**Title: 5100 STUDENT SAFETY/WELLNESS**

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| Educator Discipline Act (Act), 24 P.S. § 2070.9a  Act 44 of 2018 | **5100 Student Safety/Wellness**  The Principal and the school staff should place primary emphasis on behaviors which enhance the welfare of the entire school community. Educational programs should be designed to heighten student awareness of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse.  The use and/or possession of illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, mood-altering substances, look alike drugs, or drug-related paraphernalia, or the abuse of prescription drugs on school property or while attending or participating in any school-sponsored activity is forbidden and is considered a major disciplinary infraction.  Being under the influence of illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, or mood-altering substances on school property or at a school-sponsored activity is likewise forbidden and is considered a major disciplinary infraction.  After considering all circumstances, the Principal may suspend or expel a student for these major disciplinary infractions, depending upon the severity and/or frequency of such violations.  The selling, pushing, or supplying of illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, mood-altering substances, or drug-related paraphernalia is an extremely serious situation which is to be reported to the parents/guardians of a student and ordinarily to law enforcement officials as well. If, in the judgment of the Principal, there are no extenuating circumstances, a student committing such an offense will be expelled from the school.  A Student Assistance Team is to be established in each secondary and elementary school for the purpose of recommending guidelines to respond openly and effectively to the potential and current uses and abuses of drugs, alcohol, and mood-altering substances by students. Upon approval by the local Board of Trustees, the Student Assistance Program Guidelines will be submitted by each secondary and elementary school to the Director of Education for review and reference.  **5100.1 Participation in Physical Education Classes**  Participation in inter-scholastic athletic programs is a significant element of the school program in the diocese and is an important contribution to the Church’s religious mission and ministry, and play a vital role in the formation of the Christian personality.  Neither the Pennsylvania School Code nor the State Board of Education allows for waivers for students from the requirements of health and physical education due to participation in a physical activity, such as interscholastic sports, band or ROTC. Physical activity is only one component of physical education and physical activity does not meet all of the requirements and standards of physical education.  **5100.2 Participation in Athletics**  Athletics, as with all school programs, are formational in nature. Gospel-based values are taught and learned in athletic programs by developing respect for self and for others through competitions in which dignity, integrity, fairness, and moral strength are emphasized. Coaches, student athletes, and school fans are expected to display appropriate Christian behavior at all times.  Schools should be conscious of offering suitable athletic opportunities to all students. Secondary schools are encouraged to make athletic opportunities available, as their enrollment and school resources permit. Elementary schools may sponsor athletic programs in cooperation with their regional secondary school, in accord with the local Catholic school decision. Schools participating in the Pennsylvania Inter-scholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) are to follow the rules and regulations of the organization, without compromising their own mission and Diocesan policies.  **5100.3 Student Pregnancy**  The Church embraces the deepest respect for the sanctity of all human life and, when pregnancy occurs outside marriage, assists individuals with compassion and understanding. Following Jesus' compassion and forgiveness and the Church's compassionate understanding of human weakness, the following policy is in effect in cases of premarital pregnancy:   1. Both male and female students involved may continue in school in order that they might receive the support that they may need at this time and to uphold the value of all human life; 2. Both female and male students are to be given every opportunity for counseling in respect to the value of human life and the various Christian approaches to coping with their situation. This response will be enacted in collaboration with parents and the pastor; 3. If the young woman is a student in a Catholic school and is continuing her education there during her pregnancy, she and her parents/guardians should be advised that arrangements for alternative instruction can be made if, for reasons of health or safety, she can no longer continue her studies in school. The young woman may continue her extracurricular activities unless or until her personal physician requires otherwise for her own health or safety or that of the baby.   **5100.4 Student Abuse/Neglect (Mandated Reporting)**  In compliance with state law, any teacher, counselor, administrator, or other school employee, having reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected shall immediately contact the ChildLine or law enforcement and inform the agency contacted of the facts and circumstances which led to the filing of a report. If you feel that a child is in immediate danger, please contact law enforcement first and then contact ChildLine to file a report.  The employee will also immediately report the case to the school administrator.  The school administrator will immediately report the case to the Director of Education of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown.  **5100.5 Harassment, Bullying, and Cyberbullying**  The Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown affirms the inherent value of every individual and upholds the respect due to each because of his or her uniqueness as a child of God; therefore, the Diocese is committed to providing for its students an educational environment that is free from physical, psychological, sexual, or verbal harassment.  The Diocese prohibits any form of harassment, including bullying or cyberbullying of or by students, on or off the school campus.  Bullying shall mean unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at a student by another student that has the intent of or effect of:   1. Physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student; 2. Damaging, extorting, or taking a student’s personal property; 3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional, or mental harm; 4. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or 5. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities.   Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher, or employee of the school by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or web site postings (including blogs). All forms of cyberbullying are unacceptable and offenders shall be subject to appropriate discipline as noted in this policy.  Any student who experiences some form of harassment or bullying should report it to the school administration or the Safe2Say Something site. Prompt investigation of allegations of harassment or bullying will be made on a confidential basis by the most immediate administrative authority not accused of or involved with the allegation to ascertain the veracity of complaints. Any student who engages in harassment or bullying is subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the offensive conduct.  Every elementary and secondary school shall make this policy known to all concerned to make it clearly understood that harassment of any form is inconsistent with our mission of Catholic education.  **5100.6 Safety Procedures**  Threats  No student shall use, possess, handle, transmit, or conceal any object which is, or can be considered, a weapon or instrument of violence. Objects which are explosive or incendiary in nature, or any object reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety or security of any person, are prohibited on school premises, and at school-related functions.  Consequences  If a student is found to be in violation of policy any or all of the disciplinary actions listed below may be imposed by the administrator, depending on the severity of the offense as well as the previous disciplinary record of the student.  Consequences may include:   1. Detention; 2. Counseling/family counseling; 3. Approved school/community service; 4. In-school suspension; 5. Referral to Juvenile Court and/or other appropriate law enforcement agency; 6. Suspension from school; 7. Expulsion from school following suspension; and 8. Diversion programs   **5100.7 Interviews of Student by Non-School Personnel**  No one may interview a pupil without a court order, and/or proper credentials. A child may also be interviewed by consent of a parent(s).  Appropriate authorities can include the local police and child protective services. The pupil has the right to request that someone be present that they feel comfortable with.  No school official may release personally identifiable student information in education records to the police or children’s services agency without prior written permission of the parent(s)/guardian(s), a lawfully-issued subpoena, or a court order. |