

Pocahontas Catholic Elementary School



STUDENT HANDBOOK

2018-2019

Pocahontas Catholic School is a community called by God, formed as disciples of Jesus, and guided by the Holy Spirit. Our mission is to develop students, staff, families, and parishioners in Gospel living through experiential learning. We are dedicated to making God's love present by developing skills for learning and living; and to serving each other, our Church, our community, and our world.

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Pocahontas Catholic School



Dear Parents:

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint you with some of the many programs, activities, and operation of our school. It should serve as a guide to help answer your initial questions and also serve as a resource to enable you to remember important details about the school. While it contains much information for you to know, it is supplemented by letters, notes, e-mails and other communications to you throughout the school year.

The education of your children is of key importance to you, the faculty, staff, and me. We endeavor to foster the growth of your children by building a faith community here that hears the Gospel message of Jesus Christ and shares that message through lives of Christian service. It is a challenging, ongoing task that prepares the students for their role as citizens of the country and holy mother Church. It is our commitment to prepare these students to thrive in a world where peace and justice are wanting values and morals, where their ability to succeed is based on their ability to problem solve, and where their goals are planted in the firm vision of life with Jesus in His service.

The teachers and staff here model our goals. I am proud to work with them and invite you to share in our commitment to enable the students to be the best they can be. It is an exciting time to be learning and being a part of Pocahontas Catholic School.

Sincerely,

Mr. Terry Eisenbarth
Pocahontas Catholic School Elementary Principal

MISSION STATEMENT

“Pocahontas Catholic School is a community called by God, formed as disciples of Jesus, and guided by the Holy Spirit. Our mission is to develop students, staff, families and parishioners in Gospel living through experiential learning. We are dedicated to making God’s love present by developing skills for learning and living; and to serving each other, our Church, our community, and our world.”

MOTTO “The Seed Ground of the Spirit” is found in St. Paul’s letter to the Galatians 6:7, 8. “A person reaps what one sows. If you sow in the field of the flesh, you reap a harvest of corruption; but if your seed ground is the Spirit, you reap everlasting life.” At Pocahontas Catholic School the environment, curriculum, philosophy, and mission are all directed to helping students and staff sow their talents and abilities in the seed ground of the Spirit, it is a place where attention to the individual is placed in the context of a faith community where all have the opportunity to learn and experience service to others.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS: We are respectful, responsible and caring to all the people, all the places all the time.

PHILOSOPHY:

The philosophy of the faculty and the administration is based on the Gospel of Jesus and the document “To Teach As Jesus Did.” Only by a constant study of Christ’s teaching and by using various methods of education will we be able to develop students for a changing world.

We will work as partners with parents because we believe that they are the primary educators of their children. Together with parents we will use every means available to motivate the students to develop leadership, loving concern for others, and realization of the responsibilities and opportunities life can offer. To accomplish these aims we will foster the growth of a healthy self concept. We will strive to help the students find Christ in our ever changing world and see Christ in every member of our society, thus forming a social conscience.

SCHOOL OBJECTIVES

- Instill in students and faculty a deeper relationship with each other in our school, parish, home, local, national and world communities.
- Promote and encourage an on going professional growth among the faculty.
- Encourage meaningful relationships in our faith community.

PROCEDURES/POLICIES

- Pocahontas Catholic School follows the Handbook of the Diocese of Sioux City, complies with local School Board Policies, and conforms to the Code of Iowa that applies to students attending non-public schools. Pocahontas Catholic School is fully accredited by the State of Iowa.

- Pocahontas Catholic School follows the calendar of the Pocahontas Area Community School as close as possible to allow for the bussing of our students. The school calendar includes 180 days as well as additional days for staff development when teachers are inservice.
- Pocahontas Catholic School is an equal opportunity educational institution. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national ethnic origin, or sex in the educational programs or activities which it operates.
- The Asbestos Management Plan for Pocahontas Catholic School is available for review in the principal’s office by those wishing to do so. The school phone is 335 3603. This management plan is required under the federal “Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act” (AHERA) codified in 40 CFR Part 763.
- The legislature has required all schools in the State of Iowa to adopt a uniform procedure for investigating allegations of abuse of students by school employees. [Iowa Code 280.17 (1989)] In response to a statutory directive, the Department of Education, in consultation with the Department of Human Services, has established administrative rules and a Model Policy for adoption by public school boards and authorities in charge of non-public schools. These rules require the board to appoint a Level I investigator and the Alternate Level I investigator for Pocahontas Catholic School.

Level 1 InvestigatorMr. Terry Eisenbarth, Principal..... (712-335 3603)
 Alternate Level I InvestigatorMrs. Patty Lansink.....(712-233-7598)

Communication of concerns should initiate with the student’s teacher. If a parent has a question or concern, this is the place to begin. If the concern is unresolved, the next step is to visit with the principal. The principal may initiate a meeting jointly with the teacher, parent, and himself to help facilitate a resolution. Open communication is essential for the health and stability of the school environment and is encouraged. Following this process ensures understanding and mutual respect.

2013-2014 FACULTY AND STAFF

Principal Mr. Terry Eisenbarth
 Kindergarten..... Mrs. Courtney Hamilton
 Grade 1 Mrs. Amy Nelson
 Grade 2..... Ms. Erin Martin
 Grade 3.....Miss Andrea Altman
 Grade 4.....Mrs. Kay DeWall
 Grade 5 Ms. Lee Ann Grimm
 Library/Religion.....Mrs. Jan Crowe
 Secretary Mrs. Wanda Rittgers
 Pastor..... Fr. Craig Collison
 Religious..... Sister Renae Hohensee
 Custodian Mr. John Nelson

Additional personnel through Pocahontas Area Community Schools: Title I Reading, P.E., Art, Band, Music and Counselor are shared time PAC staff. Students are bused to the elementary school for these subjects. The Public School nurse is available. The nurse records health records, does eye screening, checks immunization cards, and serves our students as needed.

ADMISSIONS

Registration: Registration is held in August. During this registration parents complete necessary forms, sign up for a tuition schedule, and receive other pertinent information pertaining to the school program. A letter is sent to parents in the summer reminding them of important information, date and times.

Kindergarten: According to Iowa Code 280.16, boys and girls who enter kindergarten must be five years old by September 15. Kindergarten Roundup is held in the spring of each year. New students are able to visit the classroom and parents register for the fall at this time. Parents are asked to bring a baptismal certificate if the child has been baptized in a parish other than Resurrection Parish and complete the registration forms. If a student was baptized at Resurrection Parish, we need the date for our records. A copy of the certificate will be taken. Children of other religions are certainly welcome to attend PCS.

Immunizations: In accordance with the Iowa Immunization Law, each child enrolled in PCS must have a record of all immunizations on file in the school office. Iowa schools automatically transfer the card with the child, but those entering from another state must obtain and have the card filled out by the doctor and brought back to school.

Other Admissions: Those parents wishing to enroll students in PCS other than kindergarten need to set up an appointment with the principal. Such admissions require a review of student records, discussion of any special needs, and a determination by PCS staff that admission is acceptable.

Financial Obligations: parents at registration sign a tuition payment plan. Tuition may be paid in full, quarterly, by semester, or monthly with the last payment due in May. Parents may choose the plan that best meets their ability to fulfill this obligation. Tuition statements are sent home regularly as reminders of this important obligation. Tuition assistance is available for those needing it by filling out a Monsignor Lafferty Tuition Foundation Application to FAIR.

TUITION

1st child.....	\$1,950
2nd child.....	\$1,850
3rd child	\$1,350, with a \$5,150 cap per family

Different payment plans are available. You may make a full payment at registration, pay by semester, quarterly, or monthly.

Other Fees: There is a \$40 book fee per student due at registration. Additional fees may be required such as field trips, special projects, and class socials. A letter describing these will be sent home as they occur. Families are also asked to purchase a school polo shirt and tie dye shirt for Mass and special events for \$28.00

PROGRAM PRACTICES

Prairie Lakes AEA: AEA 8 serves PCS well as a resource for videos, software, materials, and consultants. Instructional materials are delivered as ordered to the school once a week. A speech clinician, audiologist, clinical psychologist, and social worker, as well as content area consultants are all available as needed. Parental consent is required for most of these services and occurs with open and regular communication with parents.

Assemblies: Good conduct at school models a student's personal integrity and demonstrates school pride and spirit. Good conduct consists of giving one's attention to the speaker or performance, being courteous, and giving appropriate applause.

Attendance: Official school hours for K-5 are from 8:05 a.m. to 3:05 p.m. Monday through Friday. Tardy at 8:06. Children not bused are asked to remain at home until 7:50 am.

Absentees: If a student is absent, it is the responsibility of the parent to call or e-mail the school office before **8:05 a.m.** Students are expected to make up all class work and tests as directed by the teacher.

Make up work will be available only after 3:20 unless prior arrangements have been made. If a child returns for afternoon class, please return the child between 12:00 and 12:30.

Absences - Appointments: If a student comes to school in the morning knowing he/she must leave school during the day, the student is to have a written excuse from the parent stating the reason for leaving and time at which they must leave. No child will be dismissed during the day without the parent's written permission/phone call. Please send permission slips in advance. Excused absences for doctor and dental appointments are not a tardy or absence issue unless the child is gone the entire am. or p.m. session or all day.

Absences - Vacations: Missing school because of vacations is not a good practice. While students will make up work missed, there is no way to make up the time lost from teacher explanations and instruction nor acquire the lost interaction within the classroom for the each subject. The principal needs to be contacted at least one week prior to students being gone for a vacation. The teacher will decide if work will be made up before or after the vacation. Teacher's planning and attention to the class progress may require the work being done after a child's return. The last week of school in May is a crucial time for students to be present.

Bicycles: Bicycles ridden to school will be parked in the bicycle rack provided for this purpose on the north edge of the parking area. The school assumes no responsibility for bikes left during the day or night at school. Children may not ride other student's bikes.

Birthday Treats: Birthday treats are permitted with the exception of gum. Due to classroom interruptions birthday bouquets, balloons, and treats will be delivered to the office and given to the child at the end of the day.

Books: Books are the property of PCS and must be considered borrowed property by the student. All books must go back and forth to school in a plastic bag or school bag. Students are responsible for keeping the books covered and in good condition. Fines are assessed for lost or damaged books. The teacher's judgment will be respected in these matters.

Bussing: The Pocahontas Area Community School buses our students to and from school. To be eligible, the students must live in the Pocahontas Area School District. We will cooperate with them in every possible way. Students riding the bus must practice courtesy to all students and to the bus driver. Students must remain in their seats until the bus has stopped and avoid noise and rowdiness which might divert the drivers attention. Bus Conduct Slips will be issued by the bus driver for inappropriate behavior on the bus. Three bus conduct slips in one year and the student will be ineligible to ride the Pocahontas Area Community School bus. Drivers need a note from the parents if a child who regularly rides is to get off at a different stop.

Courtesy: Students are expected to be courteous and respectful at all times. When addressing or speaking to those in authority, the proper title should be used. Students must listen to and obey any teacher who corrects them, not just their homeroom teacher. It is courteous to greet each other and all adults they meet in the corridors and in the building. Students are not allowed to use cell phones at school.

Discipline: When a student is sent to the Principal's office for inappropriate behavior, they will need to call their parents at home or work to explain.

Early Dismissal: When Pocahontas Area Community School dismisses students early because of weather, bad road conditions, or high temperatures, PCS will also dismiss. It is advisable to listen to local radio stations (i.e. KAYL 101.7 Storm Lake) when such conditions are evident. It's a good idea to remind your child what they are to do when school dismisses.

Fire/Tornado Drills: Fire and tornado drills are held according to Iowa law. Fire drills are required 2 times each semester. Tornado drills are also practiced 2 times each semester. When the fire drills are held, all students and teachers must leave the building. Exit procedures have been explained to the students and for safety measure, the children are instructed to leave quickly, orderly and quietly.

Homework: Board policy requires that all students do the assigned work and complete grade level requirements within their ability as determined by professional staff. Promotion to the following grade may be affected if the student has incomplete or undone student work. Parents are asked to cooperate by helping with any home study such as math hash cards, reading words, and listening to your child do enrichment reading. Homework reinforces guided practice done as a class during a lesson and enables teachers to assess students' mastery of a given concept.

Hot Lunch Program: The Pocahontas Area Community School operates the lunch program here. You are informed in regard to cost through the Record Democrat at the beginning of each school year. The students' lunch tickets are all computerized and any amount of money can be sent for payment at any time. You will be notified when your child's account is getting low. Absolutely no paid for seconds if you have a negative balance. Keeping lunch accounts up to date help avoid such problems. Lunch money checks should be made payable to POCAHONTAS AREA COMMUNITY SCHOOL HOT LUNCH and given to our secretary. Free and reduced lunches are offered at Pocahontas Catholic; obtain an application form at the PACS Central Office.

Instructional Media Center: A librarian is available to develop library skills, to acquaint all the students with the good books, and help them locate information and materials. The school also has access to materials from Prairie Lakes Education Agency (AEA) in Pocahontas, the public library, and the Diocesan Media Center in Sioux City.

Mass: Liturgies will be held once a week in the school's multi-purpose room/cafeteria generally at 8:35. Students throughout the school take turns at various Mass parts. An open invitation is extended to parents and parishioners to join us each week. If school is delayed because of weather, Mass will be cancelled that day.

Medicine: Iowa law prohibits school personnel from dispensing any sort of prescription medication unless the parent has filled out the necessary authorization and permission forms and returned them with the medication in the original labeled container to the school secretary. She will dispense the meds at the given time. If pills need to be divided (split) for a dosage, parents are responsible for doing this and sending the split pills in a prescription bottle as needed to the school office along with the proper dosage instructions. It is extremely important for parents to ensure medication taken daily by students is kept current and available in the school office. If the medications can be given at home and not at school, we encourage this to be done. A child taking antibiotics 3 times a day does not need to take a dose at school. If a child needs non-prescription drugs (O.T.C.) we still need the same authorization. We encourage the use of Tylenol instead of aspirin for pain relief for children because of the chance they may develop Reye's Syndrome with the use of aspirin. If a child really needs cough drops, send a written permission note and only enough cough drops for the day.

Parent Newsletters/Notes: A newsletter is published informing you of coming events and past happenings. Like all notes sent home, the newsletter is given to the oldest in the family to bring home and will be sent home on each Thursday of the week.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: The meeting of parents and teachers becomes a basis for mutual cooperation and support. Parent teacher conferences are held once or twice a year. We ask that, if at all possible, both parents be present for the conference. We believe attendance at the conferences is very important. The importance parents attach to this determines to a great extent the attitude of the student to his/her work. If the student sees your interest and concern, it will be a greater motivation to achievement.

Recess: All recess periods and the noon break is staff supervised. K-5 has am. recess; K-5 has noon recess; K-5 has p.m. recess. The purpose of recess is to add physical activity for students. The nature of recess is to have students play games and learn to socialize with classmates. It is a vital part of learning to cooperate and follow game rules. For this reason it is advisable not to have students bring such things as computer games and or I-Pods. During indoor recess the same rule applies. Football: flag only.

Recess rules: Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated at recess. The staff member on duty will issue:

1. A warning;
2. Time out Bench;
3. Page of writing or
4. Call parents at work or home and explain why you are in trouble.

Report Cards: Quarterly report cards are issued. One of the approved forms issued by the Diocesan Office of Education is used. The report cards are to be signed and returned to school within a week after receiving them.

Retention: If a student would benefit from retention to assist in learning, that is done in consultation with appropriate professional staff and parents.

Room Parents: Two or three parents from each room will be asked to serve as room parents. These people are responsible to meet with the principal and plan some activities for their room during the year. It is their responsibility to inform the classroom teacher as to what is going on before the activities. These persons call parents to furnish treats for the parties and may be utilized for other activities as they occur.

Safety: The following regulations will assure the safety of the students:

- **Bringing or Picking Up Students:** Parents are asked to enter the school parking lot from the west and exit to the east when bringing or picking up students at school. This allows for the bus pick up and car flow to move smoothly and is best for the safety of the students. Please wait for cars in front of you to exit before proceeding. With many students moving at this time, it is advisable to not be in a hurry.
- **Fire Lanes:** Please leave the Fire Lane in front of the school free of cars during the school day. Please park your car north of the building by the teachers cars when you come to school for something during the school day. (Remember, buses pick up and return students all day long.)
- **Walking:** Walking in the building is stressed to prevent accidents and to provide for the safety of all while inside. Running is not allowed or tolerated. Students may lose the privilege of recess if caught running.

Policy on Harassment of Students and Employees:

I. The Policy

- A. It is the policy of the Pocahontas Catholic School in Pocahontas, Iowa to maintain learning and working environment that is free from harassment. No employee or student of the district shall be subjected to sexual harassment nor shall any employee or student of the district be subject to harassment on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability or marital status.
- B. It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the Pocahontas Catholic School staff to harass another staff member or student through conduct of a sexual nature or conduct designed to reduce the dignity of that individual with respect to race, color, creed or religion, national origin, gender, age, disability or marital status. It shall also be a violation of this policy for students to harass other students or staff through conduct of a sexual nature or conduct designed to reduce the dignity of that individual with respect to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability or marital status.
- C. The administrator shall be responsible for promoting understanding and acceptance of, and assuring compliance with, state and federal laws and board policy and procedures governing harassment within his or her school or office.
- D. Violations of this policy or procedure will be cause for disciplinary action up to and including expulsion or dismissal.

II. Definitions

A. Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment or advancement or of a student's participation in school programs or activities;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an employee or student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the employee or student;
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's or student's performance or creating an intimidating or hostile working or learning environment.
4. Sexual harassment, as set forth in Section II-A, may include, but is not limited to the following:
 - verbal or written harassment or abuse
 - electronic communication
 - pressure for sexual activity
 - repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications
 - unwelcome touching
 - suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc.

B. Harassment on the basis of race, color, creed, religion national origin, gender, age, disability or marital status means conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, harass, distress, agitate, disturb, or trouble persons when:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment or advancement, or of a student's participation in school programs or activities;
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an employee or students is used as the basis for decisions affecting the employee or student;
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's or student's performance or creating an intimidating or hostile working or learning environment.
4. Harassment, as set forth in Section II-B, may include, but is not limited to the following:
 - verbal, physical, or written harassment or abuse
 - electronic communication
 - repeated remarks of a demeaning nature
 - implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc.
 - demeaning jokes, stories, activities directed at a student or employee.

III. Procedure

Staff and/or students who feel they have been harassed or who feel they have witnessed incidents of harassment are encouraged to contact the Equity Coordinator or any other staff member. Employees and students are advised that all reports will be kept as confidential as is possible and that retaliation will be not tolerated.

IV. Notification

Notice of this policy will be incorporated in the Pocahontas Catholic School teacher and student handbooks. Training sessions on this policy and the prevention of sexual harassment shall be held for teachers on an annual basis.

Equity Coordinator..... Mr. Terry Eisenbarth, Principal 712-335-3603
Alternate Contact Fr. Craig Collison..... 712-335-3242

Procedure for Reporting/Action Regarding Allegations of Harassment:

1. Any student, parent of a student, or employee of Pocahontas Catholic School who feels she/he has been harassed or who feels he/she has witnessed incidents of harassment is encouraged to contact the principal or any other staff member.

Any staff member to whom an incident of harassment has been reported is to contact the principal as soon as possible to inform the principal of the incident and identify the person making the claim.

2. The principal will have the person making the claim fill out the form for reporting harassment and instruct the person to recall and record as many details as possible including identifying any witnesses to the incident.
3. The principal will then interview any witnesses, having them fill out a report form as completely as possible.
4. The principal will next interview the person claimed to have committed the harassment.
5. If any of the criteria for harassment are found as stated in the School Policy on Harassment, there is cause for disciplinary action up to and including expulsion or dismissal.
6. Consequences for school employees committing acts of harassment will include a formal reprimand which would include a written statement in the employee's file and a mutual review of the policy with the principal. Further disciplinary action (at the discretion of the principal) might include a two-day suspension without pay and mandatory outside professional counseling, or termination of contract. Any recommendation of the outside counselor will be communicated to the principal and followed through by the employee.
7. In the event any claim is made against the principal, the pastor and the superintendent for elementary schools are to be contacted immediately, and the pastor is to conduct the investigation.
8. If a claim is found to be groundless, this will be made known to the person filing the claim.
9. All claims and reports resulting from founded claims are filed in the principal's office.

Consequences for grade school students committing acts of harassment:

1st Offense

- Parents notified by student or principal or counselor.
- Student and counselor meet to develop appropriate counseling plan.
- Written or verbal apology approved or witnessed by principal.
- Report of harassment documented.

2nd Offense

- Parents notified by student or principal or counselor.
- One day school suspension.
- Parents and child must meet with principal and/or counselor to develop plan of action. This may include a referral for professional counseling.
- Report of harassment documented.

3rd Offense

- Parents notified by principal.
- 3 day school suspension.
- Disciplinary Board meets – see student handbook.
- Referral for professional counseling.
- Report of harassment documented.

4th Offense

- Expulsion for the rest of the school year.
- Report of harassment documented.

Consequences for school employees committing acts of harassment:

1st Offense

- Two days suspension without pay.
- Mandatory outside professional counseling.
- Any recommendations will be communicated to the principal and followed by the employee.
- Report of harassment documented.

2nd Offense

- Termination of contract.

School Visitors: As a school, we realize that there are special times when family may want to visit our school. We would encourage you to visit our school during non-academic times such as recess and lunch. We ask that you contact the principal, so that we can make the appropriate arrangements with the classroom teacher, etc. We like to encourage visitors at our school, but ask that they report to the office upon arrival and seek prior approval so that our educational process is not interrupted.

School Property: Care of school property and books is not only a matter of respect but of conscience. Damage to school property such as desks, restrooms, equipment and books, requires restitution. Students are responsible for keeping their textbooks covered.

School Records: A permanent record of each child is kept on file in the secretary's office; cumulative files are sent to the Pocahontas Area Middle School when they leave Pocahontas Catholic School. These records are private and are submitted when lawfully requested. The records include the following information: Progress report of the child from kindergarten through grade five, results of standardized tests, attendance/tardiness records, special help and recommendations given by classroom teachers, speech clinician, medical records, Title I reading teacher, psychologist, tutor and promotion/retention. PCS follows the federal law in regard to privacy rights of parents and students. Records are released only when parents/lawful guardians have granted permission. Files are available to parents for review at any time following an appointment time set up through the principal.

Sickness/Injury: If a child becomes ill or gets hurt at school, a parent or a person authorized by the parent will be notified before the child is permitted to leave school. The family emergency numbers, which are on file in the secretary's office, will be called in the event that the parents cannot be reached. Parents should be certain that the person's name that is listed in case of emergency is available. A child who is sick or who has been injured cannot remain at school. The parents must make arrangements to pick up the child. The child must be home for 24 hours before returning to school.

Sportsmanship: Pocahontas Catholic School and the Pocahontas Area Community School insist on the same sportsmanship rules. Ball games are not scheduled during the school day. Therefore, the responsibility of discipline should be the parents and not the schools. We ask the parents to please make sure that your child/children sit by one of you and watch the game instead of running up and down the bleachers or around the stadium or gym. If children continue to disturb others who are trying to watch the game, the public school personnel will take disciplinary action. Inappropriate behavior does not reflect the high ideals we espouse here at PCS.

Tardiness: Your child will be marked tardy if he/she is not present at 8:06. Continued tardiness is harmful to scholastic development. Parents will be informed if tardiness is habitual. Children who come late because of a bus delay, will not be considered tardy. Excused absences for appointments are identified for record keeping.

Telephone: Except for emergencies, neither students nor teachers will be called to the phone during school hours. Because the school phone is a business phone, children are discouraged from calling their parents to bring things during the day.

Testing: Assessment is an ongoing process for students throughout school. Tests may be teacher made, text based, or standardized from a nationally used test. Assessment may also be authentically assessed where student projects are kept in portfolios for measurement. Whatever the method, the information gathered is used by teachers to understand what programs best meet students' needs. The State also directs accredited schools to use multiple assessments to measure progress in meeting student achievement goals.

Cognitive Abilities Tests are given to Grade 3 in the spring of each school year. The Iowa Assessments are given to grades 2 through 5 in the fall of the year. Students in Grade 4 take the **STAR Reading and Math Assessments in the spring** and **Grade 5 take the Assessment of Catholic Religious Education (ACRE)** in the spring of the year also. It is proven that students who miss taking the tests with the class do not do as well as the ones who take it as a group. Please try to see to it that your child/children are here every day during testing time. You will be informed of these dates in the newsletter.

Transfer: A family transferring from this school should notify the teacher and the principal in advance in order to settle records and accounts and to give the address of the new school where records are to be sent. All school records will be forwarded to the principal of the new school. Parents are not allowed to take records with them.

Volunteers: Jesus challenges us to be service people. His depiction of the Last Judgment is based on how people "fed the hungry, gave drink to the thirsty..." The faculty of Pocahontas Catholic School welcomes anyone interested in becoming involved in helping to develop the education program of our students and to assist in the great work of Catholic education by becoming a volunteer. These volunteers are not involved in the actual teaching, but work under the direction of a classroom teacher and do what he/she gives them. These people are very important to our educational system and are much appreciated. A volunteer form is available at registration. The principal holds a short meeting with volunteers before the start of the school year. All volunteers will need to take VIRTUS training through the Diocese.

Curriculum Standards:

The academic program consists of religion, reading, literature, phonics, handwriting, language, spelling, math, science, health, family life, social studies, Iowa history, guidance, music, art, and physical education. Pocahontas Catholic School follows the curriculum guidelines of the Diocesan Office of Education, which are in compliance with State of Iowa Rules. Iowa Core Standards and Benchmarks are updated on a regular cycle involving teachers from across the Diocese and implemented with the curriculum.

Field Trips/Enrichment: Teachers take classes on educational trips to broaden the concepts they learn in the classroom. These excursions are carefully planned so they will be a means of gaining additional knowledge and information. Parents are requested to sign a permission slip before each field trip enabling the student to go with their teacher and classmates; The Knights of Columbus defray the cost of bussing.

Talented and Gifted Program: Pocahontas Catholic School believes that every individual should be allowed to develop to his/her fullest potential. PCS is committed to attaining this goal. Gifted students who possess advanced skills will be given opportunities to challenge and motivate them to utilize their abilities to their fullest potential within the classroom. Criteria utilized to determine eligibility for this program is based on PACS criteria. This includes achievement on 90% in Iowa Assessment and also qualifying scores on Cognitive Abilities Tests.

Religious Formation: Church and Religion come first at PCS. The students, faculty, and staff work to live the Gospel while building a school faith community based on lives of Christian service. Our Spirit Center, located between the west classrooms and administrative offices, serves as an assembly area for school wide prayer, Advent services, and Lenten activities. It is our focal point for meeting to practice our faith. Regular prayer services during Marion feasts remind us of our Blessed Mother as the special benefactor of our school. We honor her for her guidance and protection.

Religion is taught on all grade levels four times a week with weekly Mass counting as the 5th class time. Textbooks and methods are chosen which present the central doctrines of the Catholic faith. At times of the reception of the sacraments of Reconciliation and Communion, parents are provided with aids so that they can participate in the preparation and the celebration of these sacraments with their children.

Opportunities are given to the students to plan and participate in Eucharistic Liturgies weekly, in communal penance services, and other faith experiences. Students meet weekly during Advent and Lent for activities relevant to those seasons of the Church Year. Once a year, usually on Holy Thursday, the students have a retreat experience. All types of prayer are taught and both formal and informal prayer is used. Teachers have access to the Religious Educational Media Center housed in the Diocesan Office of Education in Sioux City. This supplies guidance and religious education films, videos, filmstrips, cassettes, and kits and CD's.

The sacrament of Holy Eucharist is provided weekly. Reconciliation is provided two times a school year or as needed. The pastor is present regularly in the school to offer guidance, help, and sharing in our school faith community. He is a valuable and appreciated resource for all.

Spirit Programs: Students are involved here at PCS. Everyone attends to the commitment of service as a way to build our school faith community. Classes regularly visit the local retirement center to bring fellowship to these people. Money collected during Catholic Schools Week from the “Yummy Sale” is directed to helping a mission in meeting its needs. The school’s Mission Awareness Program creates projects for students to raise funds or provide service in meeting local and foreign mission pleas. Students practice stewardship during their weekly Masses. This money is used for missions and the needs of the local Church.

Competitions: There is always something exciting happening here at PCS. Students compete in local, Diocesan, state and national competitions on a regular basis. Diocesan Vocation Con- test, County Conservation Posters, Catholic Daughters of America Poster Contest, Poetry Contest, Knights of Columbus local and state spelling bees are examples of these competitions.

Technology Education: Students at PCS are offered modern, technology based opportunities for learning in each classroom. Computers are networked throughout the building and within each classroom. The school’s computer lab has PC computers, which are also linked. Students have access to the Internet as a resource for class projects and to increase knowledge of a particular topic. Each student will be issued an iPad Mini for learning at school.

The benefit of being connected to the Internet is that it expands classroom teaching dramatically by making many fascinating resources, including original source materials from all over the world, available to students, teachers, and media specialists. It brings information, data, images, and even computer software into the classroom from places around the globe, and it does this almost instantaneously. Access to these resources can involve students in individual and group projects, cross cultural collaborations, and idea sharing not found in schools that lack Internet access.

Computer networks can be a great motivator for students, and their use encourages the kind of independence and autonomy, which many educators agree, is important for students to achieve in their learning process. Because the Internet is blind to class, race, gender, age, ability, and disability, it is a valuable means for addressing the needs of all students.

While the benefits of the Internet are enormous, parents need to be aware that the Internet is an open system, which contains pockets of material that many people would disapprove of and keep away from children. In conjunction with our provider and obeying federal guidelines, PCS has undertaken a technology protection measure on all computers. Our link to the Internet is filtered from and denied access to objectionable sites. We also ask your assistance in developing responsible attitudes, reinforcing appropriate behaviors, and observing security practices on the network with your child.

Following are the policies and guidelines that our school has developed to govern and guide the use of the Internet. Read them thoroughly and discuss them with your son/daughter.

Acceptable Use Guidelines: To gain Internet access students and parents must read and sign the form given at August Registration and return it to the student’s teacher.

Network Responsibilities: Pocahontas Catholic School will have an account, which can be used to access the Internet. Everyone who logs on to the Internet is responsible for all activity under that account. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening, harassing, or obscene material, pornographic material, or material protected by trade secret. Use for commercial activities by for-profit institutions, product advertisement or political lobbying

is prohibited. No use of this network shall serve to disrupt its use by other individuals or by connecting networks. It is beneficial for all users to keep the network running efficiently. Each user must take responsibility for keeping down costs and avoiding system disruption.

Any traffic from this network that traverses another network is also subject to that network's acceptable use policy. Users must respect others privacy and intellectual property. All communication and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property. Any sources used in research must be cited and credit given to the author. The legal rights of software producers and network providers, and copyright and license agreements, must be honored. Users have a right to be informed about personal information that is being, or has been, collected and about them, and to review this information.

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If you feel you can identify a security problem on Internet, you must notify your teacher. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users.

Terms and Conditions: Any violation of the network responsibilities will result in a cancellation of network privileges. The system administrator will deem what is inappropriate use and their decision is final. Also, the administrators may close out an individual user at any time. The faculty at Pocahontas Catholic may request the administrator to deny, revoke, or suspend a specific user.

Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, Internet, or any of the above listed agencies or other networks that are connected to the Internet backbone. This includes, but not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

Pocahontas Catholic School makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the services, they are providing. Pocahontas Catholic School will not be responsible for any damages you suffer. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, nondeliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions caused by the school's own negligence or your errors or omissions. Pocahontas Catholic School specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

Netiquette: Certain behaviors have gained acceptance on the network some because they save misunderstanding and maintain privacy, and others because they help other users avoid a waste of time or help conserve system resources. As you join the on line community, practice appropriate behaviors.

The purpose of providing Internet is to advance and promote education at Pocahontas Catholic School. It is intended to assist in the collaboration and exchange of information among all who are concerned with education.

The use of our account must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of Pocahontas Catholic School. Use of other organizations network or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network.

The use of Internet is a privilege, not a right. The Internet Provider will make reasonable efforts to maintain reliable service and user privacy, but they cannot absolutely guarantee that the system will always be available or that files will be saved, nor can privacy be completely guaranteed.

Parents understand and will instruct their child(ren) to abide by the above terms and conditions for Internet access at Pocahontas Catholic School. They further understand that any violation of the regulations above is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should students commit any violation, their access privileges may be revoked immediately and permanently, school disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action.

Parents also understand that this access is designed for educational purposes and Pocahontas Catholic School has taken available precautions to eliminate controversial materials and they will not hold the school responsible for materials acquired on the network.

DISCIPLINE

In guiding the child's growth in habits, attitudes, and Christian values, it is well to emphasize the positive rather than the negative. The ideal Christian discipline is self-discipline. The child must be free to choose one term of behavior over another but take upon himself or herself the consequences of that choice.

However, at times, the thoughtlessness on the part of the student will cause discipline problems which may have to be checked by appropriate measures. Whatever punishment is given must be deserved, reasonable, and appropriate to the offense. The child must learn that the observance of rules brings happiness to himself and to others.

If a disagreement arises between parents and the school, such opinions should not be voiced within hearing range of the child. They should be discussed courteously with the proper persons. If problems occur, the following procedure is generally followed.

1. Teacher conference with the student.
2. Principal teacher conference with the student.
3. Principal conference with the student.
4. Principal teacher conference with parent & student.
5. Pastor principal teacher parent & pupil conference.

Weapons and Dangerous Objects: Because the safety of children is utmost in the minds of school personnel, extraordinary measures may be taken when weapons and other dangerous objects are brought to school by students. Weapons and other dangerous objects will be taken from students and others who bring them onto school property or from students who are participating in any school related activity away from school premises. Parents of students found in possession of a weapon or dangerous object shall be notified. Confiscation of weapons or dangerous objects may be reported to law enforcement officials and the student will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion. [Board Policy 501] Diocesan policy is followed in procedures regarding probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Extraordinary Discipline: If a student exhibits serious negative behavior involving another student, a staff member, and/or a teacher during the school day, the child's parent(s) will be called and asked to take the child from the school immediately. Before being readmitted to school, the parent(s) will initiate a meeting to discuss the behavior with teacher, staff members and the principal. This policy promotes the common good and protects the welfare of all. It also provides for the good order and continued good learning climate at the school. [Board Policy 506]

Use of Controlled Substances: The use, possession, purchase, or sale of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, drugs or drug paraphernalia on school grounds at any time or at school related activities are prohibited. Any students in violation of this policy will be subject to consequences up to and including suspension and expulsion. [Board Policy 508]

DRESS CODE

The Catholic School Board feels there are clothes for dress, school, and play. School wear should be comfortable, practical and fit properly. A child will do better in school if he/she is dressed with learning in mind. Students will wear PCS polo shirts for Mass.

Shirts: Any shirts with beer or alcohol advertisements, tobacco, obscenities, or musical groups are not acceptable. Christian modesty is our primary concern.

Clothing and shoes: Pants should fit properly and be clean. Clothing should not have tears or holes in them. Make up is not allowed during school hours. Shoes must be safe for active play. No “flip flop” slip ons or other such footwear for PE. Tennis shoes need to be worn.

Shorts: May be worn throughout the year. Again proper attire appropriate length to allow for activity without compromising modesty; no cutoffs, no holes or tears in shorts.

Winter Apparel: The children are expected to go out for fresh air all winter long, unless the wind chill is zero. Students should wear the necessary clothing; caps, gloves, snow pants, and boots. These items are a must for every student as long as snow or mud is on the ground. Snow boots may not be worn in school students must bring a pair of shoes to wear in school.

This handbook is designed to help students, parents, and friends know and understand what we're about at Pocahontas Catholic School. Obviously, this handbook contains the more important policies and procedures. School Board and Diocesan Policies may also be consulted. Parents may read these upon making an appointment with the principal. There are other classroom rules, which are discussed by the appropriate teacher as well as other changes that come up from time to time throughout the course of the academic year.

When these changes or additions occur, they are usually sent home by our weekly newsletter sent home every Thursday, or thru e-mail messages sent from the office. Important notices will be sent out if necessary. Parents are urged to regularly check their child's book bags for these communications and take the time to discuss the information with your son or daughter.

Communication is a vital asset to any relationship, especially one as important as home and school. Visit with your child's teacher whenever you have a question or concern. Start with them first; it will do much to further the good working environment we pride ourselves on here at Pocahontas Catholic School.

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

There are ten areas on which the faculty of Pocahontas Catholic School focuses. Emphasizing the importance of these areas of skill creates a student who will mature into a citizen who is employable and able to problem solve as a team member in the work place.

SPIRITUAL

Students will be living examples of their Catholic faith through their words and actions and will model their relationship with God through service to others.

COMMUNICATION

Students will demonstrate the ability to express ideas clearly, effectively communicate with diverse audiences, effectively communicate through a variety of mediums, effectively communicate for a variety of purposes and create quality products.

COMPUTATION

Students will demonstrate the ability to perform basic math operations involving whole numbers, fractions, and decimals in real life situations.

TECHNOLOGY/LITERACY

Students will be lifelong learners, effectively demonstrating a basic knowledge and practical application of current technology.

LIVING/SURVIVAL SKILLS

Students will exhibit self motivated behavior that leads to completion of clearly defined expectations demonstrating cooperation, dependability, fairness, flexibility, honesty, pride in their work, respect, responsibility, and trustworthiness.

PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

Students will identify problems, gather information, and evaluate consequences and make timely informed decisions.

CITIZENSHIP

Students will realize and have respect for their societal responsibilities, including community, environmental, political, and global.

ZEST FOR LIVING/POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT

Students will identify through discovery of self, their purpose and value in life and develop an understanding of the global nature of society and the interdependence of the world's diverse cultures and people.

WELLNESS

Students will assume responsibility for their own physical and mental health and well being, make responsible decisions regarding self, family, society, environment, and career.

CULTURAL APPRECIATION

Students will care, appreciate and use creativity to enrich their lives and the lives of others.

Visit our website at...www.pokycatholic.org

