

Diocese of St. Petersburg Personnel and School Requirements

The Diocese of St. Petersburg holds all Catholic school personnel accountable for meeting specific employment and accreditation requirements. These requirements help to provide a high quality, safe, faith filled learning and working environment for everyone in the school community. Complying with these minimum requirements is mandatory for all school personnel.

All school personnel are required to meet the following minimum qualifications for employment in the Diocese of St. Petersburg:

1. Approved application
2. Level II Electronic Fingerprinting
3. Safe Environment Training
4. Blood Borne Pathogens Training
5. Establishment of Minimum Standards of Moral Conduct

Catechist Certification:

As of July 1, 2013 all full and part-time teachers are required to complete the Catechist Orientation and a basic level catechist certification within four years from the date of hire, or within a timeframe approved by the Superintendent and in consult with the Office of Faith Formation. Catechist certification is valid for four years and must remain current. Certification remains current by receiving 10 hours per year of local in-service, such as school retreats or diocesan workshops. Certification must be renewed after 4 years. Renewal may be completed on-line. (Teachers who have degrees in theology, or have credentials or experience in the field of faith formation, will be handled on an individual basis after consulting with the Superintendent.)

School Administrators and the School Counselor are required to complete the **Basic and** Advanced level Catechist certification within four years from the date of hire. Administrators and School Counselors hired prior to July 1, 2012 must complete Basic Catechist Certification by July 1, 2015. As of July 1, 2013 certification remains current by receiving 10 hours per year of local in-service, such as school retreats or diocesan workshops. Certification must be renewed after 4 years. Renewal may be completed on-line.

1. All members of the school staff shall be knowledgeable of and foster Catholic beliefs and values in their work within the school.
2. The Principal shall: a. be a Catholic in good standing; b. complete the Basic and Advanced level Diocesan Catechist Certification program; c. have a minimum of five years of experience in classroom instruction. d. have a master's degree in educational leadership or an educational leadership related field; e. within five years from the initial date of

employment as principal have a current and valid Florida or national administrator's certificate; and f. maintain recency-of-credit (six college credits or its equivalent) every five years.

3. The **Principal as Teacher**: Schools with eight or more full time classroom teachers shall have full time principals. In schools with fewer than eight full time teachers, principals may teach one class period per day.

4. The **Assistant Principal** shall: a. have a bachelor's degree; b. complete the Basic and Advanced level Diocesan Catechist Certification program; c. within three years of employment have a current and valid state or national teaching certificate; d. (1) in the case of a part time assistant principal, within two years of appointment to the position of assistant principal, shall have earned six college credits in school administration; OR (2) in the case of a full time assistant principal, within five years of appointment to the position of assistant principal, shall have earned 15 college credits in school administration; and d. maintain recency-of-credit (six college credits or its equivalent) every five years.*

5. **Need for Assistant Principal**: In schools with an enrollment greater than 300 students, it is recommended there be a part time assistant principal. In schools of over 500 students, it is recommended there be a full time assistant principal.

6. The **Prekindergarten Teacher** must meet the standards set forth by the Department of Education.

7. The **Kindergarten Teacher** shall: a. (1) have a bachelor's degree in early childhood; OR (2) have a bachelor's degree in elementary education with six college credits in early childhood education; b. within three years of appointment to the position of teacher, have a current and valid state or national teaching certificate in elementary education or in an area of early childhood; and c. maintain recency-of-credit (six college credits or its equivalent) every five years.

8. The **Teacher of Grades 1-8** shall: a. have a bachelor's degree; b. within three years of appointment as teacher, have a current and valid state or national teaching certificate in the area of his/her primary teaching assignment; c. within five years of the appointment as teacher, have at least six college credits in the area of his/her secondary teaching assignment; and d. maintain recency-of-credit (six college credits or its equivalent) every five years.

9.a. The state certified **Classroom Teacher in grades 1-8** who teaches one or two classes of **religion** shall:

a. meet all of the requirements for a teacher in grades 1-8

a. be a Catholic in good standing

b. complete the Basic Level Diocesan Catechist Certification Program within four years from the date of hire.

c. Maintain the currency of the certificate according to diocesan requirements.

9.b. The **Religion Teacher in grades 1- 8** who teaches three or more classes of religion shall

a. be a Catholic in good standing

b. have a bachelor's or master's degree in religious education or theology* and if required, completion of the Diocesan Certification Program at the requisite level, OR a bachelor's degree in any field and completion of the Basic and Advanced Level Diocesan Catechist Certification Program

c. Maintain the currency of the Catechist certificate according to diocesan requirements.

* For theology or related degrees not in the field of education, employee must have evidence of continuing professional development in the area of Classroom Management and Best Practices in Classroom Instruction.

9c. The **Religion Teachers in grades 9 -12** shall be a Catholic in good standing and shall have earned or be in the process of earning:

a. an in-field degree* from a Catholic College or University OR

b. a degree in education and completion of the Diocesan Lay Pastoral Ministry Institute with concentration in religious studies.

c. completion of the Basic and Advanced Level Diocesan Catechist Certification Program

* For theology or related degrees not in the field of education, employee must have evidence of continuing professional development in the area of Classroom Management and Best Practices in Classroom Instruction.

10. The **Teacher of Exceptional Student Education or Resource Teacher** shall: a. (1) have a bachelor's degree in special education; OR (2) have a bachelor's degree with certification in an area of special education; b. within three years of appointment as teacher, have a current and valid state or national certificate in an area of special education; and c. maintain recency-of-credit (six college credits or its equivalent) every five years.

11. The **Physical Education Teacher** (one or more periods) shall: a. (1) have a bachelor's degree in physical education and, within three years of appointment as teacher, have a current and valid state or national certificate in physical education; OR (2) have a bachelor's degree and successfully complete the state subject area examination in physical education, and, within three years of appointment as teacher, have a current and valid state or national certificate in physical education; and b. maintain recency-of-credit (six college credits or its equivalent) every five years.

12. The **Educational Media Specialist** shall: a. (1) have a master's degree in educational media; OR (2) have a bachelor's degree in a field related to educational media (e.g. English, elementary education, etc.) and familiarization with technologies; b. within three years of appointment as media specialist, have a current and valid state or national certificate in educational media or related field; and c. maintain recency of credit (six college credits or its equivalent) every five years.

13. The **School Counselor** shall: a. have a master's degree; b. (1) have a current and valid state or national guidance certificate, OR (2) have a Florida state license in an area of mental health such as Clinical Social Worker, Mental Health Counselor, Marriage and

Family Therapist, Clinical Psychologist, or any other area in mental health which the state shall license; and c. maintain recency of credit (six college credits or its equivalent) every five years, and complete the Basic and Advanced Level Diocesan Catechist training.

14.a. **Uncertified Instructional Support Staff:** a. Part time teachers in major subject areas except Religion, shall: (1) have a bachelor's degree and (2) have at least 12 college credits in their teaching area and (3) maintain recency-of-credit (six college credits or its equivalent) every five years.

14.b. **Uncertified Instructional Support Staff:** b. Personnel who teach foreign language, music, art, and technology shall: (1) have a Statement of Qualification signed by the superintendent AND (2) must have evidence of continuing professional development in the area of Classroom Management and Best Practices in Classroom Instruction.

14.c. **Additional Staff** c. Support personnel, such as library and teacher assistants, shall be under the direct supervision of an administrator or teacher.

14.d. **Additional Staff** d. Personnel to provide remedial and enrichment support to meet the individual needs of students shall have documented educational qualifications validated in writing by their superintendent.

15. Teacher Assistants

The main role of a teacher assistant is to assist with small group instruction and provide assistance to individual students, as determined by the classroom teacher. Clerical responsibilities are not the key role of a teacher assistant. Administrators are responsible for providing annual training to all teacher assistants.

15a. Prekindergarten (3 Years) A part-time teacher assistant is recommended for 1-10 students. A part-time teacher assistant is **required** for 11-15 students. A full time teacher assistant is **required** for 16-20 students.

15b. Prekindergarten (4 Years) A part-time teacher assistant is recommended for 1-15 students. A part-time teacher assistant is **required** for 16-20 students. A full time teacher assistant is **required** for 21-25 students. VPK programs will follow program directives.

15c. Kindergarten A part-time teacher assistant is recommended for 1-20 students. A part-time teacher assistant is **required** for 21-25 students. A full-time teacher assistant is **required** for 26-30 students.

15d. Grade 1: A part time teacher assistant is **recommended** for 1-20 students. A part time teacher assistant is **required** for 21-25 students. A full time teacher assistant is **required** for 26-35 students.

15e. Grades 2-8: The need for a teacher assistant should be determined by the class size, the number of children who require accommodations, and affordability.

School Requirements

Standard 16: An excellent Catholic school operates in compliance with all diocesan and applicable state and local policies.

Benchmarks

16.1 The school shall develop a written plan for mandated diocesan, county, and state health procedures; provide a safe environment to prevent illness and accidents; deal with emergencies should they occur; and educate students concerning safe and healthy practices.

16.3 The school shall maintain health records that include immunization data, hearing and vision screening, scoliosis screening, and school-entry medical examinations.

16.3 The school shall be in compliance with diocesan and applicable state and county requirements regarding protection, health, sanitation, and safety.

16.4 The school shall develop and make available a written safety and security plan which shall include a section on emergency procedures to address such matters as natural disasters, environmental hazards, dangerous weather, violent incidents, and evidence of evacuation drills.

16.5 The school shall be in compliance with provincial and diocesan safe environment policies.

16.6 The school shall publish, implement, and display statements of nondiscrimination of students and personnel in accordance with federal law and regulations.

16.7 The school shall develop an academic calendar and supporting attendance policies that are sufficient to the operation of a quality instructional program with a minimum of 180 actual school days. The school year shall include a minimum of 540 net instructional hours for kindergarten, 720 net instructional hours for grades 1-3, and 900 net instructional hours for grades 4-8.

16.8 The age of the student is the primary appropriate entrance requirement. Entry dates shall be in accordance with the following schedule:

Pre-Kindergarten 3	3 years of age
Pre-Kindergarten 4	4 years of age on or before September 1
Kindergarten	5 years of age on or before September 1
First Grade	6 years of age on or before September 1 and successful completion of Kindergarten

16.9 The school shall maintain records for students containing information, procedures, and confidentiality as required by law and as necessary for the operation of a quality educational program. (Closed schools will follow diocesan procedures regarding these records.)

Professional Development Plan: There shall be a written, school-based program of professional development designed to improve the effectiveness of all school personnel.

Planning Periods: Each full time teacher shall have the equivalent of five planning periods per week.

Class Size

The following class size limits are recommended guidelines...

- Class size limit for Grades 1-8 is 35.
- Class size limit for Kindergarten is 30.
- Class size limit for Prekindergarten (4 Years) is 25.
- Class size limit for Prekindergarten (3 Years) is 20.

Note: When feasible, determination of class size should take into account the number of students in the class who require special learning accommodations.

