

DIOCESE OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
Episcopal School Standards

Introduction

The Episcopal schools of this diocese are an important part of the Church family as well as members of the educational profession. Their calling is to affirm the educational mission of the Church---learning to love God with heart and mind and soul, and one's fellow human beings as oneself---while advancing the highest professional standards of formal education.

Our schools reflect great diversity in origin and in relationship to the Church: some are parish preschools, some are parish day schools, and others are independent schools with informal ties to the Church. Some maintain a close connection with the Church; others operate more independently.

Aside from their formal institutional ties to the Church, Episcopal schools and the Church share a concern for the well-being of the whole person, physically, mentally and spiritually. We seek to inform the minds and nurture the souls of all whom we serve.

Therefore, we pledge ourselves to a covenant relationship of mutual trust, respect, and support in our varied ministries of training, learning, proclamation of the Gospel, and outreach to human need. In furtherance of this relationship, we commit ourselves to the following understanding of what it means to be an Episcopal school in the Diocese of Central Florida.

Episcopal School Identity

The specific elements of Episcopal school identity in the Diocese of Central Florida are as follows:

1. Practice the faith and worship of the Church as embodied in the Book of Common Prayer through formal and informal expressions of worship; in appropriate opportunities for intellectual engagement with the claims of faith and belief; and by means of acts of outreach and service in response to human need. An Episcopal school provides opportunities for worship, the study of religion, and service and outreach, as expressions of its identity.
2. In accordance with national and diocesan canons all schools are to articulate and implement a policy of non-discrimination in their admissions and hiring, and make this clear to all in practice.
3. All schools within the Diocese are affiliated with the Central Florida Episcopal Schools Association and operate with the knowledge and consent of the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of the diocese.
4. Be owned and/or operated by a recognized Episcopal Church organization such as a parish, cathedral, diocese, or religious community; or be under the jurisdiction of and accountable to the Bishop or Ecclesiastical Authority of the diocese.

5. Maintain institutional accountability for their Episcopal identity by:
 - a) ensuring that a significant number of the members of their governing body be Episcopalians and that each school strive toward having a majority of members of the governing board who are Episcopalians; and that all board members are committed to the mission of Episcopal school education, and the elements of Episcopal school identity;
 - b) providing a seat on the board (if other than the Vestry) for the Bishop of Central Florida or for a person designated by the Bishop to represent him.
 - c) calling as the Head or Director, an experienced educator who is a committed, practicing Christian, preferably Episcopalian;
 - d) designating an individual who serves as a school chaplain (lay or ordained), who is adequately trained in the Episcopal faith and practice; and
 - e) hiring faculty and staff who are not only competent in their educational expertise but also exhibit a commitment to the mission of Episcopal education.
6. Priests or Deacons who serve as staff at an Episcopal School are under the authority of the Bishop and must be approved by him. They will conform to the doctrine and discipline of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Central Florida.
7. Maintain accredited status through regular assessment and certification by (FCIS) Florida Council of Independent Schools, (FKC) Florida Kindergarten Council or (SACS) Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, thereby demonstrating their commitment to the highest standards of their educational profession. Preschools that do not fall under the purview of FCIS, FKC or SACS should seek licensing by the appropriate state and local agencies.
8. Strengthen and express their Episcopal school identity through involvement with the National Association of Episcopal Schools, and/or appropriate regional or diocesan Episcopal school networks. Episcopal schools, even if operated autonomously, should see themselves as a part of a wider fellowship, both educationally and ecclesiologically.
9. Complete the Annual Statistical Survey from Central Florida Episcopal Schools Association, a summary of which will be submitted to the Bishop annually.
10. Each member of CFESA welcomes an annual visit from the Bishop or a member of his staff.