

The Rules and Instructions that must be Observed for the Proper Running and Regulation of the Schools to be established in this City of Saint Augustine, East Florida,

By order and at the expense of his Majesty the King, drawn up in conformity with the stated Royal Edict, and at the behest of his Excellency, Señor Don Vicente Manuel de Zéspedes, brigadier in the Royal Armies, governor and commander general of Saint Augustine, and approved by Don Thomas Hassett, curate, vicar, and ecclesiastical authority of this city and province, December 25, 1786.

[East Florida Papers, Library of Congress, Bundle 41 B4, Reel 16].

1. In accordance with his Majesty's pious intentions, no teacher shall obtain a post as instructor unless first passing an examination, and gaining the approval of the civil and religious authorities. Teachers will duly observe the rules and other regulations and resolutions that their superiors, civil and religious, communicate to them for the better advancement of their students.
2. The schools will be designated as primary and secondary. The primary school will only admit children ready for spelling, or those that have some additional learning, up to the point where they are ready for instruction in writing. After that, they shall pass from primary to secondary school, where they will be taught to write and to do math, and will perfect their reading skills. Only children of this grade will be admitted to secondary school, unless the authorities determine on a different policy.
3. His Majesty having allocated salaries to teachers sufficient to sustain them with a satisfactory income, no teacher is allowed to request any kind of compensation from parents for teaching their children.
4. Every year at Easter time, the teachers will draw up a list of all the children living in the parish, as noted in the census, noting down their ages, where they live, etc. After this, the teachers will request that parents send their children to the appropriate school. And if children do not attend, either because their parents are neglecting to send them, or from laziness and indifference on the part of the children themselves, the teacher will inform the parish priest, who will decide on the appropriate course of action. The teacher will follow the same procedure when a student misses school and has a poor excuse.

5. School will open throughout the year at seven o'clock in the morning and at two o'clock in the afternoon. Students are never to be dismissed from morning lessons before twelve o'clock noon. In winter time, afternoon sessions will end at sunset. The rest of the year, they may end one half hour before sunset.
6. Each morning and each afternoon, upon entering school, the children will greet their teachers respectfully, and will also greet the other students, and each one, having hung up his hat in its place, will take his seat quietly. After making the sign of the Cross in the name of the Holy Trinity, they will turn to the book or paper of their first lesson.
7. At the school each teacher will keep a roll book, or ledger, of the children under his charge, and using this he will call roll at eight o'clock every morning, and at a quarter past two every afternoon, designating each student by his first and last name. And if a student is absent during roll, the teacher should send one or two boys to the house of that student's parents, to find out why he is absent, and to bring him to school when it is necessary. Punishment of delinquent students will rest with the teacher, based on the reason given for their absence.
8. Teachers should be fair-minded when reprimanding or disciplining children. And since some will respond best to a lecture on morals, others to corporal punishment, the teachers will take particular care to know the temper and nature of each student. They will never shout out oaths or make fun of a student, or make any comments about his parents or relatives; and they will not allow students to insult one another or their families, either in school or out of it. The teacher should treat all students like good Christians, with charity and love.
9. The students will come to class in the mornings and afternoons as neat in appearance as possible, with their hair combed, their faces and hands washed, and their feet clean (if they come without shoes). Teachers will not keep students at school when they have a contagious illness, such as the itch (chicken pox), or other sickness. They will dismiss them from class, after first letting their parents know, so they will not be offended that the student must miss school while convalescing.
10. The schools will be cleaned by the students at least once a week, and the teacher will assign a sufficient number of students to do it, without making any distinctions among them, beginning with the first class through the last, so that each in turn takes part in this duty.

11. No student will leave school even in case of necessity without the express permission of the teacher. And so that no more than one may be away at a time, the teacher will, when granting permission, give him a ruler (which the teacher will keep at his table or desk for this purpose), and will not give any other student permission to leave until the first has returned with the ruler. The amount of time the student is away will be checked by means of a pendulum hung from the ceiling of the room. The student will set this pendulum in motion when he leaves, and the teacher will note if the pendulum is still swinging when the student comes back.
12. The school will be divided into different classes with separate seating, according to the abilities and advancement of the pupils. The foremost or best student in each class will get a title, and the best overall student will be called the Emperor of the School, each one keeping his title unless overtaken by someone more deserving.
13. At the beginning of each month there will be a general examination before the parish priest and the teachers, measuring the progress made by the students in reading, writing, arithmetic, religious doctrine, etc., during the previous month. Based on his achievements, each student will be assigned to the seat or position he has earned, and will keep it until the next exam. Those who earned titles for outstanding performance in the previous month may be awarded them again, if they merit it. And if they do not, they must give up their place and take the one they earned.
14. Students receiving instruction in the alphabet, spelling, and reading, will do four lessons per day with the teacher, two in the morning and two in the afternoon. The teacher will also instruct them in Christian doctrine, prayers, and litanies, morning and afternoon, according to custom. With great care and thoroughness, the teacher will encourage clear and distinct enunciation, and comprehension of reading, observing commas, semicolons, etc., (and will do this himself not through some other person). The teacher of the secondary school will follow the same method in instructing students to write, with the exception that these students will do two lessons per day, during the morning and afternoon. The teacher will show them how to position their hands and grasp the quill, and when they are finished with their copying work will correct and instruct them in their mistakes.
15. Students learning arithmetic, or math, will solve two problems per day, will write one or two assignments, and read two lessons, and in the afternoon will receive a session on religious doctrine. The teacher will never promote them from one thing to another until they are well instructed in what they have in hand, their mistakes being pointed out and corrected, as was noted in the previous rule.

16. The teacher of the secondary school will make sure that his students learn the arithmetic tables by heart. To prevent this from interfering with lessons at school, they should take the tables home and memorize them in the evening, giving an account of their work to the teacher the following morning. And in the afternoon, whenever the boys studying reading are not occupied with it, the teacher may assign parts of Father Flauré's *Historical Catechism*, or some other author, for them to memorize in the evening, matching the amount of work to their abilities, so they will not be idle at home.
17. The teachers will instruct their students in how to assist at the Mass, and will name in turn two of their students to assist the priest on Sundays and high holy days in performance of the divine rites, and also on Saturday evenings, and during the evening prayers of all the feast days throughout the year, or whenever there is a congregation of parishioners at the church.
18. On evenings when there is a procession of the Rosary from the church through the streets, the teachers will attend it with their respective students, no exceptions or excuses being allowed, and will take great pains that their pupils behave themselves respectfully and with devotion.
19. Teachers will attend the services for Salve on Saturdays and Vespers on Sundays with their students, and also on other Holy Days, and on those days when the Gospel is read.
20. Whenever God may please to call one of the students to judgment, the teachers with their students will attend the funeral procession, and when necessary four of the students will serve as bearers to carry the remains to the cemetery.
21. All students, from the age of seven years up, will receive Confession in the presence of their teachers on the four fast-days of the year, and teachers will advise their respective classes a day or two beforehand, so that the students have time to make a proper examination of conscience. The teacher will instruct them, according to their age, on how to prepare for Confession, relating how they must take care to confess all their sins, omitting nothing from negligence or for other reasons, and reminding them that the sacrament requires that they be truly sorry for their sins; and giving the same guidance to those who will be receiving the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. And the students will go to Confession in three groups, each teacher assigning a portion of his students to each group, so that on the stated fast days they will be able to go to the Church efficiently and then return to school.

22. The teacher will endeavor to obtain the most instructive books for the students' lessons, and will not allow pupils to speak any language except Spanish in school.
23. In going and coming from their houses to the school, pupils should always ask most humbly for their parents' blessing, and whenever they meet their elders in the streets, they should greet them courteously.
24. Upon leaving school, the students will go directly home, and will not dillydally in the streets, shouting or committing other mischief.
25. Any blacks or mulattoes attending school will be seated together in a separate section by the door, but with respect to their spiritual and temporal education, the teachers will minister to them with the same justice given to all the students.
26. The teachers should post in their respective schools a copy of these rules, so that everyone will be aware of their provisions, and will duly observe them, as his Majesty the King desires.