

MONTANA CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

*Diocese of
Helena*



*Diocese of
Great Falls-
Billings*

Policy Manual

SECTION 6000: ACCREDITATION, CURRICULUM & LONG-RANGE PLANS

2015-16



Table of Contents

- 6000 Accreditation 3**
 - 6002 Preschool/Child Care Accreditation3
 - 6004 Grade School (K – 8) Accreditation.....3
 - 6006 High School Accreditation3

- 6100 Curriculum and Instructional Assessment 3**
 - 6102 Religion / Theology Curriculum3
 - 6104 High School Curriculum4
 - 6106 Grade School Curriculum4
 - 6108 Textbooks.....5
 - 6110 Library Books and Media.....5
 - 6112 Instructional Assessments6

- 6200 Long Range Plan 6**

6000 Accreditation

6002 Preschool/Child Care Accreditation

All Catholic school programs that serve children in a Pre-Kindergarten environment (Preschool/Child Care) and those programs serving school-age children (Before School / After School) are strongly encouraged to seek licensure, certification, and/or accreditation.

6004 Grade School (K – 8) Accreditation

All Catholic grade schools shall be accredited by the Western Catholic Education Association (WCEA).

6006 High School Accreditation

Diocesan Catholic high schools will be accredited with The Western Catholic Education Association (WCEA) or actively working towards such accreditation.

- The school's mission statement should describe the school's unique method of carrying out a Catholic philosophy of education, in accordance with the Diocese.

6100 Curriculum and Instructional Assessment

The school curriculum encompasses all the learning experiences planned and directed under the leadership of the Principal. The curriculum will be compatible with diocesan policy and the school philosophy.

Along with religious instruction, each school shall provide a general education curriculum that satisfies the educational standards of Montana.

- The curriculum should:
 - Give witness to the message of Christ as it is revealed through a formal program integrating religious belief and practice.
 - Provide an informational framework that will prepare the student for the future by developing the tools of communication, problem solving, and decision making.
 - Encourage each student to develop his/her potential through responsibility and accountability.
 - Affirm ethnic pride, appreciate cultural values, and allow diversity when applying the principles of peace and justice.
 - Integrate parent and community talent into the school program through specifically defined roles for which they will be prepared, made responsible, and held accountable.

6102 Religion / Theology Curriculum

A Religion / Theology curriculum will be established by the Diocese and standards shall be distributed to the Catholic Schools for implementation.

Catholic liturgy, sacraments, traditions, and prayer shall be taught as an integral part of the school's curriculum. The liturgy should be celebrated regularly for the school, prayers said daily, and Catholic traditions celebrated according to liturgical season.

All components and instructional materials used to implement the curriculum for Religion / Theology will be consistent with the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, conform to the guidelines of the Diocese, and be developmentally appropriate and relevant to the students' lives.

- All supplementary material used in the curriculum will conform to Catholic moral teaching and doctrine and approved, in advance, by the Principal.

Catholic schools will provide opportunities for students to participate in community service projects or service learning that benefits the Christian community and/or local community.

Teachers will participate in continuing education offered by the Catholic Schools Office.

6104 High School Curriculum

The high school curriculum will be reviewed on a six-year rotating basis for all subjects and content areas.

The high school curriculum will meet or exceed the requirements set forth by the Office of Public Instruction (OPI).

The Catholic high school will offer a broad-based program of liberal arts studies.

- The general norm of a high school curriculum shall be:
 - Religion / Theology 4 years
 - English 4 years
 - Social Studies 3 years
 - Mathematics 3 years
 - Laboratory Science 3 years
 - Foreign Language 2 years
 - Physical Education 1.5 years
 - Fine Arts 1 year
 - Practical Arts 1 year

6106 Grade School Curriculum

The grade school curriculum will be reviewed on a six-year rotating basis for all subjects and content areas.

The grade school curriculum will meet or exceed the requirements set forth by the Office of Public Instruction (OPI).

- The general norm of a Kindergarten through Second Grade (K-2) curriculum shall be:

Religion	Language Arts	Mathematics
Music	Art	Physical Education
Personal Development	Social Studies	Media-Art
Technology	Science	Sensory-Motor development

- The general norm of a Third Grade through Fifth Grade (3-5) curriculum shall be:

Religion	Language Arts	Mathematics
Music	Physical Education	Art
Social Studies	Science	Health and Safety
Technology		

- The general norm of a Sixth Grade through Eighth Grade (6-8) curriculum shall be:

Religion	Language Arts	Mathematics
Music	Physical Education	Art
Social Studies	Science	Health and Safety
Technology	Foreign Language (if possible)	

6108 Textbooks

Textbooks shall be selected in accordance with a procedure developed by the Principal and Council / Board / Commission .

- Textbook purchases will be pre-approved by the Council / Board / Commission Finance Committee and established in the school's budget.
- It is important that there be a unified, articulated program and a consistent methodology clearly agreed upon by all members of the teaching faculty.

It is strongly advised that the same basal textbook series be used sequentially in grades K - 5 in core curriculum subjects.

- The exception to this pertains to schools using an approved individualized management system in reading, mathematics, or other basic subjects.

Principals shall provide teachers' manuals and supplementary materials for every basal textbook series.

- When financially possible, supplementary materials used as part of the instructional program, in conjunction with the textbook series, shall be included with the textbook purchase.
- Supplementary resources should be selected in accordance with the general curriculum policy of school.

6108.1 Evaluation and Adoption of Textbooks

- Texts shall be reviewed and evaluated at least every 5 (five) years. Textbook series should be adopted after careful evaluation according to specific criteria. Care should be taken to eliminate the use of outdated texts in classroom instruction.

6110 Library Books and Media

An appropriate selection of printed materials and technology resources in a central library is a vital part of a school's instructional program. If a school does not have room for a central library, provision should be made for classroom libraries or centers.

Local criteria should be established for the selection of school and/or classroom library books. The materials selected shall be compatible with the educational goals of the school.

6112 Instructional Assessments

Student assessment programs shall be used each year at selected grade levels to ensure that students are mastering the skills and knowledge appropriate for their age group.

- Catholic School students will participate in the standardized assessments recommended for all students by Montana's OPI.
- Catholic School students in grades five (5), eight (8), and eleven / twelve (11 / 12) will participate in the ACRE (Assessment for Catechesis Religious Education) Exam, from the NCEA.

A copy of the school's assessment results will be sent to the Superintendent.

To ensure that parents are informed of the progress of their child(ren), schools shall inform the parents of their child(ren)'s assessment scores in a timely fashion.

6200 Long Range Plan

Each Catholic school needs a coherent and well integrated educational plan to ensure the quality of its program. It should have a current, formal, long-range plan, effective budget development and monitoring processes, and a dynamic public relations program designed to reach the publics with which the school deals on a regular basis.

An effective Catholic school needs to look not simply at its current problems, but also to develop creative ways to involve the school's local community in the continued development of the ministry of Catholic education. A Catholic school's planning process needs to address the quality of education and Catholicity of the school and then build future plans that enhance these characteristics.

The Catholic school is a people-oriented business, requiring effective ways to communicate with its various publics and broaden its base of support.

Each school will operate from a long-range plan of three to five years.

- The long-range plan should be reviewed on an annual basis, so that it continues to include a range of three to five years.
- The long range plan should result from in-depth self-study and/or accreditation visiting team recommendations.