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Teacher Personnel

“Teachers must remember that it depends chiefly on them whether the Catholic school achieves its purpose. They should therefore be prepared for their work with special care, having the appropriate qualifications and adequate learning both religious and secular. They should also be skilled in the art of education in accordance with the discoveries of modern times. Possessed by charity both towards each other and towards their pupils, and inspired by an apostolic spirit, they should bear testimony by their lives and their teaching to the one Teacher, who is Christ.”

--Declaration on Christian Education, Gravissimum Educationis, Vatican II, 1965.

“The teachers love their students, and they show this love in the way they interact with them. They take advantage of every opportunity to encourage and strengthen them in those areas which will help to achieve the goals of the educational process. Their words, their witness, their encouragement and help, their advice and friendly correction are all important in achieving these goals, which must always be understood to include academic achievement, moral behavior, and a religious dimension.”

“When students feel loved, they will love in return. Their questioning, their trust, their critical observations and suggestions for improvement in the classroom and the school milieu will enrich the teachers and also help to facilitate a shared commitment to the formation process.”

--The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, The Congregation for Catholic Education, Rome, 1988.

The pastors of the Church of Philadelphia in 1977 developed a statement of principles, Education and Faith: Faith and Life, on the vocation of the parish elementary school teacher, a statement which clearly outlines the role of the entire parish community in relation to the vocation of teachers. This statement was revised in June 2007. Only through prayerful study and reflection on this document can a teacher fully understand the task to which he/she has been called. For that reason, it is the policy of the elementary schools that all teachers become fully acquainted with this document in order to be able to properly fulfill their functions and responsibilities.

Since the teacher, more than any other person, comes into constant daily contact with the student, the influence of the teacher on the formation of the student is far-reaching and enduring. More than any other person, the teacher holds the key in the teaching-learning process. The responsibility for creating a Catholic atmosphere that is characterized by warm, loving concern for each individual clearly rests with the classroom teacher.

Teachers in the parish or regional elementary schools of the Archdiocese must be committed to the philosophy and principles of Catholic education and manifest this commitment in the performance of their professional responsibilities and in their daily lives. Relationships with the administrator, faculty, parents, and students should be characterized by the cooperation, kindness, concern, and courtesy that is necessary if a Catholic, personalized learning community is to exist. In the performance of professional responsibilities, the teacher works with the administrator who is responsible for the entire educational program in the school. However, responsibility for carrying out the educational programs and directives of the Office of Catholic Education as well as locally initiated programs, goals, and objectives, rests with each member of the faculty. While the professional responsibilities of the teacher go beyond those enumerated below, the major professional responsibilities of the parish or regional elementary school teachers include:

- 1) Observing the directives of the Office of Catholic Education, Standards of Ministerial Behavior and Boundaries, and of the local school
- 2) Being familiar with the Parish Elementary School Policies and Procedures recommended by the Office of Catholic Education
- 3) Praying with children, helping them experience the Gospel message of Jesus, treating students with respect and kindness
- 4) Keeping accurate and complete records
- 5) Preparing lesson plans and presenting lesson plans to the administrator for review
- 6) Presenting report cards and all general communication for parents/guardians to the administrator for professional review
- 7) Planning class activities that provide for the individual differences of students

- 8) Attending Home and School Association Meetings and being available for meetings with parents/guardians
- 9) Verifying student absences through written notes from parent/guardian
- 10) Assuming supervisory responsibilities as determined by the needs of the school
- 11) Accepting leadership opportunities in a spirit of collaboration as determined by local needs
- 12) Keeping the classroom in good order and establishing a learning atmosphere
- 13) Preparing classroom displays that are meaningful, current, and related to learning
- 14) Maintaining professional competency through awareness of changes in educational practices and procedures and having a positive attitude toward change and innovation
- 15) Attending in-service programs conducted by the Archdiocese, district, and local school
- 16) Communicating regularly with parents/guardians
- 17) Attending faculty meetings
- 18) Conferring with the administrator or his/her designee on administrative and policy matters
- 19) Dressing in a manner appropriate and suitable for professional teachers

Initial Application

When seeking a position, interested applicants should address letters of inquiry to the Director of Elementary Staff Relations in the following manner:

Director of Elementary Staff Relations
Archdiocese of Philadelphia
222 North Seventeenth Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299

All applications should contain a complete résumé of the applicant's educational background and working experience, including any teaching experience. This information, as well as appropriate references, must be on file before an interview can be scheduled.

Documents Needed for Approval

1. A letter of recommendation from his/her pastor, sent directly to the Director of Elementary Staff Relations
2. All official transcripts and documents from colleges or universities
3. Three letters of recommendation from previous employers, or college professors, particularly in the field of education
4. An official application for employment in the parish elementary schools, revised 1997 (Refer to 202.1)
5. Professional résumé and cover letter
6. The following police checks:
 - a. A current (within the year) Criminal History Record Information from PA State Police . Must be renewed every five years while a teacher is on staff at the same school
 - b. A current (within the year) Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance from the PA Department of Public Welfare. Must be renewed every five years while a teacher is on staff at the same school
 - c. If non-resident of Pennsylvania for at least two years, an FBI Fingerprint Check must be submitted. If hired on or after April 1, 2007, an FBI clearance is required*

7. Copy of State Certification (Private Academic Schools Certification is not accepted.)
8. The state requires that the Verification of Employment Eligibility form be completed after the applicant is employed. The state considers it discriminatory to have this form signed before employment.

If for good reason the applicant cannot keep the interview as scheduled, the applicant is asked to notify the Office of Catholic Education twenty-four hours in advance. Any falsification or misstatement on the documents required in hiring procedures may result in dismissal of the teacher by the pastor(s).

If all required documents are not received before the opening of a school year, the applicant may be given conditional approval, if warranted, until all documents are received. State law requires termination of employment if State Police, Child Abuse, and FBI Fingerprint Check (if applicable) documentation are not produced within 30 days of employment.

Interview

The applicant will be interviewed by the Director of Elementary Staff Relations or his/her designee. It should be understood that the interviewing process does not constitute a job offer, and that no commitment is made as a result of the interview.

**P/P Official Application for Employment in
the Parish Elementary Schools**

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See Archdiocesan website for formal application

www.catholicschools-phl.org

P/P

Induction Program

Policy No.: TP 203

Date: September 2009

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The State of Pennsylvania and the Office of Catholic Education require that all newly hired teachers to parish or regional elementary schools of the Archdiocese participate in the state-approved Induction Program. This program is required by Pennsylvania law for all teachers state certified after June 1, 1987. All requirements are published in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, Teacher Induction Plan (Revised June 2009).

Refer to Appendix A.

- 1) It is the right and responsibility of the pastor(s) of the parish/regional elementary school to employ approved lay teachers.
- 2) Every lay teacher should be interviewed and approved by the Office of Catholic Education prior to being employed by the pastor(s) in any elementary school. If a lay teacher had previous teaching experience in a parish elementary school of the Archdiocese, his/her status as an approved candidate should be verified by the Office of Catholic Education prior to being employed by the pastor of another elementary school.
- 3) The Office of Catholic Education approves applicants who have earned a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree with PA Instructional I Certification.
- 4) The administrator and the pastor(s) should also conduct an interview with the candidate prior to actually employing him/her.
- 5) If a lay teacher is doing satisfactory work, he/she should not be released during the school year without good reason. Cases involving dismissal of a teacher during the school year should be brought to the attention of the Office of Catholic Education prior to any dismissal or action being taken. Any teacher with two or more years of teaching in the same parish or regional elementary school shall have the right to appeal non-renewal of his/her contract or termination of employment (subject to the approval of the pastor) to the:

Parish/Regional Elementary School Appeal Board
222 North Seventeenth Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

*(Refer to T920 Personnel Handbook for Parish Elementary School Lay Teachers)

Moral issues are not subject to an appeal.

- 6) Lay teachers employed in a parish or regional elementary school are committed to and give witness to the doctrines, laws, and norms of the Catholic Church. A lay teacher is liable for immediate termination of employment by the Pastor(s) for rejection of official doctrine or laws of the Church.
- 7) Beginning teachers, who have probationary status, should be advised and guided during their first year of teaching. To assist in this process, it is mandated by the Induction Program that the administrator assign an experienced teacher as a mentor.

(Refer to Archdiocese of Philadelphia, Teacher Induction Plan)

- 8) Lay teachers who have been employed to teach in a parish or regional elementary school cannot seek employment in another elementary parish or regional elementary school for the same school year without the knowledge and consent of the pastor and administrator who first employed the teacher.
 - a. It is the responsibility of the hiring parish to honor the August 1st deadline in accepting transferring teachers within the Archdiocese for employment from one parish/regional elementary school to another.
- 9) The Office of Catholic Education recommends that lay teachers whose teaching experience has been satisfactory be retained on the staff.
- 10) A substitute lay teacher who is hired in an elementary school for a continuous period of more than six weeks should be interviewed and approved by the Office of Catholic Education.

- 11) It is the right and responsibility of the pastor to hire and pay lay teachers whether on a substitute or permanent basis. Lay teachers may not hire nor pay their own substitutes for any period of employment.
- 12) All lay teachers, hired for the school year convening in September 2003, employed in a parish or regional elementary school with prior experience (Kindergarten through Grade 12) in any school district or diocese may be given credit on the salary scale for each year of full-time teaching.

Full-time Pre-Kindergarten experience should be reviewed on an individual basis. Credit for previous Pre-Kindergarten experience should be reviewed according to the following criteria:

- a. Experience was in a program similar to a Pre-Kindergarten program within the Archdiocese.
 - b. Teacher has met the criteria that are established for all parish or regional elementary teachers.
 - c. Former religious should receive credit on the salary scale for those years of experience as a religious in the parish elementary or diocesan secondary schools within the Archdiocese of Philadelphia
- 13) All elementary teachers in elementary schools of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia are required to complete the program for permanent Religion Certification as prescribed by the Office of Catechetical Formation. Current requirements are available through the Office of Catechetical Formation.

If for any reason there are non-Catholic teachers (unapproved by the Office of Catholic Education) on the faculty, they may not teach Religion; however, they must earn credits in order to better understand the mission of the Catholic school as prescribed by the Office of Catechetical Formation.

- 14) It is the administrator's responsibility to notify the Office of Catholic Education of a teacher's employment and separation in a parish or regional elementary school.
(Teacher New to the School or Reason for Leaving Card)

Archdiocesan

It is the policy of the Office of Catholic Education to conduct an orientation in-service for new teachers. The purpose of this workshop is to prepare and acquaint new teachers with the functions and regulations of the elementary school; to prepare new teachers to teach more effectively and with greater knowledge in their assigned subjects or grades; to familiarize new teachers with the curricula and procedures of the schools; to enable the new teacher to be assimilated into the schools in an orderly fashion; and to provide a sense of confidence in new teachers by defining their role in the parish/regional elementary schools.

Local School

In conjunction with the Archdiocesan Orientation Program and the PA State Induction Program, the schools are required to conduct orientation programs on the local level to welcome the new teachers as important contributors to the Catholic community. These programs aid in further acquainting them with the school's philosophy of education as well as its rules and regulations which pertain to the particular school, its curricula, and the function of the various committees within the school itself. Efforts should be made to help the new teacher understand his/her relationship to these functions.

Specifications of the State of Pennsylvania Induction Program:

- Archdiocesan In-Service
- Local In-Service
- Minimum of four workshops in course of school year (non-religious in nature)
- Needs Assessment three times per year
- Support teacher with at least five years of teaching experience
- Minimum of nine meetings during induction time period
- Supervision by administration
- Completion of necessary documentation

(Appendices A, B, C, D, and E in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, Teacher Induction Plan)

Professional Record Card

It is the policy of the Office of Catholic Education to establish and maintain a Professional Record Card at the local level for each teacher employed by the elementary school. All information recorded on this card is to be entered in accordance with the guidelines issued. This card has value vital to a teacher's future needs; i.e., verification of employment, loans, future employment, etc. The Professional Record Cards and teacher evaluations of teachers leaving one parish/regional school for another school should be forwarded to the new school within the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for any teacher transferring.

The Professional Record Card (revised in 1994) is available upon request.

Professional Staff Development Card

It is the policy of the Office of Catholic Education for administrators to maintain a Professional Staff Development Card for each teacher employed by a local parish or regional elementary school. All information is to be updated annually and kept on file at the local level. Cards can be obtained by contacting the Director of Elementary Staff Relations.

Elementary Teacher Attendance Record

An Elementary Teacher Attendance Record is provided by the Office of Catholic Education for each teacher. At the end of each school year, the administrator and teacher are asked to sign off on the verification of teacher attendance. The form is duplicated and one copy is forwarded to the Office of Catholic Education and one copy remains at the local school.

Substitute teachers should possess a Baccalaureate Degree. A list of approved substitute teachers will be generated for parish or regional elementary administrators by the Director of Elementary Staff Relations. All substitutes must present copies of the State Police Check and Child Abuse Clearance. An FBI fingerprint check is required if the substitute is hired from April 1, 2007 forward. If a non-PA resident is hired, an FBI Check is required.

Each teacher should have ready for a substitute a current plan book with the page of each lesson listed, roll book, a class list, desk copies of texts, and all necessary teaching materials.

The salary for a teacher employed as a long term substitute for a continuous period of six weeks or longer should be prorated according to the recommended salary scale based on his/her degree and experience. For degreed teachers, the recommended per diem salary for a substitute teacher will be determined each year by Board of Directors of the Pastors' Committee.

The Office of Catholic Education recommends that all newly hired teachers have state certification. The Office of Catholic Education will comply with Induction and the new certification law (Act 48). Where possible, certification programs will be provided in cooperation with the certifying institutions within the metropolitan area of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Information relative to teacher certification can be obtained from the Office of Catholic Education. Participation in the Induction Program is required for all first-year teachers or teachers new to the parish/regional elementary schools (Pennsylvania certified after June 1, 1987).

Act 48

Beginning July 1, 2000, Act 48 of 1999 requires persons holding Pennsylvania professional educator certification to complete continuing education requirements every five years to maintain their certificates as active.

- ❖ All educators holding PA state certification including Intern, Instructional I and II, Educational Specialist I and II, Administrative, Supervisory, Letters of Eligibility and all vocational certificates are affected by the requirements of Act 48.
- ❖ Certificates will remain active by earning six (6) collegiate credits for six (6) PDE-approved in-service credits or 180 continuing education hours in any combination every five years. Each collegiate or in-service credit is equal to thirty (30) continuing education hours.
- ❖ Collegiate credits and PDE-approved in-service credits earned after January 1, 2000 may be accepted.
- ❖ The five-year period begins on July 1, 2000 for issued certificates prior to and including July 2000. For issued certificates August 2000 and thereafter, the five-year period begins with the effective date of issuance of the initial certificate.

Further reference from designated period to designated period will be communicated through the office of the Director for Curriculum and Instruction PK-12.

Conversion of Certificates from Level I to Level II

For those anticipating certification conversion from Instructional I to Instructional II, Chapter 49 of the School Code mandates six satisfactory assessments over a three year time-frame. All teachers certified after September 1, 2004 are required to have Form 427 (Teacher Assessment) completed by the Principal. This form includes an evaluation of the teacher's performance based on four basic domains:

- a) planning and preparation
- b) classroom environment
- c) instructional delivery, and
- d) professionalism

Infused in each of these four frameworks for teaching is an emphasis on Catholic Identity which is the core of education in a parish elementary school.

The purpose of the teacher evaluation is to improve instruction by aiding a teacher's growth and development through analysis of instructional performance and to improve communication between administration and the teachers. The goal of the supervisory process is to promote professional performance in all phases of education.

Supervision is a developmental process which links instruction and classroom management with professional development. It binds the school's goals and the teacher's needs for improved learning. Various supervisory approaches must be explored based on the developmental stage and expertise of each teacher. Supervision provides the support, knowledge, and skills needed to enable a teacher to succeed. It is a tool that facilitates change, thus enhancing instructional improvement and professional growth.

The purpose of the evaluative process is both formative and summative. Formative evaluation of the teacher is ongoing throughout the year. As part of the supervisory process, the administrator has the responsibility to meet with the individual teacher, as often as necessary, to review performance of specific recommendations. If an administrator is not satisfied with the professional demeanor, cooperation, or performance of the teacher, the administrator should meet with the teacher and maintain a written record of the observations. (Refer to T530 Personnel Handbook for Parish Elementary School Lay Teachers)

The summative evaluation of the teacher provides a definitive judgment on performance and professional development. Only the evaluation instrument approved by the Office of Catholic Education should be utilized. Local school evaluation forms may not be substituted for the approved one. The original is to be sent to the Office of Catholic Education. A copy is to be given to the teacher and a copy is retained in the teacher's file. Forward all teacher evaluations to the Director of Elementary Staff Relations by the designated date in June of each school year, with accompanying attendance record stapled to each teacher's evaluation for the current year.

In preparation for the evaluation process, the following principles should be kept in mind by the administrator and the teacher:

- 1) Evaluation of performance contributes to professional effectiveness and productivity.
- 2) The administrator, as instructional leader, has the responsibility and obligation to evaluate performance and prescribe advantageous and/or necessary improvements.
- 3) Both the administrator and the teacher must understand the process.
- 4) If the evaluation is to be fair and objective, the teacher must be clearly informed as to the criteria prior to the evaluation.
- 5) Individual teaching styles among classroom teachers must be recognized.
- 6) The teacher must be willing to accept and implement the suggestions designed to improve performance.
- 7) If the teacher is to benefit from the evaluation process, performance reviews must be reported specifically, thoroughly, and in a timely fashion.
- 8) The teacher must be provided an opportunity to discuss the results and submit a written response.

Purposes

The purposes of the teacher evaluation required in the parish or regional elementary schools of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia are as follows:

- 1) To assure support for the goals and spirit of Catholic education in general and the program in particular
- 2) To improve the instructional program
- 3) To identify professional growth needs
- 4) To identify effective personnel and encourage their retention
- 5) To provide a record of teacher performance for future reference
- 6) To supply proof of employment and professional experience to persons designated by teachers

1. Personnel

- A. Teacher evaluation is an administrative responsibility, which may not be delegated.
- B. The performance of all teachers, full-time and part-time, religious and lay, is evaluated.
- C. Teachers in the parish or regional elementary schools of the Archdiocese are evaluated formally once each year. Teachers who are participating in the Induction Program should have a formal evaluation three times (end of each of the first two trimesters and mid-May) during the course of the first year.
- D. Informal evaluation should be an on-going process.

2. Instrument

- A. The teacher evaluation form for all elementary teachers is supplied by the Office of Catholic Education. No other instrument is acceptable.
- B. For teachers involved in the Induction Program, a teacher induction evaluation (Appendix B of the Teacher Induction Plan) is to be used at the end of both the first and second trimesters. The regular teacher evaluation instrument is to be used in May for all teachers.

3. Schedule

- A. Yearly evaluation reports should be completed by May 15 and sent to the Office of Catholic Education by June 15th of the current year.

4. Distribution and Filing

- A. At the September faculty meeting, a copy of the evaluation report is distributed to each teacher and the purposes and procedures of the evaluation process are clearly defined.
- B. During September and October, the administrator meets individually with each teacher. At that time, or at the signing of the contract, individual professional goals and strategies for the school year are determined.

- C. After the basic completion of the evaluation report by the administrator, an individual conference is held, at which time the final page of the evaluation is completed and an overall discussion of the entire instrument occurs.
- D. Written responses to the evaluation rating by the teacher may be submitted and attached to the report.
- E. The original evaluation and written response (if applicable) is placed in the Teacher Personnel File in the Office of Catholic Education. A copy is retained in the school and a copy given to the teacher.
- F. The content of the evaluation report is confidential and available only to authorized personnel, i.e., administrator, teacher evaluated, pastor, staff of the Office of Catholic Education, future administrators, representatives of a religious congregation, and anyone who has a genuine “need to know” in order to protect the parish from liability.

**P/P Confidentiality and Access of
Personnel Files**

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All personnel files of faculty and staff are confidential. These files should be combined in a secure/locked fire-proof file. Only authorized persons may have access to the files, i.e., pastor, administrator, individual teacher, and members of the staff of the Office of Catholic Education. Periodically, parish audits are conducted by the parish Financial Services. At this time, an auditor will request to see the Police Checks and Child Abuse and FBI Clearances of all parish employees. Administrators are expected to comply with this request.

A teacher has the right to review his/her file while on staff and may have copies of documents contained in the file. No documents may be added to the teacher's file without the knowledge of the teacher. (Refer to T600 Personnel Handbook Parish Elementary School Lay Teachers)

Administrators should schedule faculty meetings that provide for optimal professional growth and development. Chairing and participation in faculty meetings should be developed to give a shared responsibility to the faculty.

Minutes of faculty meetings should be kept on file in the administrator's office for a period of two years. Every faculty meeting should have:

- ◇ Prayer
- ◇ Professional component
- ◇ Business component

Excluding the Organizational Day, the following format/options are:

- ◇ Monthly half-day October through May
- ◇ One all-day faculty meeting per trimester

If local circumstances or educational needs dictate an alternative schedule from those recommended, the administration is to submit the plan in writing to the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Educational Services who will review the plan and grant approval in writing. This plan will be in effect for the current year only.

School must be in session for four hours before a regular early dismissal for faculty meetings can take place.

The following pieces of documentation are kept in the personnel files at the local level:

- Teacher application
- Transcript(s)
- Copy of Police Checks
 - State Police Check
 - Department of Public Welfare Check
 - FBI Fingerprint Check
- Letters of Recommendation
- Copy of State Certification
- State Teacher Induction
- Documents in compliance with Act 48
- Verification of Employment Eligibility (Form I-9)
- Written Contracts (if applicable)
- Professional Record Card
- Religion Certificate
- Copy of Religion credits
- Teacher Attendance Card
- Staff Development Record Card
- Due Process Documentation (if applicable)
- Teacher Evaluations
- Copy of Standards for Ministerial Behavior and Boundaries

Note: No medical health forms, medical information, doctor's notes, etc., may be placed in the teacher's personnel files. All medical information is to be kept in a separate file.