**Title**: **4270 Copyright Policy for Teachers**

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|  | **4270** **Copyright Policy for Teachers**  **Purpose:** This policy is designed to ensure that all staff members within the diocese comply with copyright law and understand their responsibilities regarding the use of copyrighted materials. This policy aims to protect the intellectual property rights of creators while ensuring that teachers can effectively use materials to support student learning.  **Scope:** This policy applies to all teachers, staff, and administrators who create, share, or use copyrighted materials in any format, including books, articles, music, videos, software, artwork, and online resources.  **General Guidelines:**   1. **Respect Copyright Laws:**    * Teachers must adhere to all relevant copyright laws when using, distributing, or reproducing copyrighted materials.    * Copyrighted works are protected by law and cannot be reproduced or distributed without proper authorization or a valid exception. 2. **Use of Educational Exceptions:**    * Under U.S. copyright law, there are exceptions for educational use in classrooms under the *Fair Use* doctrine and the *TEACH Act*. Teachers may use certain copyrighted materials for educational purposes (e.g., teaching, scholarship, or research) without explicit permission, but must comply with the limitations outlined in the law.    * The *Fair Use* factors to consider include:      + Purpose of use (non-commercial, educational purposes are preferred)      + Nature of the work (factual works are more likely to be fair use than creative works)      + Amount and substantiality of the work used (use only what is necessary)      + Effect on the market value (the use should not substitute for the original work or reduce its market value) 3. **Reproduction of Materials:**    * Teachers should make only limited copies of copyrighted materials for classroom use, ensuring they comply with fair use guidelines. For example, photocopying a small portion of a book or an article (e.g., one chapter or an excerpt) may be permissible, but teachers should avoid excessive copying of entire works. 4. **Digital Content and Online Resources:**    * When using online content (e.g., videos, images, articles), teachers should check the usage rights or licenses. Preferably, use content that is in the public domain, licensed under Creative Commons, or specifically labeled for educational use.    * Streaming video/audio or showing content from online platforms (e.g., YouTube, streaming services) for educational purposes should be done in accordance with platform policies and copyright law. Always verify if the video is permitted for educational use. 5. **Creative Commons and Public Domain:**    * Teachers are encouraged to use resources available under Creative Commons licenses or those in the public domain. These resources often come with specific guidelines regarding attribution and permitted uses.    * Creative Commons licenses can vary, so be sure to follow the terms outlined by the creator, including providing appropriate credit when required. 6. **Creating Your Own Content:**    * Teachers who create their own educational materials (e.g., worksheets, lesson plans, videos, etc.) retain copyright of those materials unless stated otherwise. If teachers plan to share or distribute their materials widely (e.g., to other educators or the public), they can choose to license them under terms that suit their preferences. 7. **Fair Use in the Classroom:**    * Fair use permits the use of copyrighted materials in specific situations, such as for critique, commentary, and discussion. Teachers may use short portions of a work (e.g., a chapter from a book or a scene from a movie) if it directly supports classroom learning.    * Avoid using entire works (e.g., entire films, books, or large portions of texts) in class unless the work is in the public domain, or proper permissions have been obtained. 8. **Obtaining Permission:**    * If teachers wish to use materials that do not fall under fair use, public domain, or Creative Commons, they should seek permission from the copyright holder or license the content appropriately.    * Documentation of permission (in writing) should be retained for school records. 9. **Citing Sources:**    * Teachers must always provide appropriate credit to the creators of the materials used in the classroom. Proper citation practices should be followed for all works, including written, visual, and digital content, to respect the intellectual property of others. 10. **Student-Produced Work:**     * Students who create original work in the classroom own the copyright to their materials unless a specific agreement is made between the teacher and the student regarding ownership.   **Compliance and Enforcement:**   * Teachers who fail to comply with copyright law and the provisions of this policy may face disciplinary action, which could include training, reprimands, or more serious consequences in accordance with district policy. * If there are uncertainties about whether the use of certain materials is allowed, teachers should consult with the district office for guidance.   **Conclusion:** This policy ensures that the school district upholds copyright laws while supporting effective teaching and learning. By respecting the intellectual property rights of others and using educational materials ethically, we create a fair and legal learning environment for students and educators alike. |