FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

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7000 School Publications

7002 School Publications

7002.1 All printed material representing the Catholic School will be authorized prior to publication

- The administration is responsible for the supervision and distribution of all written communication representing the Catholic School System.
- The Principal is responsible for the supervision and distribution of all written communication representing the individual school.
- Printed materials communicating the philosophy, programming and presence of the Catholic Schools and each school building will be professional in appearance and should testify to the Catholic nature and high academic standards of the school and system.

7002.2 School Newsletter

- The administration shall communicate through a weekly, monthly, or quarterly newsletter with the school families.

7002.3 Calling Guide / Handbook

- The Catholic Schools will print a “Calling Guide / Handbook” as a tool to assist in community communications.
- Parents will be notified in advance that their phone numbers will be listed.

It is recommended that the Calling Guide and the Handbook are bound together.

Each family shall be given one copy of the Calling Guide / Handbook and the school shall retain the signature acknowledging receipt of the publication.

- The Calling Guide and Handbooks are not public information and will be distributed only to the families attending the Catholic school.
- Annually, the Diocese of Helena Catholic School Office will receive a Calling Guide and Handbook from each school.

7002.4 Student Publications

- Student publications foster creativity, responsibility, and improved communications skills and will be supported by the Catholic School as part of the curriculum and learning expectations.
- When students of the Catholic School are invited to publish information representing the school or Catholic Community, such as a “student section” in the local media, the document / portfolio will be reviewed by the administration prior to publication.

7100 School Records

7102 School Records and Reports

7102.1 Grade School Cumulative Record

- In the Catholic grade school, the cumulative record reflects the academic progress, standardized test scores, and summary of attendance.
- A permanent file of students' records, that shall include:
 - the name and address of the student
 - his/her parent or guardian
 - birth date
 - academic work completed
 - level of achievement (grades, standardized achievement tests)
 - immunization records as per 20-5-406, MCA
 - attendance data

7102.2 High School Transcript

- In the Catholic high school, the transcript is an official academic record reflecting semester grades, credits earned, standardized test scores and summary of attendance.

7102.3 Academic Grade Reporting

- Grades will be assigned each term and communicated with the parents by way of a conference and/or report card.
 - Students in grades 3 – 12 will receive a mid-term
 - All students shall receive an end of the term grade report.
- Parent / Teacher Conferences will be held at least twice each year.
- Diplomas shall not be released until all financial obligations with respect to the student have been satisfied.

7102.4 Student Record Retention

- Student records shall be kept in a centralized, secure and fireproof place, easily accessible to the school administration.
- Original school records shall not be removed from the school premises.
- Anecdotal records, incidental matter, and subjective data will be purged from school records within five (5) years of student graduation / transfer from school.
- In the Catholic Grade School, a record of transfer replaces the cumulative file.

7102.5 Transfer of School Records

- A certified copy of the permanent file will be forwarded by mail or electronically to a local educational agency or accredited school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll within 5 working days after a receipt of a written or electronic request.

The files that are forwarded must include education records in the permanent file, special education records, and any disciplinary actions taken against the student that are educationally related.

- For the purpose of this rule, a disciplinary action that is educationally related is an action that results in the expulsion or out-of-school suspension of the student.

The school may not refuse to transfer files because a student owes fines or fees.

Anecdotal records, incidental matter, and subjective data will not be transferred.

7102.6 Academic Records and Past Due Financial Obligations

- The Tuition Office will make every effort to collect tuition and fee prior to the transfer of a student's academic record.
- Each spring, the Tuition Office will present the Principal with a list of students in their final year of school (8th Grade or 12th Grade) with outstanding financial obligations.
- Students in their final year of school who have outstanding financial obligations will not be allowed to take final exams until all financial obligations to the Catholic School are paid in full.
- Students in their final year of school who have outstanding financial obligations will not receive a diploma until all financial obligations to the Catholic School are paid in full.

The Catholic high school will not transfer student records to a college or university, until all tuition and fees are paid in full.

- When a student withdraws from the Catholic School with outstanding financial obligations, the school will do so but list student's grades for the term in which he / she withdraws, as "INCOMPLETE" until the tuition and fees are paid in full.

7102.7 Student Record Storage

- The Catholic School shall retain student records, per the following recommendation:

Individual student academic records: Permanent – never destroy

- Name and address of student
- Name and address of parents/guardian
- Date of Birth
- Academic work completed
- Level of achievement (grades, standardized tests, grade level)
- Immunization records
- Attendance data
- Permission for release of school records
- Report of student leaving school

Recommended student records: Destroy within five (5) years of student and/or cohort graduation.

- Health records
- Post secondary educational plans
- Activity participation records
- Objective teacher evaluation reports
- Parental authorization or prohibitions
- Discipline reports and records
- Accident reports
- Anecdotal reports and records
- Grade books
- Report card copies

7102.8 Access to Student Records

- Only the school administration and the support staff employee(s) assigned to maintain student records shall have access to student records.

Faculty members may have access to all student records with prior approval from the administration.

- A parent/guardian may view a child's record upon request and in the presence of the administration.

A parent will not remove a child's cumulative record but may request removal of certain subjective data, e.g., a teacher's opinion, a specific label given the child, etc.

- In the case of students who parents' marriage has been dissolved, both parents shall have access to their child's school records, except for a parent to whom visitation rights with the child have been denied by court order. In such a case, a certified copy of the court order denying visitation rights should be filed with the school.

When needing verification of education for a graduate beyond three (3) years, the Catholic Schools will supply the evidence when requested in writing and for a nominal processing fee.

7102.9 Inactive Records

- Attendance records should be summarized annually on the cumulative record or transcript.
- Cumulative records and transcripts are permanent records and, as such, may not be destroyed.

7102.10 Records' Storage / Archives

- Records from closed schools are kept intact or on microfilm at the Diocesan Office.
- When needing verification of education, the school Office will supply the evidence requested for a nominal processing fee.

7104 Maintenance of Records Schedule

- Records are maintained for either legal purposes or for history. The following schedule is a guideline for retention.

Type of Record	Contents	Duration
Student Records	Original permanent records that include the name and address of student, Name and address of parents/guardian, Date of birth, Academic work completed, Level of achievement (grades, standardized tests, grade level), Immunization records, Attendance data, Permission for release of school records, and Report of student leaving school	Indefinitely
Student Records	Student health records, Post secondary educational plans, Activity participation, Objective teacher evaluations, Parental authorization or prohibitions, Discipline reports and records, Accident reports, Anecdotal reports and records, Report card hard copies, and Emergency contact information,	Five years
Teacher Records	Grade book, Lesson plans, and Classroom attendance	Five years
Personnel Files	Copy of the employee's contracts / employment agreements, Record of social security, Name change, Benefits, etc., Original signed application, Observation / Evaluation reports, Record of academic course work, Educational history, Full transcript of credits and experience history, Signed resume of professional accomplishments, Commendations, and acknowledgements, Record of absences, Record of tardiness, Record of Leaves, including a detailed record of sick leave used and sick leave accumulated, Official certificates, and the Final separation report,	Indefinitely
Asbestos File	Everything since 1981	Indefinitely
School Council Minutes	A copy of the minutes from each Council Meeting	Indefinitely
School Finances (Not Tuition)	Bank Statements, Payroll, etc.	Seven years
Tuition Records	Tuition assessments, obligations, payment histories, and other financial records pertaining to students or families	Three years after the youngest child of the family leaves school.
Accreditation Reports	Annual Reports, surveys, self studies, and visitations	Ten years after accreditation date
Permission Slips	Any parentally signed forms granting a student permission to participate in a school-sanctioned activity.	Until student graduation from high school

7200 School and Student Data

7202 General Requests for Release of School Data

- Federal, state, and private agencies frequently request educational data from schools and parishes. This data may affect the school's or student's eligibility for participation in numerous programs. Once the data is released, it not only must be substantiated but must be consistent with the statistical data of other years.
- In light of the complexity of issues, such as the eligibility for federal programs, accreditation, certification, etc. all parishes and schools are advised that no educational data or statistics are to be released to any agency or institution unless the request is forwarded from the Catholic Schools Office or the Diocese of Helena Chancery Office or explicit approval for release of such data has been given by the Superintendent.
 - This applies to the completion of forms, surveys, or questionnaires sent from federal, state, or other agencies.
- Catholic school employees, students, or school records of any form will not be subjects of surveys or studies without prior approval of the Catholic Schools Office.
- Catholic schools participating in the federal breakfast, lunch, or milk program should release the required data for participation in those programs.

7204 Release of Information to the Media

- Written permission for publication of the use of names, the likeness of (whether in still, motion pictures, audio, or video tape, photograph, and/or other reproduction) a student (including voice and features with or without the name of the student) for any promotional purposes involving a Catholic school, news, or feature stories in any media, or other purpose whatsoever, must be secured from the parent(s) / guardian(s) of the student.
 - This permission shall be kept on file for the length of time the student is enrolled in the Catholic school.

7206 Data for the Catholic Schools Office

- The Catholic Schools Office is responsible for gathering statistical data for the Diocese, for state and federal agencies, and for national associations. Data requested from each school should be sent to the Superintendent as requested.
- This permission shall be kept on file for the length of time the student is enrolled in the Catholic school.