

# **HOLY TRINITY ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**

**in PHILADELPHIA, PA.**

## **RULES OF ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF THE PARISH SCHOOL**

Holy Trinity's Parish School is an educational institution of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Philadelphia, PA, a parish of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas. It was designed for the children of our Orthodox Christian community in Philadelphia and surrounding area.

Mission Parish School is to provide students moral behavior according to this, knowledge spiritual and cultural values of American and Romanian people. The goal of Holy Trinity's Parish School is to provide its students an insight into the teaching of Orthodox Christian faith, with an Orthodox-Christian. knowledge, to acquire a moral behavior according to the principles of Orthodox Church, and to become acquainted with the spiritual and cultural values of both Romanian and American nations.

### **1. PARISH SCHOOL CURRICULUM**

The parish school curricula (including educational objectives to be pursued, educational content, skills to be attained, evaluation criteria to be pursued and also guidance on methods to be used), specific to each age level are produced annually by an Education Commission of the Archdiocese, in consultation with teachers in parish schools from across the Archdiocese and approved by the blessing of His Eminence Archbishop Nicolae.

A Parish School uniform curriculum is needed for a better orientation of the different parish schools to pave the way for equitable participation of all students in the annual Olympics of religion or other religious-themed competitions organized by the Archdiocese.

### **2. PARISH SCHOOL ORGANISATION**

Our parish school operates in the social hall of the church basement. In the future we will hopefully have special rooms dedicated to this activity, but this depends on the number of children enrolled, and on the volunteer teachers available we could find, within the limits of this Regulation.

The current director of Holy Trinity Parish School in charge with this educational project is Mrs. Rodica Buga. Mrs. Rodica Buga is also our Presbytera (the priest's wife, Matjushka). She is assisted by Mrs Cristina DAVID ANCA.

The Director and his team are in charge with the educational ministry at the Parish School. They work voluntarily, without any remuneration.

Generally, the School Director shall be appointed by the parish priest.

According to the Archdiocese's General Regulation of Parish Schools, it is recommended that the person in charge with the Parish School should be a part of the Parish Council.

The Director represents the school and shall take any decision on its proper functioning, with parental, the parish council and his team consent. May be assisted by a deputy where the number of children requires that.

He is assisted in organizing and conducting the school activity by an educational team of volunteers, whose members are nominated by the Parish Council or by the Director himself/herself. The educational team composition is however the decision of the school Director.

He/she is in charge with all the pedagogical, administrative and technical issues of the Parish School.

He/she is responsible for:

- application of these and also internal rules;
- the quality of work his team carries with the children;
- students enrollment and organizing the study groups on age levels;
- educational duties delegation for the staff members, where appropriate;
- guidance / assistance of the educational team members in organizing and developing of the educational activities where appropriate;
- supervision of the implementation of the unique curriculum established at the Archdiocese;
- provision of the necessary material to conduct educational activities;
- coordination of the dialogue between the parents and the school teachers;
- administration the school budget in the students interest;
- conducting educational activities.

At the end of each school year he/she presents an activity report to the Parish Council and also a financial report.

He/she shall have an exemplary good Christian behavior in relation with the students, parents and the whole ecclesial community.

#### **Educational team members' responsibilities:**

- they subordinate to the school director with whom they cooperate in projecting, conducting and evaluating educational activities;
- they shall have an exemplary good Christian behavior in relation with the students, parents and the whole ecclesial community;
- they plan, conduct and evaluate educational activities in comply with the Archdiocese approved curricula;
- they shall be preoccupied in purchasing teaching materials needed for the educational activities;
- they take care of maintaining in good condition the material goods of the parish school.

### **3. ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION:**

Admission is ensured to every Orthodox Christian baptized children, whose parents / legal guardians are declared and recognized as members of the parish community; exceptions may be allowed, but only with the parish priest approval.

Children's admission is based on the available sits in the parish facilities. The number of enrolled children may not exceed the number of persons admitted in the school, established by the Parish Council of the parish where the school operates.

Registration begins, generally, the latest, in August before the beginning of the new school year.

Registration may be accepted during the school year, especially for the families newly arrived in the parish, depending on the available sits.

The student groups will be organized according to the number and age of the enrolled children, as follows:

- Group A: 4 - 7 years;
- Group B: 8 - 13 years;
- Group C: 14 - 17 years.

Depending on the particularity of the parish, the school director is empowered to organize differently the study groups (e.g. simultaneously study groups), but only so that every child would benefit from the educational age-specific program.

Minimum or maximum number of children in the group is determined by each school's Director. It is recommended that the school should function even with one student in a group.

Children remain in the specific age group until the end of the school year during which they reach maximum age from the group.

Exceptionally, children who reach the minimum age (four years) between the school year start date and the end of the calendar year may be accepted with the teachers approval.

At enrollment, the parent or legal guardian is required to ascertain this Regulation, other rules and specific parish school aspects, and also to complete and sign the registration forms.

#### **4. PARISH SCHOOL DOCUMENTS**

- The present Regulation (which must be acknowledged by the Parish Council and by the parents, and must be displayed in a visible place).
- The unique curriculum annually (which is established by the Archdiocese Education Commission.)
- The annual School Plan / per learning unit, tailored to the school particularity (number of groups, number of students in the group, while possibly working simultaneously in different age groups).
- The students Catalogue showing their frequency in school activities and quantified results in ratings and summary feedback.
- Children's personal files (form 1 and 2), accurately completed at the enrollment and which respects confidentiality criterion. They should contain the phone numbers at home and work of the father, mother and all persons who are authorized to take the child from school (where school program takes place on different days than Sunday, when, typically, parents are attending church). They should allow educators, in case of emergency, at any time to contact the parents or other responsible person designated by them.
- Drawings / lesson plans and other educational activities as an educators support in teaching process, and which will be archived to be available for verification by the parish priest or the Archdiocese delegate for the evaluation of the Parish School.

- Student portfolios(which include the results of students' work. They can be accessed by students' parents whenever they like, and especially at the end of the school year.)
- School schedule - approved by the parish council and displayed in a visible place.
- The Annual Parish School Report and copies of the Parish Council meetings minutes in which assessments are made on the report or are taking any decisions on parochial school.

## **5. SCHEDULE**

Our parish school operates every weekend from September 15 through May 15. Lessons take place on Sunday, and begin after the time of Holy Communion.

Students are not allowed to be late. They may be excused only exceptionally.

Duration of a lesson is 45 minutes, up to one hour per week.

## **6. FREQUENCY**

The Parish School attendance is voluntary, not mandatory.

By registering their children to the parish school parents / legal guardian are committed to ensuring a regular frequency of their child (at least 75% of the total number of hours per year).

Since irregular or low classes' frequency (less than 70% of the total number of hours throughout the school year) is prejudicing the child because he cannot benefit from a coherent educational process, and also impede the educational process to other students, the school's Director may decide to exclude a child from school, in consultation with his educators' team.

The parents have the duty to provide reasons for long absences / frequently of their children from the Parish School and to reaffirm their intention to continue to retain them as registered or not.

## **7. TEACHING**

Parents entrust the child to the teacher. Parents must come to pick up the child at the end of each course. Legal guardians may complete a parental authorization designating other persons the authority to pick up the child from school. The authorized persons should be able to prove their identity upon request and / or have been presented to the school principal and teaching staff. Delegating this task is not recommended for children under the age of 12 years.

The entrance to the school or class is forbidden to all foreigners.

Once the children are handed over to authorized persons, they are no longer under the responsibility of the school even if they are still inside it.

## **8. PARENT - TEACHER RELATIONSHIP**

Information on what is happening in school will be sent regularly to all families. Parents will be kept posted with the changes through posters in the social hall or church and through educational team.

Families can briefly communicate with the teacher when they pick up their child from school. For a longer discussion, meetings with parents are arranged, giving parents the opportunity to express themselves and come up with new ideas for the proper functioning of the school.

School staff is prohibited from any conduct, gesture or word that would translate an attitude of indifference or contempt against any child or family. Also, children and their families do not have

the right to use words, gestures or conduct that might adversely affect people working in the school, the children and their families.

Families are not allowed to regulate themselves the arising conflicts between children at school.

Once a month the school is recommended to organize a parent - child program, during which parents are invited to participate with children in joint activities organized by the educational team.

## **9. SAFETY**

To inform the Officer / Director of any health issue is in the interest of the child. Any child with an apparent acute distress (fever) will be immediately returned to the family.

Any contagious disease must be reported immediately. The school will inform the other families by displaying this information. At the end of the child's absence for a contagious disease, the parent will present a medical certificate stating that there is no risk of contamination.

The school is not entitled to administer drugs (even homeopathic).

In the case of children with severe allergies that require rapid intervention a protocol (valid for one year) with a doctor approved by the Parish Council is required to be established.

Children must refrain from any gesture or action which could affect the integrity or their colleagues.

Children are required to comply with all safety requirements determined by teachers or school staff.

If a child's behavior seriously disrupts the functioning of the class and shows maladjustment to the Parish School system, his case will be analyzed by the educational team. The Director may decide a child's temporary expulsion, following consultation with parents.

Temporary expulsion of a child, for a maximum of two weeks, may be given by the Parish School's Director in consultation with his teaching team, failure to comply with hygiene standards and good conduct.

Once a year is exercised the evacuation in case of fire or earthquake. Safety Commission verifies compliance with fire safety rules in the school. An evacuation plan in case of fire or earthquake must be displayed on school premises.

The following are PROHIBITED in the school area:

- Objects and toys from outside the school (e.g. jumping cord, balls, cars, coins, lighters, umbrellas, bikes or luggage ...)
- Medicines
- Sweets (including chewing gum and lollipop)
- Jewelry (injury or loss risk), brooches and pins are not allowed.

Of a particular importance is for the educators to observe the provisions of the "Procedures for immoral behavior" document of our Archdiocese

## **10. FEES**

The Parish School is free of charge.

Parish School funding is provided by the Parish Council, voluntary contributions from parents or from their own sources of funding procured by the Director together with the educational team, in which students are encouraged to get involved (e.g. raffles / auction).

For families who financially want to support the Parish School, the Parish Council may approve a financial contribution; the school will issue a receipt for tax exemption within the law limits of the country of residency.

## **11. FINAL PROVISIONS**

This regulation is mandatory for every child enrolled in the Parish School.

Parents / legal guardians of the students are required to ascertain and observe this regulation.