

# 2019-2020

## Faith Formation Registration & Informational Handbook for Grades Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade



*St. Michael Catholic Church*  
*1125 St. Michaels Road*  
*Mt. Airy, MD 21771*  
*410-489-7667*  
*[www.smpschurch.org](http://www.smpschurch.org)*





ST. MICHAEL CATHOLIC CHURCH, POPLAR SPRINGS  
1125 ST. MICHAEL'S ROAD, MT. AIRY, MD 21771  
410-489-7667, 410-442-1717

Fall 2019

Dear Parents, Faith Formation Team, and Catechists:

Glad tidings! Though we stand always in the shadow of the Cross, we continue to make our Preschool, Sunday School and evening sessions inviting learning experiences for children, youth and families in a welcoming and safe environment!

Our approach is holistic in body, mind and spirit, providing spiritual food for the soul and corporal good works and social activities. In addition to formal instruction in the Commandments, Creed, Prayer, and the Sacraments, the summer vacation bible school, mini-camp and work camps are quite faith-building, re-creative and fun! Together with Juliana, Joann, Sally, catechists and helpers I warmly welcome you and the children and youth to the 2019-2020 Christian faith formation program. Though as parent or guardian you are primarily responsible for bringing up your children and teens in the practice of the faith in accord with the Law of Christ, the whole church family is to support you in fellowship and service.

As pastor I too must concern myself with your family's spiritual well-being and the children's Christian character and growth in reverence for God and respect for neighbor - a most significant and sacred obligation entrusted to me in Holy Orders and to you in Holy Matrimony, and on the day of your child's Baptism. Making and growing younger and older missionary disciples is a commission given by Christ to the whole faith community at St. Michael Church, Poplar Springs - Mount Airy.



“Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these” (Mk 10:14).

We offer parents the administrative and pastoral guidance and support of creative faith formation leaders and dedicated volunteer catechists and classroom aides in fulfilling a most sacred service to students from preschool through high school. Called and gifted, let us collaborate and share the joy of the Gospel, for our sake and for the greater glory of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I ask your full, active, and conscientious participation in the life and mission of our faith community that encompasses worship, faith witness; observance of God's commandments and the precepts of the Church; the exercise of the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy; and, if relevant to your particular situation, seeking full communion with the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church; and the Church's blessing on your marriage. For the spiritual good of your family and in partnership with staff and catechists, please communicate your needs and constructive ideas for improvement, as we yearly assess and evaluate the program.

Come and see; and help us dispel the darkness with Christ our light, as we pass on the Christian hope and faith and love with renewed courage, imagination and in new and fruitful ways!

Respectfully,  
Fr. Mike  
Pastor

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STAFF

**Juliana M. Weber** - Director of Faith Formation (Grades 6 – 12 and sacramental preparation) ~ 240-437-3671 and [JWeber@smpschurch.org](mailto:JWeber@smpschurch.org)

**Joann M. Wozniak** - Administrator for Religious Education (PreK - 5) ~ 240-437-3673 and [JWozniak@smpschurch.org](mailto:JWozniak@smpschurch.org)

**Sally Amatucci** - Administrative Assistant for Religious Education/Youth & Young Adult Ministry and Virtus Administrator ~ 240-437-3670 and [SAmatucci@smpschurch.org](mailto:SAmatucci@smpschurch.org)

Because our ultimate goal is heaven – for ourselves and for all those we love – we evangelize! St. Michael’s Faith Formation program is ordered towards helping parents pass on the faith to their families and to ensure that their children have the tools necessary to freely choose salvation. Guided by this goal:

1. Our parish Faith Formation program is offered at times that support families’ attendance at Mass together.
2. We provide parents with “look-ahead” information about what topics are going to be covered each week as well as a synopsis of what was presented and discussed during class.
3. We provide parents with information about additional resources that are available for parent and student enrichment.
4. We prepare catechists to meet the challenging demands of effectively teaching the faith in relevant, engaging, and meaningful ways.

We offer Sunday and Tuesday in-class options for faith formation in addition to a Home Study option (K-8 only) for those who choose to educate their children at home. In-class, we use Pflaum Gospel Weeklies for Pre-K through 6th Grade, and--**NEW 2019-2020**--we use Benzinger Be My Disciples for 7th and 8th Grades in-class. Home Study (K-8) uses Pflaum Gospel Weeklies.

Our programs are designed to follow the scope and sequence for the individual grade-level curriculum guidelines established by the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Each grade level focuses on a specific aspect of our faith. You can find a copy of the AOB standards and indicators for each grade level, as well as the Confirmation guidelines every parish must adhere to on this webpage:

<https://www.archbalt.org/faith-formation/faith-formation-publications/>.

# Enrollment Form 2019-2020

## St. Michael Faith Formation

Pre-K to 8<sup>th</sup> Grade classes (Do not use this form for Confirmation prep.)

Please note: Registrations received after September 8<sup>th</sup> may result in delays getting your child's materials ready for the first class.

For Office Use Only

Date:

Check No:

Amount:

FAMILY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIN E-MAIL ADDRESS:** (St. Michael's main method of communication) \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

FATHER'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Cell # \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

MOTHER'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Cell # \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name Other Than Parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # where they can be reached during the faith formation sessions: \_\_\_\_\_

### Please complete in full for each student.

1<sup>st</sup> STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

School grade in fall 2019 \_\_\_\_\_ Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

#### Session/Day of the week: (please check one)

Sunday (pre-K-8<sup>th</sup>) \_\_\_\_ Tuesday (1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) \_\_\_\_ Family/Home Study Program (K-8<sup>th</sup>) \_\_\_\_

*Please check below only if the child will receive the sacrament this year:*

1<sup>st</sup> RECONCILIATION (Penance) \_\_\_\_\_ 1<sup>st</sup> EUCHARIST (Communion) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Special needs or medical issues:

2<sup>nd</sup> STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

School grade in fall 2019 \_\_\_\_\_ Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

#### Session/Day of the Week: (please check one)

Sunday (pre-K-8<sup>th</sup>) \_\_\_\_ Tuesday (1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) \_\_\_\_ Family/Home Study Program (K-8<sup>th</sup>) \_\_\_\_

*Please check below only if the child will receive the sacrament this year:*

1<sup>st</sup> RECONCILIATION (Penance) \_\_\_\_\_ 1<sup>st</sup> EUCHARIST (Communion) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Special needs or medical issues:

**FIRST- AND SECOND-YEAR CONFIRMATION ARE A SEPARATE REGISTRATION**

**Payment is due at time of registration. We cannot "hold" a spot without payment.**

3<sup>rd</sup> STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

School grade in fall 2019 \_\_\_\_\_ Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

**Session/Day of the Week:** (please check one)

Sunday (pre-K-8<sup>th</sup>) \_\_\_\_ Tuesday (1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) \_\_\_\_ Family/Home Study Program (K-8<sup>th</sup>) \_\_\_\_

*Please check below only if the child will receive the sacrament this year:*

1<sup>st</sup> RECONCILIATION (Penance) \_\_\_\_\_ 1<sup>st</sup> EUCHARIST (Communion) \_\_\_\_\_

**Special needs or medical issues:**

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4<sup>th</sup> STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

School grade in fall 2019 \_\_\_\_\_ Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

**Session/Day of the Week:** (please check one)

Sunday (pre-K-8<sup>th</sup>) \_\_\_\_ Tuesday (1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) \_\_\_\_ Family/Home Study Program (K-8<sup>th</sup>) \_\_\_\_

*Please check below only if the child will receive the sacrament this year:*

1<sup>st</sup> RECONCILIATION (Penance) \_\_\_\_\_ 1<sup>st</sup> EUCHARIST (Communion) \_\_\_\_\_

**Special needs or medical issues:**

**If your child was not baptized here at St. Michael, please submit a copy of that child's baptismal certificate with this registration form, if you have not done so already.**

**Payment is due at time of registration. We cannot "hold" a spot without payment.**

**I would like to purchase a Catholic Youth Bible – students in the Confirmation program use their Bibles. Bring your own or purchase one here:**

Middle – High School - \$28 \_\_\_\_

**I would like to purchase a children's Catholic Bible (not required for classes)**

Grades PreK-1 – Bible - \$15 \_\_\_\_

Grades 2-5 – Bible - \$20 \_\_\_\_



Photos of your child in class or other church programs might be used for the parish bulletin, church website, or other publication. We will never use your child's name when publishing a photo. You must contact our office if you do not allow your child's photo to be used in this way.

**FIRST- AND SECOND-YEAR CONFIRMATION ARE A SEPARATE REGISTRATION**

**Payment is due at time of registration. We cannot "hold" a spot without payment.**

# ***FAITH FORMATION SESSIONS***

***September 2019 – April 2020***

**SUNDAY Sessions** 9:00 am – 10:15 am - **Classes begin September 22** Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. The last class will be April 26<sup>th</sup>.

**TUESDAY Sessions** 7:00 pm – 8:15 pm - **Classes begin September 24** 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. The last class will be April 21<sup>st</sup>.

Please be sure to meet your child's / teen's catechist in-person and partner with them in passing on the faith to the next generation. We can't do this without you!



## ***TUITION FOR IN-CLASS FAITH FORMATION\****

	<b>Rcvd by July 31 (early bird discount)</b>	<b>Rcvd Aug 1 and later</b>
<b>1 child</b>	\$110	\$160
<b>2 children</b>	\$160	\$210
<b>3 children</b>	\$210	\$260
<b>4 or more children</b>	\$260	\$310

Sacrament Fee for those receiving First Reconciliation + First Eucharist = \$70.

**Payment is due at time of registration.** We cannot "hold" a spot without payment.

Please make checks payable to St. Michael Church or you may use [Online payment if you have signed up for online giving.](#)



\* ***Please note:*** If you are in need of **tuition assistance**, we offer a scholarship program and keep this information strictly private. Please contact Juliana Weber, DFF via e-mail [JWeber@smpschurch.org](mailto:JWeber@smpschurch.org) with an explanation of need for assistance. **You must re-apply each year.**

## ***FAMILY/HOME STUDY***

Offered to children who are entering Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

The Home Study option is designed to offer flexibility in scheduling time for faith formation. We use the Pflaum Gospel Weeklies, which are date/time sensitive. You need to pick up materials as they arrive every 8 weeks. Pflaum Gospel Weeklies are approved by the Archdiocese of Baltimore and by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Like the Church's lectionary, PGWs follow a 3-year cycle of Sunday Gospel readings, so that each program covers several grade levels without repeating Gospel readings or curriculum material (e.g. PGW's Venture issues serve Grades 4 - 6).

**Parents are asked to attend the following group sessions with their children.** We gather in the fellowship hall at **7:00 p.m.** and spend about an hour on the topic of the night and guarantee you are free to go no later than **8:00 p.m.**

Group sessions will be held in St. Michael's Fellowship Hall on the following dates:

**October 9, 2019** – Home Study meeting  
**December 18, 2019** - Home Study meeting  
**January 15, 2020** - Home Study meeting  
**March 11, 2020** - Home Study meeting

Please **put these dates on your calendar.** These sessions are integral to our Family Home Study program and they are an opportunity for families to come and interact with others in the parish.

## ***TUITION FOR FAMILY/HOME STUDY***

<b>Kindergarten – Grade 8</b>	<b>Rcvd by July 31 (early bird)</b>	<b>Rcvd Aug 1 and later</b>
<b>1 child</b>	\$95	\$120
<b>2 children</b>	\$130	\$155
<b>3 children</b>	\$165	\$190
<b>4 or more children</b>	\$200	\$225

The sacrament fee for those receiving First Reconciliation + First Eucharist = \$70, and it is charged in addition to tuition.

### **Payment is due at time of registration.**

Please make checks payable to St. Michael Church or you may use [Online payment if you have signed up for online giving.](#) *Please note: If you are in need of tuition assistance, we offer a scholarship program and keep this information strictly private. Please contact Juliana Weber, DFF either via e-mail [jweber@smpschurch.org](mailto:jweber@smpschurch.org) or by phone 240-437-3671.*



**ANSWERING THE CALL**  
***ADULT, PARENT, & HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH VOLUNTEER***  
***OPPORTUNITIES***

**How to get involved:**

St. Michael Ministry depends upon the support of the community to provide positive ministry to our young people. In the "Renewing the Vision" document, the Bishops of the United States state that ministry to youth is the responsibility of all the parishioners in a parish.

**What can you do now?**

So, if you are ready to get involved - and we hope you are - all you have to do is contact anyone on the Religious Education Staff to discuss how your interests can complement our program needs.

**There are many opportunities in and around the classroom, so please prayerfully consider supporting the children of St. Michael in one of the ministries below:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sunday Morning / Tuesday Evening (please circle)**

- \_\_\_ Children's Liturgy of the Word
- \_\_\_ Catechist/Aide (Grades PreK - 5)
- \_\_\_ Substitute catechist when needed (PreK - 5)
- \_\_\_ Catechist/Aide (Grades 6 - 8)
- \_\_\_ Substitute catechist when needed (6 - 8)
- \_\_\_ Confirmation Preparation & Retreat chaperone
- \_\_\_ Small Group Facilitator for Middle School or High School
- \_\_\_ Hall Monitors (1-2 needed per session Sunday and Tuesday)

**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT/MISCELLANEOUS:**

- \_\_\_ High School Youth Group Team Members
- \_\_\_ Middle School Youth Group Team Members
- \_\_\_ Retreat Team / Chaperoning
- \_\_\_ Vacation Bible School
- \_\_\_ Middle School Mini-Camp
- \_\_\_ Event Set-Up / Breakdown and Logistics

**SOCIAL OUTREACH:**

- \_\_\_ Holiday Baskets (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter)
- \_\_\_ Lunches (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday)
- \_\_\_ Soup Kitchen service (Baltimore & Frederick)
- \_\_\_ High School work camp (14+ year olds)
- \_\_\_ Beacon House (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday)



## ***VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS***

**All adult (18+) volunteers must be Virtus trained for the protection of our children and youth. For Virtus training go to our new website at [www.virtus.org](http://www.virtus.org) where you will create your own account and follow the on-screen prompts. If you have further questions, contact Sally at [SAmatucci@smpschurch.org](mailto:SAmatucci@smpschurch.org).**

**Young people between the ages of 14 and 17 who do ministry with the children must complete “Worthy of the Call” training. “Worthy of the Call” training is done onsite by appointment. Contact Sally (above).**

## ***CATECHIST & YOUTH MINISTRY REQUIREMENTS***

Completion of the Virtus training is the first step for catechists and youth ministry volunteers. Because ministry to our parishioners is such a vital component, preparation and training is the next step in our faith formation efforts. All faith formation ministers must attend an orientation and subsequent training opportunities.

### **Best Practices for Catechists and Aides at St. Michael**

Religious Education teachers are called catechists. A catechist, from the Greek word “to echo,” is someone commissioned by the parish to hand down its faith tradition.

#### **Qualities of an effective catechist:**

A desire to grow in and share the Catholic faith.

Answering a baptismal call to discipleship and sharing the faith with others.

A commitment to a life of prayer.

Openness to greet children, to engage them in prayer, to share the joy of the gospel, to read the word of God in class, to encourage faith-sharing, and to enculture children in Catholic teaching and traditions.

A commitment to entering into a partnership with parents, guardians, and staff.

#### **Requirements**

A practicing Catholic, baptized and confirmed in the Catholic Faith.

Use the Pflaum Weekly booklets given to you by staff and utilize the Pflaum website at [www.Pflaum.com](http://www.Pflaum.com), or, for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade catechists, use the Benzinger “Be My Disciples” books and the online resources at <http://bemydisciples.com/>.

Prepare lessons in advance, giving careful consideration to the developmental level of the grade being taught.

Work as a team with catechists, aides, substitutes, staff, and other volunteers.

Arrive at least 10 minutes early to set up classroom to greet children and parents. Notify appropriate staff as far in advance as possible when sick or otherwise unable to attend class.

Possess basic understanding of Catholic teaching, scripture, Catholic tradition; be willing to learn more.

Attend Mass weekly and on Holy Days of Obligation.

## **Communication**

Provide good communication to families by sending a weekly email to your parents with a brief synopsis of what happened in class and future plans. You can only be so effective without parental involvement at home.

Staff will send out a weekly email to parents and catechists with a link to the weekly readings in Pflaum as well as other happenings at church.

Notify staff of behavior problems, classroom disruptions, and other incidents immediately. If you plan to take the class on a trip outside of the classroom, notify staff in advance; you'll need your emergency backpack, attendance folder, and possibly (depending on the destination) a walkie talkie.

## **Safe Environment**

Volunteers go through AOB Child Protection training, fill out an application with references, and complete a background check (Virtus).

A responsible adult will need to be in the room at least ten minutes ahead of class time.

For grades PreK through 5: Do not let children leave on their own or with siblings under the age of 13. Wait for a parent, guardian, or adult siblings to pick them up.

There will be a folder in the classroom with an attendance sheet and information for students in your class. Please disseminate this information and take attendance accurately.

There is an emergency backpack in each classroom with contact numbers for staff members and faith formation catechists and aides who are scheduled to be in the building in case of an emergency.

Our Emergency Response Plan will be incorporated into our training for evacuation and shelter in place at the beginning of each school year. There will be a scheduled evacuation drill.

**Our first evacuation drill for the 2019-2020 school year  
will be on October 13 and 15, 2019.  
We will also hold shelter-in-place drills on  
January 19 and 21, 2020.**

# ***SACRAMENTS***

## **Baptism**



If you have a child who has not been baptized, we would like to invite you to contact Deacon Cliff Britton who will prepare your child and have that taken care of promptly. Once the preparation is finished, you can schedule the celebration with Fr. Mike, Deacon Harbey, or Deacon Cliff. Baptisms are typically held in the small church on Sunday afternoons at 1:15 but may also be held in the large church.

## **First Reconciliation (Penance/Confession)**

This sacrament must be celebrated prior to First Eucharist. Parents attend a parent meeting in the fall and receive materials to prepare their children at home. This preparation must be completed in addition to the regular Religious Education class or home study curriculum. Children may register for this sacrament if they were in faith formation last year and are at least rising second graders. The sacrament fee is separate from tuition, allowing parents the option of waiting until they feel their child is mature enough to handle the meaning and significance of these grace-filled sacraments. Once they have received this sacrament, children are then permitted to prepare and receive their first Holy Eucharist (Communion). Submit a copy of your child's baptismal certificate if not baptized at St. Michael. Reconciliation parent meetings will be October 6 at 9:15am or October 8 at 7:15pm in the Fellowship Hall. You only need to attend one of those two meeting options.

## **First Holy Eucharist (Communion)**

This sacrament is the MOST holy of the seven. Again, parents are asked to attend a parent meeting in the winter to receive the materials and overview necessary to prepare their children at home. This sacrament cannot be celebrated without the sacrament of Reconciliation being completed first. Our First Communion Masses are held the first two Saturdays in May or at a regularly scheduled Sunday mass. Submit a copy of your child's baptismal certificate if not baptized at St. Michael. First Communion Parent meetings will be January 26 at 9:15am or January 28 at 7:15pm in the Fellowship Hall. You only need to attend one of those two meeting options.

Sacrament Fee for those receiving First Reconciliation and First Eucharist is \$70. This is charged in addition to tuition for in-class or home study Religious Education.

Please make checks payable to St. Michael Church or you may use [Online payment if you have signed up for online giving](#).

## **Confirmation**

Continued religious education is important throughout our lives and especially the year prior to Confirmation preparation, a two-year process which begins as early as 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Confirmation may then be celebrated as early as 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

To register for Confirmation, please pick up a Confirmation Year 1 or Year 2 Handbook. The program structure and registration form are different and are not included in this handbook.

(There is an adult Confirmation process for those who were not confirmed in their youth. Contact Deacon Cliff Britton for more information [CBritton@smpschurch.org](mailto:CBritton@smpschurch.org).)

# ***GENERAL INFORMATION & POLICIES***

## ***ATTENDANCE***

Our programs are designed to follow the national scope and sequence for the individual grade level curriculum guidelines. Each grade level focuses on a specific aspect of our faith. Therefore, it is important to maintain strong attendance throughout childhood development. If a class is missed due to illness or family obligations, it can be made up for class credit in accordance with archdiocesan policy.

**\*\*Please be aware that archdiocesan policy regulates that a child must have attended a minimum of one full year of Religious Education sessions or have been enrolled in a Catholic School religious education class prior to the year in which they prepare for First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation.**

## ***PRE-3 THROUGH 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE DISMISSAL POLICY***

For the safety of all Pre-3 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, a parent or a sibling 13+ years old must pick up the student at the classroom. The teen sibling needs to be introduced to the catechist by the parent.

## ***CANCELLATIONS***

St. Michael follows the **Howard County Public Schools inclement weather school closing policy** on schooldays. If weekend activities and sessions are canceled because of inclement weather, a notice will be posted on the parish website [www.stmichaelpoplarsprings.org](http://www.stmichaelpoplarsprings.org). No decision will be made until 3:00 p.m. unless Howard County has closed their schools early. We will post our Sunday class cancellations by 7:15 a.m. Your safety is paramount. Always use your best judgment.

## ***CATHOLIC TEACHING ON FAMILY LIFE AND MORALITY COMPONENT***

The Archdiocese has required that all Christian Formation programs for youth contain the element of personal body safety and morality. The intent of the Archdiocese is to have parish programs **ASSIST** the parents/guardians in their efforts to present this subject from a Catholic Christian perspective.

**Kindergarten through 8th** ~ We use the RCL/Benziger "Family Life" program which is taught both here in our religious education classes and in partnership with parents in the home. The home piece is called the Parent Connection.

Some updated curriculum pieces include personal body safety in regards to bullying, respecting others, and raising awareness as to what is a healthy relationship and what is potentially unhealthy. The idea is to strengthen the dignity of the human person as part of God's creation. You are welcome to visit our office and review the materials.

# *Archdiocese of Baltimore*

## *Student Harassment Policy*

### *I. Policy*

It is Archdiocesan policy to prohibit discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap or protected activity, (i.e. opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process) in its education programs and activities. Each Catholic school shall adhere to this policy with respect to students. (Employees are similarly protected from harassment by a separate Archdiocesan policy.)

### *II. Scope*

This policy applies to all students in Archdiocesan elementary, middle and secondary schools. The Archdiocese neither condones nor tolerates harassment of students at school, school-related activities or functions, or in any school-related setting. Harassment of students, whether engaged in by other students, teachers, administrators, or others, is prohibited. Violation of this policy is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or suspension or expulsion from school, depending on the nature and severity of the offense and the individual's disciplinary record.

### *III. Prohibited Conduct*

For purposes of this policy, "harassment" means verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, or protected activity, that:

- Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment;
- Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance; or
- otherwise adversely affects an individual's educational opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to race, color, gender, national origin, religion, age, handicap or disability. "Sexual" harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for educational decisions or has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.