

St. Mary School Employee Code of Profession Conduct

FAITH'S LAW

Pursuant to Illinois's Faith's Law requirements, St. Mary School adopts this Code of Professional Conduct for School Employees. Each of the provisions below is contained in existing policies and rules of the Diocese of Springfield, but are restated as a Code of Conduct for School Employees to comply with the law.

Each school is required pursuant to Faith's Law to post this Code of Professional Conduct for School Employees on the school's website and to publish this document in the school's staff/parent/family/student handbook, if the school has one.

Illinois State Board of Education - Sexual Abuse Response and Prevention Resource Guide.

I. EDUCATOR CODE OF CONDUCT

Pursuant to recent Illinois law, St. Mary School adopts the relevant portions of the Illinois Educator Code of Conduct, as follows, which applies to school employees who are certified or working toward certification or whose certification has been waived:

Principle 1: Responsibility to Students. Educators are committed to creating, promoting, and implementing a learning environment that enables students to achieve their highest academic potential, and to succeed as a responsible member of society. They are committed to embodying standards of professionalism in the learning environment; respecting the inherent dignity and worth of each student by assuring that the learning environment is characterized by respect for each student; maintaining a professional relationship with students at all times; providing a curriculum based on high expectations for students; and fostering in each student the development of attributes that will enhance skills and knowledge necessary to be a contributing member of society.

Principle 2: Responsibility to Self. Educators are committed to establishing high professional standards and striving to meet these standards through their performance. They are committed to assuming responsibility and accountability for their performance and striving to demonstrate proficiency and currency in both content knowledge and professional practice; developing and implementing personal and professional goals with attention to professional standards through a process of self-assessment and professional development; representing their professional credentials and qualifications accurately; and using sound professional judgment.

Principle 3: Responsibility to Colleagues and the Profession. Educators are committed to collaborating with school and Diocesan colleagues and other professionals in the interest of student learning and to meet state educational standards; working together to create a respectful, professional and supportive school climate for educators to maintain their individual professional integrity; seeking out and engaging in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the profession; encouraging promising candidates to enter the education

profession; and supporting the preparation, induction, mentoring and professional development of educators.

Principle 4: Responsibility to School Parents and Families. Educators are committed to collaborating, striving to build trust, and respecting confidentiality with school parents and families; striving to develop and maintain professional relationships with school parents and families; and promoting collaboration and supporting student learning through communication with parents and families.

Principle 5: Responsibility to the ISBE. Educators are committed to supporting the Administrative and School Codes as applicable to Catholic schools, state and federal laws and regulations as applicable to Catholic schools, and the Illinois State Board of Education's standards for highly qualified educators, as applicable to Catholic schools. They are committed to providing accurate communication to the Illinois State Board of Education concerning all certification matters; maintaining appropriate certification for employment; and complying with the state and federal codes, laws, and regulations, that apply to Catholic schools.

II. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

The St. Mary School Norms for the Prohibition of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Sexual Misconduct with Adults: Education, Prevention, Assistance to Persons making a Report, Investigation, and Procedures for Determination of Fitness for Ministry/Employment, prohibits sexual abuse of minors by its employees, clergy members, and volunteers. Pursuant to Faith's Law, St. Mary School has amended its Norms to add additional description of acts constituting sexual abuse of a Minor:

Sexual misconduct, defined by Faith's Law as any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity directed toward or with a minor for the purpose of establishing a romantic or sexual relationship with the minor, including but not limited to a sexual or romantic invitation; dating or soliciting a date; engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog; making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a minor; self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature; and/or a sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the minor (Illinois' Faith's Law, Public Act 102-0676, 105 ILCS 5/22-85.5).

Grooming behavior, defined by Faith's Law and the Illinois Criminal Code as knowingly using a computer online service, internet service, local bulletin board service, or any other device capable of electronic data storage or transmission, or performs an act in person or by conduct through a third party, or uses written communication to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice, or attempt to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice, a child, or another person believed by the person to be a child, to commit any sex offense as defined in Section 2 of the Sex Offender Registration Act, to distribute photographs depicting the sex organs of the child, or to otherwise engage in any unlawful sexual conduct with a child or with another person believed by the person to be a child.

III. EXPECTATIONS OF SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

St. Mary School restates here the Diocese's expectations of all its employees, including employees who work at parish elementary schools and Diocesan high schools in the Diocese of Springfield:

School employees are expected to maintain professional relationships and boundaries, recognizing the age and the developmental levels of the students with whom they interact. This includes meeting with a student or contacting a student outside of the employee's professional role.

While the school does not provide transportation on a regular basis, special circumstances (i.e. field trips) create the need for private transportation of students. While it is preferred to utilize volunteer adult chaperones to provide transportation for students, sometimes employees are also needed to provide this service. Employees are to follow the same guidelines as volunteer chaperones when transporting students, and it is recommended that an employee refrains from transporting a single student, and rather has a group of students, unless an emergency arises. In this case, the employee should notify the school office of the transportation needs before leaving.

In addition, employees will take particular care in taking or possessing a photo or a video of a student. Parents/guardians should first give permission for photos and videos to be taken by employees of the school. Photos and videos of students should serve an educational purpose, and the employee should only maintain those photos and videos for as long as the educational purpose requires. Once the purpose is met, the employee should no longer maintain the photos and videos.

Expectations are also set forth in detail in the following:

- Diocese's Code for the Pastoral Use of Technology and Social Media;
- Diocese's Code of Pastoral Conduct;
- Diocese's Guidelines for Youth and Those Working with Youth Employee, Volunteer, and Youth Participant General Guidelines and Boundaries Expectations;
- Diocese's Norms for the Prohibition of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Sexual Misconduct with Adults: Education, Prevention, Assistance to Persons making a Report, Investigation, and Procedures for Determination of Fitness for Ministry/Employment;
- Illinois DCFS Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status form; and the following trainings:
 - Virtus Protecting God's Children or Safe Environment Training;
 - Illinois DCFS's Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters; and
 - State of Illinois' Prohibition of Sexual Harassment training.

IV. SCHOOL EMPLOYEES ARE MANDATED REPORTERS

St. Mary School restates here the Diocese's requirement that its employees, including employees who work at parish elementary schools and Diocesan high schools in the Diocese of Springfield, shall report suspected child abuse and suspected child neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

Pursuant to the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, (325 ILCS 5/4), school employees are required to make a report of suspected child abuse and suspected child neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services by calling the hotline number at 1-800-25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873) whenever the employee has reasonable cause to believe that a child known to the employee in the employee's professional or official capacity may be abused or neglected.

The school will comply with all sexual misconduct allegation notification requirements under Section 22-85 of the School Code. A violation of the employee code of professional conduct may subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment. Failure of an employee to report a violation of the employee code of professional conduct policy by another employee may subject that employee to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment. 105 ILCS 5/22-85.5(f).

If the report of sexual abuse involves Church Personnel as described in BK2§101 of the Policy on Sexual Abuse of Minors by Church Personnel, the principal and/or teacher shall also report the incident or suspicion to the Victim Assistance Coordinator as described in BK2§108.1.2 – Reporting an Incident of the above-mentioned policy.

This requirement is contained in the following:

- Diocese's Norms for the Prohibition of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Sexual Misconduct with Adults: Education, Prevention, Assistance to Persons making a Report, Investigation, and Procedures for Determination of Fitness for Ministry/Employment;
- Illinois DCFS Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status form; and the following trainings:
 - Virtus Protecting God's Children or Safe Environment Training;
 - Illinois DCFS's Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters; and
 - State of Illinois' Prohibition of Sexual Harassment training.

V. EMPLOYEE TRAINING RELATED TO CHILD ABUSE AND EDUCATOR ETHICS

St. Mary School requires its employees be trained annually in their obligations as mandated reporters and every three years to be trained in preventing, detecting and responding properly to sexual harassment. The trainings are entitled DCFS's Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters; and the State of Illinois' Prohibition of Sexual Harassment training.

Those requirements are set forth in the school's Employee Handbook and in the Diocese's Safe Environment Requirements for Clergy, Adult/Teen Employees and Volunteers whose role involves direct contact with minors.

References:

Diocese's Norms for the Prohibition of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Sexual Misconduct with Adults: Education, Prevention, Assistance to Persons making a Report, Investigation, and Procedures for Determination of Fitness for Ministry/Employment;

Illinois DCFS Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status form;

Diocese's Code for the Pastoral Use of Technology and Social Media;

Diocese's Code of Pastoral Conduct; the Diocese's Guidelines for Youth and Those Working with Youth Employee, Volunteer, and Youth Participant General Guidelines and Boundaries Expectations;

Virtus Protecting God's Children training and Safe Environment Training;

Illinois DCFS's Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters;

State of Illinois' Prohibition of Sexual Harassment training;

Illinois Compiled Statutes