# PREVENTION OF ABUSE

# A Statement of Policy by the Board of Directors Catholic High School

"The mission of Catholic High School is to teach Gospel values in an environment of academic excellence according to Catholic tradition and the spirit of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart." (The Mission Statement of Catholic High School)

Catholic High School is committed to assuring that all employees' and volunteers' relations with the young further their human, spiritual, physical, moral, and social growth. It is equally committed to vigilance against any influences which are inimical to growth in these areas.

In light of its mission and its relationship of trust with young people, Catholic High states its strong commitment to preventing the sexual and physical abuse of the young who are the beneficiaries of this mission. It states with equal strength its commitment to preventing all forms of physical or sexual abuse. The concrete forms which define this policy of commitment to prevention of abuse are detailed in the subsequent paragraphs.

#### 1. SCREENING

Catholic High School employs only persons willing to submit to thorough screening by use of procedures including, but not necessarily limited to, confidential written references; formal checking with the National Child Abuse Central Registry and with national and state law enforcement agencies; and personal interviews aimed at determining their suitability for work with young people and at ascertaining their readiness to supervision of their work with the young.

### 2. SUPERVISION

Catholic High School conducts close supervision of all employees and volunteers aimed at preventing sexual and physical abuse. Supervision at Catholic High includes the express promulgation of guidelines for conduct by employees and volunteers in their relationships with the young and with adults. Supervision at Catholic High aims not only at preventing behaviors which of themselves fall under the legal definitions of sexual and physical abuse but also at eliminating those words, actions, and comportments which are potentially exploitative, abusive, or demeaning.

### 3. EDUCATION

Catholic High School educates its employees and volunteers who work with young people in (a) the means of recognizing symptoms of abuse, (b) their responsibilities for reporting suspected instances of abuse or neglect, (c) state, parish, and municipal laws defining and governing sexual and physical abuse, and (d) the procedures of supervision.

Likewise, Catholic High educates its students regarding state, parish, and local laws pertaining to physical and sexual abuse, and how to recognize symptoms of abuse. Students are also informed regarding procedures to be followed in case of suspected or perceived abuse.

### 4. ALLEGATIONS

All employees and volunteers at Catholic High School will take seriously all allegations of sexual or physical abuse and neglect, regardless of the role and identity of the accused, by reporting the allegation to the competent school authority.

The school's first concern will be the protection, confidentiality, and welfare of the person(s) involved in the allegations, and the first action will be the immediate removal of the accused from the ministry site until the matter is resolved.

# 5. REPORTING ALLEGATIONS

In the event of an allegation of sexual or physical abuse, after protecting the person making the charge from possible further distress by removal of the accused from the ministry site, the competent school authority will abide by all state, parish, and municipal laws about reporting the allegation to civil authorities and will cooperate with such authorities in the discharge of their duties.

### 6. TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Any employee of or volunteer with Catholic High School who admits to guilt, is found guilty of, or pleads *nolo contendere* to a charge of abuse will be terminated.

Approved by Board of Directors April 21, 1994