



# PARENT PARTICIPATION POLICY

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Parent Participation Program is an important dimension of the operation of Archbishop Carney Regional Secondary School. The purpose of the program is to foster a spirit of community and pride among Carney families, and provide tangible economic benefits to the school. In addition, participating in the program offers families who meet their minimum 40 hours commitment the opportunity to save by not paying the non-participation fee.

As parents with a vital role to play in the education of our children, we commit to working together as Christians to create a better school.

The ACRSS Regional Education Committee is responsible for the Parent Participation Program and appoints a Parent Participation Program Coordinator to manage and maintain the administration of the program policy and processes.

A new **Parent Participation Policy was enacted by the Committee** on January 13, 2012 and **revised and approved June 11, 2019**. All participation activities must be in compliance with this policy.

## Family Commitment

Each family at ACRSS is responsible for fulfilling their obligations with regard to the Parent Participation Program. At the time of annual registration, parents must choose one of the following options:

- Participating Family
- Non-Participating Family
- Exempt (CISVA)
- Special Exemption

In **choosing the Participating** Family option, **parents agree** to:

- Fulfill a minimum of 40 hours of Participation activities for the school year (fiscal school year is July 1st to June 30th)
- Take personal responsibility to abide by the expectations of the program as set out in this policy.

## Non-Participating

Parents who do not wish to commit to active involvement in the program may choose the Non-Participating option. In lieu of participation, parents will be assessed an annual Non-Participation Fee. Such fee is due and payable on July 2nd prior to the start of each school year.

The Non-Participation Fee will be stated on the registration package as determined by the Education Committee.

## Exempt (CISVA)

- In recognition of their commitment and dedication to their school, and in accordance with CISVA policy, full-time CISVA teachers with children attending ACRSS are exempt from the Parent Participation Program. Part-time teachers are exempt from the minimum requirement on a pro-rated basis.

- Full-time non-instructional staff members of ACRSS are exempt from the Parent Participation Program provided they contribute to the extra-curricular activities of ACRSS, as approved by the Principal. Part-time non-instructional staff members are exempt from the minimum requirement on a pro-rated basis provided they contribute to the extra-curricular activities of ACRSS, as approved by the Principal.
- Full-time or part-time non-instructional staff members of other CISVA schools or parishes with children attending ACRSS may be exempt from the Parent Participation Program with the written approval of their parish Pastor showing their extra-curricular contribution to their parish community and the agreement of the ACRSS Principal. Written approval from the parish Pastor must be supplied annually and attached to the parent participation registration form. Part-time non-instructional staff members are exempt from the minimum requirement on a pro-rated basis.

### **Special Exemption**

- Extenuating circumstances, such as health or family situations, may qualify a family to be considered for a partial or full exemption from the PP Program. Application for exemption must be made, in writing, to the Participation Coordinator at the time of registration or immediately when a situation occurs. Exemptions will be evaluated on an individual basis. Any exemption approved in one school year does not carry forward to the next school year and must be applied for each new school year.

### **Participating Families - Duties and Responsibilities**

Participating Families will fulfill their obligation to the program by recording sufficient hours of work in one or more of their assigned Participation categories.

### **Participation Categories**

The program will offer a variety of categories, and endeavor to provide sufficient flexibility to allow most families to be able to take part in the program. Parents will indicate on the annual registration form their preference for participation duties. The following categories are given priority as they are an integral part of the day to day operation of the school: Cafeteria, Custodial Assistance, Traffic Patrol and Repair & Maintenance.

Once assigned to a category, parents may not switch to another category without the express permission of the Participation Coordinator in consultation with the Category Managers involved. In order to facilitate administration, a Category Transfer Form must be completed and signed by all parties. A copy of this form can be found on the home page of the ACRSS website. Please note that if a parent is asking to leave a category and in doing so will leave this category short of participants, transfer permission will not be granted unless there are extenuating circumstances that would then be evaluated by the Parent Participation Coordinator.

It is important that Participation categories are up to date and accurately reflect the Participation activities in the school. Therefore, **Schedule 'A'** is attached to this Policy to allow for categories to be added or modified at the discretion of the REC.

In the event that **Schedule 'A'** is modified, copies shall be forwarded to the Category Managers and the Parent Participation Coordinator.

## SCHEDULE 'A'

### Non-Participating Families

- Families may choose the non-participation option; in which case they will be required to remit a \$1000.00 Non-Participation Fee. This cheque will be cashed on or after July 2nd prior to the beginning of the new school year.

### Participating Families

- Participating families are required to commit to a *minimum of 40 hours* of Parent Participation activities each school year. Annual Participation hours are tabulated for the period July 1st to June 30th. While some limited summer work may be available, most parents will perform their duties during the period of September through June. Any summer work will be credited for the school year to begin that September.
- The Program offers a variety of categories, and endeavors to provide sufficient flexibility so that most families will be able take part in the program.
- Parents must take individual responsibility for signing up in a Participation Category - they will not necessarily be personally contacted. Although parents are asked to indicate their preference on the annual registration form, actual sign-up procedures vary by category. Parents must proactively monitor the school website and Job Bank postings for information about category openings and / or meetings. Most categories will have information meetings in late August or at the beginning of the school year.
- Fundraising categories will hold their meetings a few months prior to the event date.
- **Transferring categories:** Once a parent has commitment to a category and has agreed to a shift or shifts which have been confirmed, transferring to another category requires the authorization of the Participation Coordinator.
- **Fees for missed shifts** will be levied as they occur throughout the school year and are invoiced at the end of the year.
- **Definition of a missed shift:** These are shifts in any category that a parent has been assigned and accepted but did not attend the shift (s).
- At the time of registration, parents are required to submit two cheques in the amount of \$500 each dated April 1<sup>st</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup> of the following school year. Participants who are absent from their scheduled assignments and have not made the appropriate arrangements for a replacement for that shift, will be subject to a fee as follows:
  - The fee is \$100 or the total number of hours for each missed shift at \$25/hour, whichever is greater.  
**Example:** Parent missed a shift that was for between 1 and 4 hours, the fee will be \$100 for each shift missed. A parent missed a 5 hour shift; the penalty will be \$125 which is 5 hours x \$25/hr.
- Parents will receive a notification outlining these charges prior to the payment process indicated above.
- Parents should ensure that sufficient funds are available in their account to cover these charges in order to avoid an additional NSF charge.
- Non-deposited cheques will be destroyed at the end of the school year.

## **CATEGORIES:**

### **Cafeteria Assistance**

Under the direction of the Cafeteria Managers, participants will assist in the preparation and serving of food, as well as, the completion of kitchen and cafeteria clean-up.

Participants will commit to a set schedule of working 5 hours approximately every 4 - 6 weeks.

\*\* A school-year commitment is required.

### **Custodial Assistance**

Under the direction of the head Custodian and/or Janitor, parents will assist in the general clean-up of the school. Duties may include: dry mopping, vacuuming, cleaning, dusting and emptying garbage. Work is done in the evenings. Parents must begin their shift between 4pm and 7pm. There is no bathroom cleaning. Participants will commit to a set schedule of working approximately 2 hours bi-weekly or 4 hours monthly. \*\* A school-year commitment is required.

### **Traffic Patrol**

Under the direction of the Vice-Principal and/or School Assistance Category Manager, parents will work in either the drop-off area in front of the school or at the street crossing assisting students' safe crossing. Work is done in the mornings before school starts and/or in the afternoon after school.

\*\* A school-year commitment is required.

### **Repair and Maintenance & Emergency Preparedness/ Crisis Management**

Under the direction of the Facilities Manager and/or R & M Category Manager, parents will be working at various tasks as identified and will vary depending on the needs of the school.

#### ***Examples of some of this work:***

Grounds: landscaping, lawn care, field upkeep or other related tasks

Manual Labour: Various school maintenance duties and special projects as identified by the Facilities Manager and/or R & M Category Manager.

\*\* A school-year commitment is required.

### **Fundraising**

Positions of leadership are needed to plan, organize and keep records of special fundraising activities. Several additional participants are also required to carry out the many general duties in the running of events. Some of the lead positions may require more than a 40-hour commitment.

Parents may choose from a variety of fundraisers scheduled for the year. General school fundraising activities eligible for PP hours are:

Walkathon; Garage Sale; Christmas Craft Fair; Golf Tournament;

■ Qualifications and scheduling will vary depending on the needs of the event.

**Excluded:** fundraising activities for individual groups and/or teams are not eligible for Parent Participation hours unless an exception has been made by the Parent Participation Coordinator and the REC Parent Participation Liaison.

### **Catering**

Under the direction of the catering manager, participants will assist with the preparing, serving and cleanup for a variety of school events.

\*\*Schedule of events will vary year to year.

### **ACRSS Regional Education Committee (REC)**

Parents who are elected or appointed to the REC (by their Parish priest) will receive Participation hours for committee and sub-committee duties.

\*\* A 2-year commitment is required for REC members, per CISVA policy.

### **PSG (Parent Support Group)**

Parents who are elected to the PSG will receive participation hours for committee and sub-committee duties. The mandate of the PSG is to apply for gaming funds received from the BC Government and to administer those funds. Executive positions are voted in at an annual meeting in May of each year.

\*\* A school-year commitment is required.

### **School Assistance**

Under the direction of school staff and/or the School Assistance Category Manager, parents will assist in the following areas. Qualifications and scheduling will vary depending on the needs of the school.

### **GENERAL CATEGORIES**

**Student Dances:** Parents are required to chaperone the student dances. Duties include chaperoning during the dance, security at exits, concession and coat check.

### **LIMITED CATEGORIES**

**Definition of a limited category** - This is work that does not benefit the entire school and is rather done to assist with small groups, teams, etc. and is subject to the limitation of a maximum credit of 15 hours (combined), per family, per school year. I.e. if a participating family worked 5 hours assisting in the Fine Arts Department and 10 hours assisting on one or more fieldtrips, this means they would have now accumulated their maximum hours in limited categories and cannot be credited with any additional hours from other work in limited categories, for the remainder of the school year.

**A 15-hour (combined) limit will be placed on the following School Assistance activities:**

**Fine Arts:** If a teacher in the Fine Arts Dept. has asked for and been approved to have a parent assistant, the designated parent will be credited for all hours completed in this role. The parent must be qualified for the work required in this role and must be approved by the teacher and commit to a full school year for this role. All other assistance to this category will fall within the limited category designation.

\*\* A school-year commitment is required.

**Athletic Department Coaching:** Parents who are qualified must commit to a full season for coaching a particular sport. Parent Participation hours will only be given to one coach per team that has been designated by the Athletic Director. All other assistance to this category will fall within the limited category designation - see below for definition of Limited Categories.

### **Clubs - Must be a pre-approved school club**

- Clubs must be approved by school administration in order to qualify for limited pp hours.

### **Graduation and Dry Grad:**

Parents who assist in the planning, organization and fundraising of graduation activities including Dry Grad. The exception would be the Grad Parent Coordinator appointed by the teacher in charge of grad planning. This parent would receive credit for full hours worked. Eligible parent participation limited hours include, but are not limited to, the following fundraising activities:

- Purdy's Chocolate sale
- Bake sale
- Car wash
- Other pre-approved fundraising activities for grad

**Fieldtrips** and other activities/events in the Athletics and Fine Arts and Performing Departments

### **Driving - To qualify:**

- Teacher/Coach must give permission to act as activity/event driver.
- Be an eligible driver according to the school parent driver policies and must be transporting 3 or more students (at least 2 of which are not the parents' own child) in their vehicle.
- Activity must be within BC region. Fieldtrips outside of the BC Region are exempt from the PP Program.
- Only the actual driving time to and from the event or activity will qualify for the limited PP hours.
- Time spent at the event does not qualify for PP hours.

### **Student Supervision - To qualify:**

- Have permission from the teacher to act as a student supervisor.
- Only fieldtrips that are within the BC Region will qualify for limited PP hours.
- Fieldtrips outside of the BC Region are exempt from the PP Program.
- Parents will assist with the supervision of students for extra-curricular activities. Supervision means active and direct management of students during their activities. Supervision does NOT include watching sports games, competitions or musical concerts.

### **Special Note applicable to all Limited Categories**

A parent making a significant time contribution to a job that falls within the limited category section of the PP Program, and operating as the coordinator in charge or asked by school staff to work a significant number of hours above the limited 15 hours, may qualify for additional PP hours. A written proposal must be provided to the PP Coordinator (prior to commencing work) to be presented to the REC. The proposal must outline scope of job, role and projected time commitment, as well as, a recommendation from the staff member in charge of this work. This proposal will be evaluated on a per case basis and a decision will be communicated to the applicant by the PP Coordinator.

If a parent is offered a stipend by the school, the parent can choose to accept the stipend plus receive up to and additional 15 hours under the limited category. If the family has already received limited hours from another category, the cap of 15 Hours from limited categories per family school year still applies. The parent would need to complete the remaining outstanding hours in other non-limited categories. If a parent chooses to receive full parent participation credit of 40 hours, they cannot receive a stipend as well. A written request to receive full parent participation credit must be made to the parent participation sub-committee prior to the start of working in the limited category.

### **Miscellaneous Program Information**

- All hours worked in the PP Program will only be credited to the school year in progress and will not be carried forward to any subsequent school year
- School aged (or younger) children will not be permitted to accompany their parent (s) on any PP work. In addition, ACRSS alumni 19 years of age or older will be permitted to assist a parent in doing PP.

# PARENT PARTICIPATION FAQs

## 1) Why have such a program?

The Parent Participation Program helps to foster a strong sense of community spirit as parents work together to create a better school. Through this program we are able to:

**Raise funds for the school** - many participation hours are dedicated to fundraising.

**Reduce costs** - hours devoted to maintenance, janitorial and cafeteria work represent significant dollar savings to the school.

## 2) Are all volunteer opportunities at Carney eligible for Participation hours?

**As there is a \$25 per hour credit given to all parents choosing to take part in the PP Program, parents become participants and are not considered 'volunteers'.**

Only activities specifically mentioned in **Schedule 'A'** can be credited towards the Parent Participation Program. **Some activities are limited to 15 hours combined (see Schedule 'A' for a complete list of categories and eligible hours). Some activities are not eligible at all and are true volunteer opportunities for parent assistance.**

## 3) How do I get started?

**Parents must take individual responsibility for signing up for a Parent Participation Category** of their choice, and for ensuring that they accumulate the 40-hour minimum requirement. Although some categories will call parents to arrange scheduling, **the majority of parents will not be contacted personally.**

Parents should carefully monitor the school website and emails for specific information about available PP work or contact the Program Coordinator who can pass on information about which categories may need participants.

Key category information and/or registration meetings take place in late August and in the first couple months of the school year. Parents should monitor their email or regularly check the school website for information about meeting dates.

Please take advantage of the following important communication tools:

**Email: [pp@acrss.org](mailto:pp@acrss.org)** This Participation email address can be used throughout the year for all program enquiries.

**Website: [www.acrss.org](http://www.acrss.org)** See the links on the website for all pertinent Parent Participation information, such as contact information, frequently asked questions, policy document, etc.

**4) How many hours are required?**

Parents are required to work a **minimum of 40 hours throughout the school's fiscal year, which runs from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>**. While some very limited summer work may be available, most parents will perform their duties during the period from September to June. Any summer work will be credited for the school year to begin that September.

The primary purpose of scheduling will be to complete an activity that benefits the school. Accordingly, shifts might not be structured so that parents may work 40 hours exactly. As a result, it is the expectation that most parents will work more than the minimum hours required.

**5) Do I choose just one Category?**

If you are working in one category, **you may have enough** scheduled shifts to fulfill your minimum 40-hour yearly commitment, but it is **not guaranteed** and in some cases participants must find the remainder of their required minimum 40 hour commitment in other categories.

**6) What are the Participation Categories?**

For a full list of Parent Participation Categories, please refer to **Schedule 'A'** of the Parent Participation Policy. It details all school activities which are eligible for Participation hours.

**7) What are my responsibilities?**

Parents must take personal responsibility for ensuring that they become active in the program, and that they schedule sufficient hours to meet their commitment for the year. **Parents are also required to be familiar with the program policies and how they are applied.**

**\*\* The PP Program Policy is always available online on the school's home page and should be checked periodically for updates and revisions. On the Home Page, click on the Admissions tab, then from the drop down menu select Parent Participation Program.**

Parents must commit to one main category each year, and fully cooperate in the scheduling of the related activities. In agreeing to work specific shifts, parents commit to the following:

To arrive at the Participation activity in a timely fashion and to work for the entire shift

To accurately record their hours on the sign-in sheet and to keep their own detailed record of hours worked

**8) What if my Category does not give me 40 Hours?**

Participation shifts and schedules can vary from year to year, so it is possible that a parent's main category does not provide 40 hours. In this case, parents may "top-up" their hours in another category. Parents should always talk to their Category Manager first to see if additional hours are available.

**9) What if I don't get my hours for the year?**

Any family that has not completed the minimum 40 Participation hours by the end of the school year will



be assessed at a rate of **\$25.00** per hour for all outstanding hours. Parents must understand that there is no opportunity to make up missing participation hours after June 30<sup>th</sup>

**In the event that the Dry Grad occurs after June 30<sup>th</sup>, Dry Grad supervisors may credit these parent participation hours.**

**10) What if I work independently, and do not use a Sign-In Sheet?**

Everyone working in the PP program must use a Sign IN/Out sheet.

Many leadership positions within the Program require parents to work independently, and their work is not directly supervised by a Team Leader. However, they are still **obliged to fully document their hours and submit them for approval once a month to their Category Manager or Event Coordinator.** Hours that are not entered on a Sign In/Out sheet and approved by the Team Leader or Category Manager will not be credited.

**11) What if I have a personal situation and can't fulfill my Participation commitment?**

**Extenuating circumstances**, such as serious health or family situation, may qualify a family for a partial or full exemption. These situations are evaluated on a case by case basis. Parents must contact the Parent Participation Coordinator if they are experiencing personal difficulties and find they can neither fulfill their commitment to the program nor pay the non-participation fee. The PP Coordinator and the PP subcommittee will assess the situation based on information and documentation provided. Once reviewed by the REC PP subcommittee, the PP Coordinator will communicate the decision to the parent applicant.

Supporting documents such as notes from a medical practitioner may be required for medical exemption consideration. Any exemption offered is for that school year only and does not carry over to any subsequent school years. Exemptions must be applied for each school year even if it is an ongoing issue.

**\*\*Please note** that in order to be fair to all parents, we do not grant exemptions because parents are busy with work, or have participation commitments in other schools.

**12) What if I miss a shift?**

Any parent that fails to work a scheduled Participation shift will be assessed at the rate of **\$100.00 per each missed shift or \$25 per hour for any missed shift, whichever is greater.** *Example:* A parent that misses a shift that had been scheduled for 1 hour will be assessed **\$100**; a parent that misses a shift that had been scheduled for 5 hours will be assessed **\$125**. These missed shifts are reported by the Category Manager to the Program Coordinator who will invoice the family at the end of the school year.

**Parents must understand that if they cannot work a particular shift, it is their personal responsibility to arrange for an authorized replacement within the category or with permission from the category manager. The category manager must be notified of any changes to the schedule.**

**13) Can I change Categories?**

Parents need formal permission to change categories. Once a commitment to a category has been confirmed, **transferring** to another category for Participation **requires the authorization** of your current category manager, the category manager of the new category you are choosing to transfer to and

finally the **Participation Coordinator**. The reason for this process is to eliminate participants moving from category to category and leaving some categories short of participants to adequately fulfill the operation of those categories. (See the Category Transfer form found on the website's home page under the Downloads icon)

**14) Why are some activities restricted to 15 hours of Participation?**

The School Assistance Category is divided into two parts: School Assistance - General, and School Assistance - Limited. There is no restriction on the General category, but the Limited category is subject to a **combined** limit of 15 Participation hours for the year. See **Schedule 'A'** for a complete list of general and limited categories.

The **priority of Parent Participation** is to direct parents towards activities that benefit the whole school.

However, when we consider some of the activities under School Assistance - such as field trip supervision, driving, and assisting with school events - we have found that these cannot truly be considered a priority for the program - mainly because they involve extra-curricular activities that service few students rather than the majority of the school population. On the other hand, we do appreciate that teachers and coaches do need assistance in these areas, and that there are not always sufficient volunteers available. Therefore, we do allow these activities for parent participation, but each family may claim a combined limit of 15 participation hours for these activities each year.

**15) Can Participation Hours be credited for Out-of-Town Trips?**

**Yes, as long as these trips are within the BC region. However, please note that these hours both for driving and supervision will fall within the Limited Category hours policy (see schedule A)**

Out-of-province trips pose a genuine problem for the program; since they use such a large number of parent hours, in a short period of time (a parent could fulfill the 40-hour minimum requirement in one weekend). Although we certainly appreciate the commitment of parents who are willing to assist the school in this way, we feel that such hours do not fit into the priorities of the program.

**16) How can I check my hours?**

Parents can check their Participation hours by following the following process:

- 1. Contacting their Category Manager (s).** However, Parents have the responsibility to keep personal documentation of all hours worked should it become necessary to verify against the records of the Category Manager.
- 2. In the event that there is a discrepancy between a parent's record and the Category Managers, the Category Manager will take steps to deal with the issue but if they cannot, then the matter will be referred to the Program Coordinator.**

**17) What if I don't wish to participate in this program?**

Families may choose the non-participation option, in which case they will be required to remit an **\$1000.00 Non-Participation Fee** at the time of registration. This **cheque will be cashed on or after July 2<sup>nd</sup> (prior to the beginning of that school year).**

**18) Who do I contact about Parent Participation?**

Each participation activity has a Category Manager or Event Coordinator, and the Parent Participation Coordinator has overall responsibility for the Program. Their contact information can be found on the school website.

***End of FAQs***