

Education

Schools explain free/low-cost milk policy

The diocesan Department of Catholic Schools has announced a free and reduced-price meal (free milk) policy for students in Catholic schools throughout the 12-county diocese.

The policy, effective from July 1, 1997, through June 30, 1998, sets specific eligibility criteria based upon income levels and family sizes. A chart stipulating the eligibility figures — as well as a complete copy of the policy — can be obtained from the principal's office at each of the participating schools.

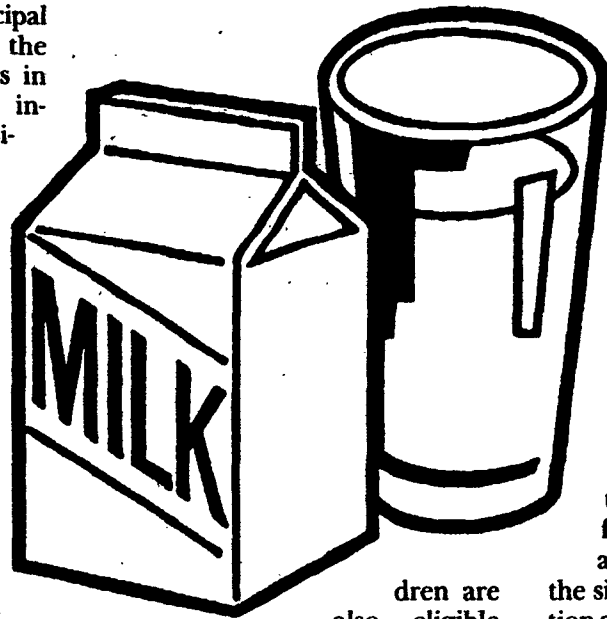
Families whose incomes fall at or below the levels stipulated for their family sizes are urged to apply for free and/or reduced-price meals (or free milk) by filling out application forms that have been sent to parents. Application forms also are available from the principal's office at each school.

Applications may be submit-

ted to the school principal at any time during the school year. Changes in employment, family income or size necessitate the submission of new applications. Information provided on application forms will be held in strict confidence and will be used only for the purpose of determining eligibility.

The school district does, however, reserve the right to verify information provided by parents at any time during the school year. If a parent declines to provide information to the school, his or her children will no longer be eligible for free or reduced-price meals (free milk).

In certain cases, foster chil-



Children are also eligible for these benefits, and families interested in obtaining benefits for foster children should contact their children's schools.

Under the policy's provisions, a designated official will review applications and deter-

mine eligibility. If a parent is dissatisfied with a ruling made by the designated official, he or she may make a request — either orally or in writing — for an appeal hearing. Each school has designated an official to conduct hearings, and hearing procedures are outlined in the policy.

Prior to initiating an appeal procedure, a parent or School Food Authority may request a conference in which parents and officials may discuss the situation, present information and obtain an explanation of the data submitted in the family's application and of the decisions rendered.

A request for a conference shall not in any way prejudice or diminish a family's right to a fair hearing.

All questions on the applica-

tion must be answered completely for the application to receive consideration by the school district. In addition, the form must be signed by a parent or guardian who certifies that the information is true and correct.

No child shall be discriminated against because of his or her race, sex, color, national origin, age or handicap. If any member of a household believes he or she had been discriminated against, he or she should write the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

A complete copy of the policy is on file in the office of the School Food Authority District Administrator, where it may be reviewed by any interested persons.

Parents seeking to find out which other diocesan schools are taking part in the program should call the Catholic school of their choice directly.

Web directory features 'all' Catholic, public schools

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

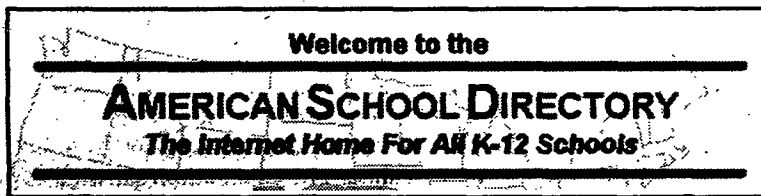
WASHINGTON — If it has been a particularly long summer, students might want to get on line and check out their school's Web site before the first day of school.

They can find everything from a school's mascot to what upcoming days they'll have off to the directions for getting to school.

A lot of schools — and Catholic schools are no exception — have found their way onto the World Wide Web to promote themselves and even provide an ongoing "online yearbook," featuring school photos and artwork.

Many college Web sites are like slick brochures, appealing to new recruits by listing everything the school provides, amid a lot of color photos and graphics. But high schools and elementary schools, with slightly different budgets, are still trying to climb aboard the online bandwagon.

Hundreds of schools have developed their own Web sites, and obviously, some are jazzier than others. But even schools that aren't up to speed yet, at least have a pre-made site on The American School Directory, which claims to have posted a free Web site for every elementary school and high school in the



country, including Catholic schools.

The 106,000 sites in the directory give basic information for each school that can be updated by the schools themselves.

While the service lists about 30 in Monroe County and others within the Diocese of Rochester, it also includes outdated information. For example, a site for Most Precious Blood in Rochester —

which was closed in 1994 — is included.

Sites for other, current Rochester diocesan schools offer anything from such basic information as principals and statistics, to wish lists.

Holy Rosary School in Rochester, for example, has a detailed street map showing its location, as well as a wish list for such items as carpeting in preschool rooms and repair of a wheelchair lift for the cafeteria.

With the directory's service, "you're five seconds away from any school in America," said Elijah Collard, vice president of marketing for Computers for Education. His organization is a co-sponsor of the directory along with Apple, IBM, Vanderbilt University and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

"You can describe any Catholic

school by city or state and you're just there," Collard told Catholic News Service.

The directory, launched in February, can be found at www.asd.com. It took a year and a half — "forever in Web years" — to assemble, according to Collard. He also said only about 50 percent of schools know about it.

Those that do can purchase expansion software from Computers for Education, based in Murfreesboro, Tenn., to broaden their sites.

Some have included mission statements, faculty listings, school news and history, club information, a school wish list and lots of photos.

In the immediate works for these sites are alumni directories with message boards and free e-mail services for students.

Each site also contains a school store, not for selling pens and pencils but magazines, videos, software and books. A small percentage of the cost helps underwrite the directory's service and another percentage goes directly to the school.

Subscriptions

TO LIFE

Publication Date: October 2 - Deadline: September 18

The Consistent Ethic, which proclaims dignity of all human life from conception until natural death, is a priority for the Diocese of Rochester. This special section, timed in conjunction with Respect Life Month, will deal with protecting and nurturing life through advocacy, direct action on such issues as abortion, militarism, capital punishment, euthanasia and care for the poor.

RELIGIOUS VOCATIONS

Publication Date: October 16 - Deadline: October 2

This special supplement will address various aspects of vocations and mission work in today's church — from the motivations of young men studying for the priesthood to the efforts of women religious mapping the future of religious life; from the dwindling vocations statistics in the United States to the burgeoning numbers entering religious life abroad.

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