

Diocese of Joliet  
Catholic Schools Office

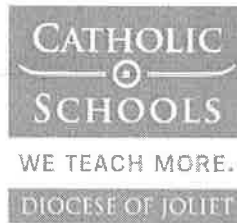
Leadership Manual  
for  
Catholic School Boards

CATHOLIC  
SCHOOLS

WE TEACH MORE.

DIOCESE OF JOLIET

2013-14 Edition



September 17, 2013  
Feast of St. Robert Bellarmine  
Patron of Catechists

Dear Friends in Catholic Education:

"Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature." (Mk 16:15) If someone had not taken this command from Our Lord to heart, you would not be reading this letter. Yet someone did take Jesus' command to heart. Our forebears in the faith passed on what they received. We represent the next generation of Catholics to bring the Good News to the whole world. Catholic education is one privileged way the Church has to evangelize young people. As school board members, your service to your school in the Diocese of Joliet is a response to Christ's call to evangelize. Committed to Catholic education, we join the Holy Father, Pope Francis, in the new evangelization, as the Church proposes anew the perennial truth of Christ's Gospel.

As part of our commitment to Catholic education, in March 2010 the Joliet Diocese Board of Education endorsed, *Lighting the Path to Our Future: Strategic Plan for Catholic Schools*. Implementation of the plan will have far-reaching effects. Stakeholders will better understand the value and advantages of Catholic schools; focused marketing efforts will result in increased enrollment and greater outreach. School improvement planning will foster a professional school culture that emphasizes continuous improvement, and increased collaboration among schools within the diocese will promote and actively enhance Catholic education throughout the diocese. More highly developed lay leadership will give local school boards a heightened sense of responsibility and ownership of vibrant schools, and the Catholic identity of high schools and elementary schools will be improved through expanded and renewed religion curriculum and the common commitment to form students in the Gospel message. Your work as a school board member is invaluable as you support these efforts with your talents, time, and treasure.

The basic principles and insights outlined in this manual offer a clear direction concerning school boards within the Diocese of Joliet for parish schools and diocesan high schools. Our hope is that this manual will be useful to board members, pastors, principals, and chief administrators as a means of exercising their rights and responsibilities in the service of others for the advancement of Catholic school education.

Those who serve on school boards provide an environment for the teaching of Catholic doctrine, the building of community, the service of others, and the education and formation of future generations of holy men and women. I am most grateful to you for your generous service.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. John Belmonte, S.J., Ph.D." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Rev. John Belmonte, S.J., Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Catholic Schools

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# Introduction

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Joliet, under the direction, guidance, and service of the Catholic Schools Office, are dedicated to providing faith formation, academic excellence, and appropriate developmental personal growth opportunities for all Catholic school students. The Church's understanding and appreciation for the role of the laity are expressed as a "witness and living instrument of mission of the Church itself." (*Lumen Gentium*, 33). Service on a local school board is an example of how the laity can effectively assist the Church's educational mission, "doing their full share continually in the work of the Lord." (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 33)

The "invitation and obligation to holiness" (*Lumen Gentium*, 42) finds expression in every group of volunteers that so generously give of their time, talent, and treasure to work as a Catholic school board. The consultative, committee-driven board efficiently assists the pastor and Principal/chief administrator in the operations of the school. By their dedication and effort, Catholic school board safeguards and promotes the viability and vitality of their Catholic school.

Guiding these volunteers is the **Leadership Manual for Catholic School Boards**. It will be a valuable resource for the initial in-service of members, for guidance and reference, and for evaluation of the Board's effectiveness. As the consultative boards in each school assume the general responsibilities of school Board membership as well as those that arise from the individual committees, use of this **Manual** reflects an adherence to the *Diocese of Joliet Handbook of School Policies*.

Under the diocesan bishop, the Catholic School Board has the unique opportunity to protect and advance the teaching mission of the Church. The dialogue created among board members stimulates the unity of purpose and the success of the school. The increased responsibility of school boards to be consultative underscores the commitment noted in the diocesan school strategic plan, *Lighting the Path to Our Future* that the "school is a ministry of the parish." (*LPTOF*, VIII)

The School Board agrees to follow the policies and administrative procedures of the Diocese of Joliet and the Catholic Schools Office. School Board members agree that they will use their expertise and insights to promote the mission and goals of Catholic education and the common good of the school community. In order to discern with other school Board members the issues, concerns, and challenges that their schools face in meeting the educational needs of the students, any personal agenda of a board member must be deferred.

## School Board Mission Statement

In conjunction with the Catholic Schools Office, the mission of the Catholic School Board in the Diocese of Joliet is to advance quality Catholic education for students by providing leadership, direction, and support to pastors, principals, chief administrators, and members of the school community.

The School Board adopts the school's mission statement and the periodic review of its operational validity and Catholic identity.

Philosophy: what we are called to be

Mission Statement: what we are called to do

What we are called to do and whom the school serves often change over the years. Review is necessary to determine who the school is currently serving and how; and if the mission statement accurately reflects the school of today.

The Code of Ethics for School Board Members delineates the expectations inherent in the purpose of the Board. Members, by accepting the position to serve on the Board, ascribe to this code. Periodic review of the code reminds members that they are working together for the common goal: to promote the mission and purpose of Catholic school education. The Code of Ethics addresses the following: conflict of interest, confidentiality, objectivity, justice, fairness, and maintenance of unity.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

School Board members shall avoid situations that present actual, perceived, or potential conflict between their interest and the interest of the school.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Members of the School Board are responsible to keep matters discussed in executive sessions in confidence. Official information/business discussed in such sessions cannot be shared with non-Board members, even with one's spouse.

**OBJECTIVITY**

As total objectivity is impossible for anyone to achieve, members must identify and manage their own personal biases. It is important that members see situations from multiple points of view rather than solely from their own perceptions, assumptions, and feelings. The welfare of the school children comes first in all deliberations.

**JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS**

Recommendations made by the School Board and approved on the parish school level by the pastor and on the secondary level by the chief administrator and the superintendent, should be the result of honest and open discussion by all members: pastor, principal/high school chief administrator, parent, parishioner, and general membership. Consideration of the good of the total parish/school community should be integral to the decision-making process. Every member shall abide by and uphold decisions. When decisions will affect various constituencies, those constituencies should be informed at the same time through an agreed-upon vehicle of communication.

**MAINTENANCE OF UNITY**

In achieving its objectives within the faith community of the parish/school, the Board is to do all it can to avoid creating factions, sides, or other divisive groupings in the parish or school community. Members should function within the framework of the total leadership of the parish/school and strive to cooperate with other leadership groups in the local faith community. The Board meets only with the pastor and/or the principal in attendance. If approached with a problem that is administrative in nature, board members must refer the person to the proper administrative officer, pastor, principal, or superintendent.

# Constitution and Bylaws

All Catholic schools are required to follow Diocese of Joliet and School Policy in all matters related to the operation of the schools. Each school shall have a consultative school board. A **Consultative Board** is a body that participates in the policy-making process by formulating, adopting, and recommending policy to the person with authority to enact it. The person with authority is required to consult the Board before making decisions in designated areas, but is not bound by the Board's advice. The people in authority, in parish schools, are the pastor and principal, and in diocesan high schools, the bishop, superintendent, and chief administrator.

The **Constitution** is the founding document of an organization that establishes and defines mission, structure, and process. The **Bylaws** are rules adopted by an organization to govern its operation. Use the following materials as a point of reference when developing or revising the constitutions and bylaws. See Appendix for *Model Constitution and Bylaws for School Boards of Education*.

## Constitution

Topics included in the **Constitution** are as follows:

- The official title of the Board
- The purpose and function of the Board
- The responsibilities of the Board
- Membership
- Officers of the Board
- Meetings
- Quorum
- Role of Pastor/Chief Administrator
- Role of Committees
- Amendments

## Bylaws

**Bylaws** will usually include the following topics:

### Formulating and Adopting Policy for the School

- Process for adopting policy
- Enactment of policy by pastor/chief administrator
- Process for review of school policies
- Procedures for publication of new policies

### Selection of the Principal

See *Principal Search Committee Guidelines* established by the Catholic Schools Office.

### Performance Appraisal for President and Principal

Policy and Procedure 4120 established by the Catholic Schools Office.

### Developing the School Budget

Policy and Procedure 3100 (series) established by the Catholic Schools Office.

### School Improvement Process

See *Handbook for School Improvement Process* established by the Catholic Schools Office.

**Membership on the Board**

Number of members  
Composition of membership  
Procedures for nomination of members  
Membership eligibility  
Resignation of a member  
Removal of a member  
Filling vacancies  
Attendance at meetings

**Officers of the Board**

Procedures for selection/election of officers  
Responsibilities of officers

**President**

Presides at all meetings  
Develops agenda with the principal/chief administrator  
Appoints committee chairs and members  
Assigns additional duties to members

**Vice-President**

Performs duties in absence of the chair  
Serves on committees

**Secretary**

Maintains written record of minutes  
Takes care of correspondence  
Distributes agenda one week before the meeting  
Prepares other reports as requested  
An individual without voting power could be appointed to serve as "secretary of the Board." The "appointed secretary of the Board" does not participate in the meetings. This would allow all board members to fully participate in the meeting's agenda.

**Meetings**

Place  
Duration and schedule  
Procedures for calling special meetings  
Procedures for visitors  
Procedures for Open Forum  
Robert's Rules of Order  
Order of business  
Executive session

**Committees**

Responsibilities  
Standing or ad hoc  
Accountability

**Amendments to the Bylaws**

Process to be followed

**Review the Bylaws**

The content should be checked at least once every five years to ensure that bylaws:

- Model the faith community.
- is consistent with the Diocese of Joliet Policies and Procedures of the Catholic Schools Office.
- is clear and readable.
- Articulate the roles and responsibilities of the members.
- describe the School Board as consultative to the pastor and principal/chief administrator.

- indicate how the Board operates.

Before final approval of the Board's constitution and bylaws, a copy should be given to the appropriate assistant superintendent at the Catholic Schools Office for review. A final copy and any revisions of the Board's constitution and bylaws should be sent to the Catholic Schools Office.

### Executive Session

Procedures should be established for the Board to meet in executive session when necessary. The Board meets in executive session in order to deal with sensitive issues that may not necessarily be shared with the public. The agenda may reflect that the Board will meet in executive session. Decisions made in an "executive session" are recorded. The decision, topic, issue, or concern discussed in executive session is not published.

The minutes of the executive session are confidential. These minutes are not made public. Some of the topics, which may be covered in "executive session," include but are not limited to: the final selection of a principal hired to fill a vacancy; the resignation or removal of a Board member; the review of the performance of the principal and renewal or non-renewal of the principal's contract. Other topics that are part of the Board's responsibilities can also be included in the executive sessions of the Board as part of the decision-making process. The pastor/chief administrator is always present for an executive session of the Board. The principal will be present except when his/her performance is being evaluated.

## School Board Membership

### Size and Composition

The Board should be composed of 7-9 members (excluding pastor, superintendent, principal, and chief administrator). They should include:

#### **PASTOR**

Ex-officio, all parish school board votes are subject to Pastor's approval

#### **SUPERINTENDENT / ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT**

Ex-officio non-voting members of diocesan high school boards

#### **PRINCIPAL / CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR**

Ex-officio non-voting executive officer of the Board

#### **PARENTS**

Parents of students currently enrolled in the school. This group should not comprise more than one-third of the Board.

#### **PARISH COUNCIL MEMBER**

One parish council member from the school's parish should sit on the parish School Board. This will help develop a relationship and improve communication with the parish.

#### **OTHER**

Other parishioners, alumni, parents of alumni, and community members, who are supportive of Catholic education and who have talents or skills that contribute to the Board's goals.



## Term of Membership And Eligibility

Each member shall serve a term of three years, renewable for a second term. After the second term, there must be a one-year interval before the individual is again eligible for board membership. Staggered term lengths are recommended.

- Eighteen years of age or older
- Genuine interest in Catholic school education
- A credible witness of the Catholic faith; a member of a parish; or if non-Catholic, not opposed to the tenets of the Catholic faith.
- Ability to work with others to achieve consensus
- Ability to make time commitment for meetings, committee work, and in-services
- Willing to maintain confidentiality and high level of integrity
- Willing to support school philosophy and mission.
- Have a professional and personal life that is reflective of the teachings of the Catholic Church

Members of the school or parish staff or their spouses, children, siblings, or parents shall **not** be eligible for board membership.

## Responsibilities of the School Board

The School Board is by its nature consultative to the pastor and principal in parish schools; and to the Bishop, Superintendent, and chief administrator in the diocesan high school. In parish schools the consultative board shall relate to the parish finance council as directed by the pastor. In a Diocesan high school the Board relates to the corporation officers through the superintendent and chief administrator. The School Board is a leadership group within the ministry of Catholic education. As such, the responsibilities include:

1. **Mission Statement:** adoption of the school's mission statement, and periodic review of its operational validity.
2. **Policy:** the formulation and adoption of policy for the school, as needed, within the framework of diocesan policy. Monitor the implementation of school policy and procedure.
3. **Planning:** the development and regular updating of a 3-to-5 year plan for the school; annual goal-setting for the school and for the Board. The long-range plan should follow the guidelines of the Catholic Schools Office.
4. **Advancement:** the formulation and implementation of an advancement program for the school, following diocesan guidelines, and in cooperation with the Catholic Schools Office.
5. **Budget:** adopting the school's operational budget, according to the format specified by the Diocesan Finance Office and the Catholic Schools Office; receiving periodic reports from the Principal/Chief Administrator on the implementation of the budget.
6. **Evaluation:** systematically evaluating:
  - The school's mission statement, goals, and policies
  - The Board itself
  - The principal/chief administrator within the process of the diocese
7. **Recommendation for the Appointment of the Principal/Chief Administrator:** when a vacancy occurs, some board members will be asked to participate in the search process.

## PASTOR

- Canonical administrator of the parish; spiritual and administrative leader
- Hires, supervises, and with the Catholic Schools Office, evaluates the principal of the parish school
- Brings his overall knowledge of the parish to the Board
- Approves budget prepared by the principal and recommended by the School Board
- Cooperates in the initiation and implementation of the school's advancement plans, student recruitment efforts, and long-range plan
- The School Board is consultative to the pastor, so all votes are subject to his approval – the pastor has ultimate responsibility.
  - While he may make a decision contrary to a majority vote, this is usually infrequent since the presumption is that the Board is worthy of the trust that he's placed in them.
  - If he does not approve a board decision, he should provide a written statement of his reasons to the Board. In this and all cases, the Board must recognize his ultimate authority.

*"I would encourage members to make a resolution to be energetic and enthusiastic in carrying out Board responsibilities and helping the organization move into the future."*

*Regina M. Haney,  
Ed.D., Executive  
Director, NCEA  
Department of  
Boards and Councils*

## SUPERINTENDENT / ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT

- Chief spokesperson for school's mission
- Ex-officio non-voting members of diocesan high school boards
- Superintendent is responsible for the general administration and supervision of Catholic parish and secondary schools; for the direction of the Catholic Schools Office.
- Superintendent and staff of the Catholic Schools Office establish regulations, programs, and procedures to implement the policies promulgated by the diocesan bishop in the *Diocese of Joliet Handbook of School Policies*.
- The superintendent of Catholic schools interprets diocesan policies; provides in-service programs; consults; and receives recommendations for additions/changes to diocesan Catholic school procedures.

## PRINCIPAL / CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR

- Educational leader and administrator of school – responsible for operation of the school program
- Parish school principal responsible for employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff; the establishment of educational programming; evaluation and management of student behavior; and implementation of School policy, all in accordance with diocesan policy
- Diocesan high school chief administrator responsible to carry out diocesan policies and procedures, and any policies that the high school board has developed.
- Develops regulations, programs, and procedures to implement policies
- Main source of recommendations regarding need for school policies
- Develops agendas for board meetings with chair; is the main resource person for board in-services

- Develops the budget (in conjunction with the pastor and Finance Committee for parish schools); implements budget; periodically reports to the Board and the Office of Catholic Schools on budget
- Participates in the school's advancement plans, student recruitment efforts, and long-range plan

### CHAIRPERSON / OFFICERS

Officers are elected annually by the Board membership and need to have served on the Board for at least one year.

- **President** presides at all meetings; determines the agenda with the Principal (in collaboration with the pastor as needed)/chief administrator; assigns additional duties to individual members; appoints members to committees; oversees committee activities; plans orientation for new members with Nominating Committee and principal/chief administrator; coordinates and reviews the School Board Self-Assessment and guides the Board to consensus on future plans.
- **Vice-President** in the absence of the Chair performs all duties of the chair.
- **Secretary** maintains written record of all acts of the School Board; handles all correspondence for the Board; preserves reports and documents; notifies members of the date and time of meetings; distributes meeting agendas and committee reports at least seven (7) days in advance; distributes minutes following each meeting, e-mails materials when possible; collects the School Board Self-Assessment forms and files a report of data to the chair.

### MEMBERS AT LARGE

- Accept appointments as committee chairs
- Use their expertise to assist with committee work
- Provide written committee reports to the Board
- Assist in setting goals
- Accept other duties as needed

## Committees

### Committee Structure

The committee structure contributes to the efficient operation of the Board. It is impossible to address all of the work of the Board without using the **committee structure**. The committee structure is also a way to recruit new members to the Board and provide opportunities for members of the school community to become involved in the work of the Board. Committees research, organize, and present needed information so that the Board can take action on a particular issue. Committee members may include both non-board members and board members. The chair of each committee must be a board member.

There are two types of committees, *standing and ad hoc*. The **standing committee** provides continuity for the ongoing operation of the Board. **The ad hoc committee** is established to meet a specific objective at a given time. Non-Board members of the ad hoc committee do not actively participate in the Board's agenda after presenting their report. When the work of this committee is complete, the committee disbands.

The Board may also invite representatives of various constituent groups to report on activities, educate the Board, or communicate essential information pertinent to the Board's purpose. The responsibility of these representatives is to advance the mission of Catholic schools. Representatives may be invited to report from the school faculty, school legislative liaison, business office, advancement office, parish religious education, parish council, parish finance council, parish trustees, or facilities department. These invited representatives have no vote and are not full members of the Board.

The president of the Home and School Association or parent association may be an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board, and this must be stated in the bylaws.

## Standing Committees

The recommended **standing committees** and a brief description of their responsibilities are:

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

The School Board contributes to the development and regular updating of a 3-to-5 year long-range strategic plan for the school, annual goal setting, and action steps for the school and for the Board. The long-range plan should follow the guidelines of the Catholic Schools Office.

### **ADVANCEMENT**

The School Board participates in the formulation and implementation of an advancement program for the school which includes; public relations and marketing; fund development (annual fund, capital projects, capital campaigns, planned giving and endowments), alumni and constituency relations, and enrollment management, and is in cooperation with the Catholic Schools Office guidelines.

### **FINANCE**

The School Board assists in adopting and monitoring the school's operational budget, according to the format specified by the Catholic Schools Office; receiving periodic reports from the principal/chief administrator on the implementation of the budget.

### **NOMINATING**

The School Board creates a nominating committee to seek new board members to replace those whose terms have expired. The pastor must approve the nominations for parish school boards. The diocesan bishop with the superintendent's recommendation must approve appointments to the diocesan high school board.

## Committee Responsibilities

The Committee is responsible for:

### Strategic Planning

*“ Each elementary school principal and pastor will work with its local board to develop a comprehensive, multi-year strategic plan for the school.”*

*Lighting the Path to the Our Future, Strategic Plan for Catholic Schools*

1. Developing and regular (annual) updating of a long-range strategic plan to assess where the school is currently and where it hopes to be in 3-to-5 years.
2. Including an environmental scan and a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) into the plan.
3. Making the plan strategic - explaining how the school will achieve its goals and not just projecting current trends over 3-to-5 years.
4. Integrating the Diocesan Strategic Planning Framework into the school's strategic plan.
5. Including consultation from constituents: parents, teachers, parishioners, principal, and pastor.
6. Preparing seven areas of the plan: Vision and Purpose – **Our Catholic Identity**; Governance – **Leadership for Schools**; Teaching and Learning – **Academic Excellence**; Curriculum and Assessment: **Student Performance and School Effectiveness**; Facilities, Resources, and Finances – **Stewardship**; Stakeholder Communication and Relationships – **Our Message**; Commitment to Continuous Improvement - **Strategic Leadership**  
For each area: stating dream/vision; setting goals; prioritizing goals; establishing objectives and action steps (including cost, staffing, and timing).
7. Creating a case statement including data gathered and a narrative.
8. Using the plan as the school's yearly road map, which drives all advancement activities.
9. Planning annually for the third/fifth year out so School always has a 3-to-5 years plan.

### Advancement

1. Formulating and implementing an advancement program, including public relations and marketing, annual fund and endowment development, alumni and constituency relations, and enrollment management.
2. Friend-raising, not fundraising (Raise funds, friends, and freshmen) Supporting the advancement team.
3. Identifying, cultivating, and soliciting major donors; serving as school ambassadors in the community; participating in fund development; recruitment; marketing; and alumni relations.

### Finance

1. Adopting the budget (income and expenditure) according to the diocesan format; monitoring the budget via periodic reports from the principal and pastor with recommendations from the parish finance council for parish schools. For the diocesan high school, financial reports are developed by the chief administrator, business manager, and finance committee and sent directly to the Catholic Schools Office.
2. Developing the plans and means to finance on-going educational program (i.e; setting the tuition, negotiating the parish subsidy with the Pastor and parish finance council, and developing the annual operating budget).
3. Participating in the development of financial plan section of the Strategic Plan. Catholic schools are funded from a combination of tuition, subsidy (parish, diocesan, religious congregation, donated services), fundraising, and advancement.
4. Integrating a tuition assistance line item into a budget.

**\*\*Budget must be approved/enacted by the pastor and implemented by principal of parish schools.**

## Nominating

1. Ensuring that the School Board membership is representative of the school community and is comprised of members whose talents speak to the priority needs of the school as stated in the long-range strategic plan
2. Gathering biographical information on candidates, including their statement of interest/candidacy, which presents their vision for the school, their willingness to share their time, talent, and treasure with the school, and their interests and expertise that can be matched with the school's needs and goals. For the diocesan high school board, candidates must complete the *Statement of Candidacy Diocesan High School Board* form and a *Pastor's Approval Form*, see Appendix.
3. Developing a slate of eligible candidates for board membership, to be given to the Board chair for discussion and consensus by the Board and submitted to the pastor for appointment to parish schools, or to the diocesan bishop with the recommendation of the Superintendent to the diocesan high school.
4. Providing a Confidentiality Statement to be signed by new board members. Refer to Appendix for *Confidentiality Statement for School Boards*.
5. Preparing and executing a board orientation annually for new members.
6. Suggesting topics for board in-services.
7. Preparing slate of nominees to be elected as officers of the Board.
8. The Nominating Committee chair conducts the election of officers for appointment to the Board. Refer to Appendix for *School Board Nominating Committee Guidelines*.

*"Ongoing Board training builds faith community among the members while instilling in them a strong sense of ownership and responsibility."*

*Stephanie Welling,  
NCEA Chair of the  
Department of  
Boards and Councils*

### Annual Goals, Objectives, and Action Steps

A **goal** is a statement of broad direction or purpose. A goal, by definition, will identify an outcome that one hopes to achieve. An **objective** is the specific time-oriented and realistic statement of what is going to be done to achieve a goal. The **action steps** further specify the **how, when, who, where, and cost** for each objective.

Annual goals, objectives, and action steps are developed to accomplish the ongoing work of the Board. They must be specific, measurable, attainable, reasonable, and timely. The Principal informs the Board about the annual school goals developed by faculty members and gives a report of the progress being made to implement the school goals and objectives. The Board's goals support school goals as reflected in the long-range strategic plan.

## Policy Development

The parish elementary school board and the diocesan high school board formulate and adopt policies, the pastor/superintendent enacts or promulgates them, and the principal/chief administrator implements them.

The Catholic parish elementary and secondary schools of the Diocese of Joliet follow the policies developed by the Catholic Schools Office. There are various procedures provided by the Catholic Schools Office that support the written policies. One of the School Board's responsibilities is to consider new or proposed changes in policies for the operation of the school.

A **policy** is a deliberate plan of action for the operation of the school used to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes. It is a guide for discretionary action stating what should be done, but not *how* it should be done. A policy must be written.

The policy is determined by a response to a need expressed by the principal, pastor or the Board representing its constituents. In some instances, parent input may indicate that consideration should be given to developing a policy. This information may come from data received through an open forum, parent surveys, or the results of input from focus groups.

For policy development to be effective, it is essential that appropriate input be sought from those who will be affected by the policy. Policies are never made in isolation nor are they made to "solve one problem." The nature of policy development requires time to analyze the need, gather data, allow for thoughtful deliberation, and ultimately approve a policy statement. This process cannot be covered at one meeting.

A **procedure** is the process for carrying out the policy. The Board does not make recommendations regarding procedure, as that is the role and responsibility of the administration.

## Proposing a New Policy

An issue or topic may be brought to the Board by one or more members for discussion and, if the Board determines that there is a need, the individual or group that proposed the policy may be asked to develop a rationale for the new or changed policy. This formalizes the process but does not imply that it will receive approval.

The need for a potential new policy or change to existing policy should be submitted to the administration and to the Board using the *Proposed New Policy or Change in Policy Form* (see Appendix) that includes: a statement indicating the need for the policy and the perceived consequences of implementing the change.

Once the topic is placed on the agenda, the following occurs:

- Discussion is held about the topic, issue, concern.
- Study of the issue is conducted by the principal, and possibly by an ad hoc committee.
- Questions, concerns are clarified by the individual or group who initiated the policy.
- A statement is formulated that is brief, simple, clear.
- The statement is written to describe what will be accomplished.

*“Everyone recognizes that if we were satisfied with our accomplishments we would cease to grow, so there is a continuous process of development and improvement.”*

*Dr. Kevin Baxter, Former Principal of American Martyrs School, NCEA Outstanding Board 2009*

The **first reading of the proposed policy** is considered at the Board meeting. (This may occur at an executive session.) If the policy will be considered, the initiator or a committee assigned by the chair “writes” the policy with the suggestions made by the Board in a **second draft**. The **second reading of the proposed policy** allows the Board to either accept or reject the proposed policy, or ask for another draft. An approved policy is dated, submitted to the pastor in parish schools or the superintendent in diocesan high school for enactment, and then included with the other policies.

**Publication of the policy** occurs when the Board adopts the policy, and it is promulgated by the pastor/chief administrator. Appropriate constituents are informed about the new policy. This may occur through the school newsletter, the parish bulletin, and/or the school’s handbooks.

**Reviewing and rescinding policies** are also the responsibility of the Board. Policies are tested every time that they are used, and they should be changed as soon as they become obsolete in order to achieve a balance of justice and care.

When the policy has been approved, and enacted, the principal/chief administrator determines how the policy will be **implemented** and informs the Board about the progress being made.

## The Agenda

### Planning the Agenda for Board Meetings.

The principal/chief administrator and chair of the Board plan the meeting agenda and have it distributed to the members along with an agenda packet at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. Include the name of the school, date, time, and place of the meeting on the agenda. Topics for future agendas can be raised at meetings. The format for the meetings is the same for all meetings. Meetings are usually scheduled for no more than two hours. Refer to Appendix for samples of a *Template for School Board Agenda* and *A Prayer for School Boards*.

#### Set Times for each of the following:

##### Gathering

Usually occurs 10-to-15 minutes before the meeting. The purpose is to socialize. Rotate task of bringing refreshments.

##### Call to order

Welcome and Opening Prayer  
Recognition of visitors  
Roll call

##### Consent Agenda

A group of items that may include previous meeting minutes for approval, general reports, committee reports, routine correspondence, and/or informational materials that:

- Do not require discussion
- Are self-explanatory
- Are noncontroversial
- Were submitted in writing and distributed to the Board prior to the meeting.



Consent agenda items can be removed from the group and placed on the meeting agenda. The consent agenda is voted on as a whole and acceptance is stated in the meeting minutes. The purpose of a consent agenda is to free up time for discussion of critical issues and ongoing planning.

The chair handles this part of the agenda.

**Presentations**

Presentations to the School Board could be offered early in the meeting

**General Reports**

Pastor: updates and shares general information that has not been included in the consent agenda.

Principal: gives information not already included in the consent agenda about the school's program; gives a progress report about the school's goals and objectives; informs about the coming school activities; clarifies questions raised in report; provides data regarding enrollment trends.

Board Chair: gives information regarding board events and activities.

**Committee Reports**

Indicate who will present the report on behalf of the committee and the purpose of the report, e.g., seek input from the Board or make a final recommendation. Not all committees give reports at each meeting. Written updates can be given to the Board as part of the consent agenda.

**Standing Committees**

List each committee that will apprise the Board about its progress, only if they need input from the Board or have some final recommendations for the Board to consider. Otherwise, a written report may be included in the consent agenda.

**Ad hoc committees**

List each committee that will apprise the Board about its progress, only if input is needed from the Board, or there is some final recommendation for the Board to consider. Otherwise, a written report may be included in the consent agenda.

**Old Business**

Consider items addressed at a previous meeting

**New Business**

Indicate the topic or issue to be addressed

**Visitors Comments**

Non-members who wish to speak at a Board meeting shall submit their request in writing to the chairperson two-weeks in advance of the meeting. Their requests will be honored if their business is appropriate for the Board's responsibilities and agenda. Such persons shall be given a specific time limit for speaking. Guests should be informed that someone would respond to them later. Do not make promises about resolving the issues raised.

**Planning for Next Meeting's Agenda**

**Closing Comments**

**Closing Prayer**

**Executive Session**

Executive sessions are held as needed either before the regularly scheduled meeting or after the meeting. Executive sessions need not be part of every board meeting.

## Suggested Procedures for Visitors

Visitors should be aware of the protocol observed by those who attend the Board meetings. It is important that a friendly atmosphere prevails, but it is also important that the visitors know the parameters for speaking to the Board. A flyer welcoming visitors could be distributed before the meeting begins. The flyer would include a statement of welcome and the protocol to be followed by visitors during the meeting.

*“Board members are attentive and respectful, listening and responding in ways that model Catholic values.”*

*Karen Barreras, Principal,  
The Little Flower School,  
Outstanding Board Award  
2009*

- **Visitors observe the Board** while it is in session. They do not engage in the discussion, nor do they actively participate in the agenda either through comments or by offering their opinions on the topic being discussed. No electronic devices of any kind should be accessed unless prior approval is received from the chair.
- **Once the visitor is recognized**, the visitor has one opportunity to express an opinion on the item approved for the agenda. Each individual may speak for a specified amount of time (2-to-3 minutes).
- **There is no discussion or debate** between the visitors and the members.
- **All members listen to the visitors.** If necessary, either the chair or someone designated by the chair can assist in clarifying the question or topic.
- **The chair thanks** the visitors for their comments and informs them that someone will get back to them later.

The chair and the members are cordial to the visitors. It is understood that the issues raised will not be handled at the meeting. If appropriate to the parameters of the Board's responsibilities, the issue may be addressed at a future time. Ordinarily, the visitor's comments are related to the matters considered on the agenda. Personnel issues and individual family or student's needs are not discussed. Questions of a general nature, however, could be referred to the appropriate person, e.g., the pastor or principal/chief administrator.

The Chair assures the visitors that the matter will be taken under consideration by the Board, the pastor or the principal/chief administrator. It is important that the chair not “promise” that the issue will be dealt with at the next meeting because it may not be possible to do so. The chair does not necessarily address some of the issues that may be raised. It may be appropriate, for the pastor or principal/chief administrator to respond to the individual's question, issue, or concern later.

## Open Forum

Board meetings, other than those held in executive session, may be open to the public. The dates and times are announced in the school's monthly calendar and/or the church bulletin. A particular time may be stipulated on the agenda to allow visitors to address the Board.

The open forum is an opportunity for the Board to communicate with the school families. It will also help the school's administration continue to provide a learning environment that is Catholic and excellent. This will also assist the Board in developing annual goals to meet the needs of the school community, the students and the school's program.

The open forum allows the Board, pastor and school administrator to hear from the parents and guardians of the students. Parents and guardians are given the opportunity to express what they are thinking about the school and its mission of Catholic education for their children.

- Parents and guardians are invited to attend an open forum with the Board.
- The date and time are announced well in advance.
- The purpose of the open forum is clearly stated.
- The protocol for participating is announced. This is not a time to resolve specific problems or express grave displeasure with an aspect of the school's program, operation, or personnel.
- Parents and guardians will be given the opportunity to express themselves in groups and have their input become part of the information collated by the School Board.
- Parents and guardians will be asked:
  - ✓ What do you like about the school?
  - ✓ If you could change one thing in the school, what would that be?
  - ✓ If you could add one thing to the school's program, what would that be?
- The meeting will begin on time. The purpose of the meeting is stated. Serious consideration will be given to all that is shared with the School Board since the input will serve as a means of continuous improvement in the school's program and its operation.
- The results of the open forum become an agenda item at a future board meeting. The Board determines the way to communicate the results to the School families. Families are informed that the issues raised will be addressed in one of the following ways, e.g., item for discussion of the action plans for the School Board or the school faculty and staff. Some items may be deferred for action at a later date. Others may be discerned as impossible or inconsistent with the mission, means, and philosophy of the Catholic school.
- Periodic reports are given to the school families. These updates are a response to the families that board members have heard them and that they will, when possible, deal with the issues raised.

## Services of the Catholic Schools Office

The Catholic Schools Office will provide services of orientation and training, guidance, and direction so that the purpose of and function for the consultative, committee-driven School Board will be sustainable and viable.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Diocese of Joliet Catholic Schools Office  
 Bishop Blanchette Catholic Center  
 16555 Weber Road  
 Crest Hill, IL 60403  
 Phone: (815) 722-6606  
 FAX: (815) 838-2182

### RESOURCES

Catholic Schools Office Website:  
[www.dioceseofjoliet.org/cso](http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/cso)  
 NCEA Website and Literature,  
 Department of Boards and Councils  
[www.ncea.org](http://www.ncea.org)

## **LIAISON**

Superintendent

School Board Consultation

## **ADVANCEMENT**

Executive Director of the  
Catholic Education Foundation

Advancement Consultation and Training

## **MARKETING**

Director of Marketing and  
Enrollment Management

Marketing/Marketing Analysis  
Enrollment Management

## **PLANNING**

Assistant Superintendent,  
Accreditation and Planning

Local Strategic Planning

## **FINANCES**

Superintendent/Finance Committee of  
the Diocesan School Board

Financial Consultation  
Catholic School Support Program: Analysis and Administration  
School Budget Review, Analysis, and Projection  
Fiscal Training

## **Annual Planning and Self-Assessment of the School Board**

For a Catholic school board to be effective, it must provide time for goal setting and periodic evaluation. It is important that at least one day be set aside each year for an annual planning meeting for board members to meet with the school's administrators in order to set the Board's goals for the year, as well as to review the administration's goals. The Board will plan annually for the election of officers for appointment. It is also important that the Board evaluates its performance. Refer to the Appendix for the *School Board Self-Assessment* tool to be used for this purpose. The *School Board Self-Assessment* should be completed by each board member and submitted at least seven (7) days prior to the annual meeting to the secretary of the Board. The secretary will file a report of the data to the Board chair for discussion at the annual planning meeting and for consensus on planned changes.

## **Acknowledgements**

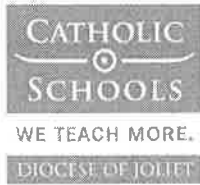
The Diocese of Joliet Catholic Schools Office would like to acknowledge the following for sharing their resources:

The Archdiocese of Hartford  
The National Catholic Educational Association

## Appendix

Model Constitution for School Board of Education  
Model Bylaws for School Board of Education  
School Board Committee Report Form  
Statement of Candidacy Diocesan High School Board  
Pastor's Approval Form  
Confidentiality Statement for School Boards  
School Board Nominating Committee Guidelines  
Proposed New Policy or Change in Policy Form  
Template for School Board Agenda  
Prayers for School Board Meetings  
School Board Self-Assessment  
Glossary of Terms





# MODEL CONSTITUTION

## SCHOOL BOARD OF EDUCATION

### ARTICLE I TITLE

The name of this body shall be the \_\_\_\_\_ School Board of Education, hereinafter referred to as the School Board and/or Board.

### ARTICLE II NATURE AND FUNCTION

The purpose of the School Board shall be to provide policy direction for the educational programs of the school, to promote the implementation of said policies, and to ensure that all local policies are in accord with the intent and spirit of the policies established for the school system by the Joliet Diocesan Board of Education.

### ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD

#### Section 1 Number and Composition

**Members of the School Board shall be the pastor (ex officio), the school administrator (ex officio), and nine (9) elected/appointed representatives.**

**The School Board shall have an executive officer, the school administrator, responsible to the Board for carrying out its policies and responsible locally to the pastor and on the diocesan level to the bishop through the diocesan superintendent of schools.**

#### Section 2 Tenure of Office

Each elected member shall serve a term of three years, with the exception that the original members shall serve terms varying from one to three years, with approximately one-third serving a one-year term, one-third a two-year term, and one-third a three-year term, to be determined by lot or other means.

#### Section 3 Election, Vacancies, Removal

- a. Parish-wide elections for new board members shall take place the last weekend of April. Newly elected members of the Board shall take office June 1 of each year. Retiring board members shall leave office on May 31 of each year.
- b. Unexpired terms of board members or of board members disqualified shall be filled by the pastor through appointment.
- c. Any member of the Board, other than an ex officio member, who is absent from two regular meetings of the Board during one academic year (August through and including June) shall, unless excused by action of the Board, cease to be a member.

### ARTICLE IV OFFICERS

#### Section 1 Organization

The officers of the Board shall include a President, a Vice-President, and a Secretary. The President, Vice-President and Secretary shall be voting members of the Board.

- Section 2      Election of Officers
- a.      The president, vice-president, and secretary shall be determined annually through the process of prayerful discernment by the voting members of the Board prior to the first regular Board meeting in May.
  - b.      All elected/appointed members of the Board are eligible for any office.

- Section 3      Duties of the Officers
- a.      The president shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Board.
  - b.      The vice-president shall perform all the duties of the president when s/he is absent or unable to act.
  - c.      The secretary shall maintain a written record of all acts of the Board; conduct, receive, and dispose of all correspondence as directed; and preserve all reports and documents committed to his/her care.

**ARTICLE V**  
**MEETINGS**

- Section 1      Regular and Special Meetings
- a.      The Board shall meet regularly on the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Thursday of the month at a publicly designated room.
  - b.      Special meetings of the Board may be called by the president as needed or by a majority of the voting members. If time permits, notice of special meetings shall be given twenty-four (24) hours in advance stating the nature of the meeting, the time, and the place.
  - c.      Because of the consultative nature of the Board, no meeting will be held without the pastor and/or principal in attendance.

- Section 2      Quorum
- a.      For the purpose of transaction official business, it shall be necessary that a majority of the total voting members be present and voting. "Voting members" of the Board shall mean the nine (9) elected/appointed representatives.
  - b.      A simple majority of those present and voting shall carry the motion, decision, and/or election unless otherwise specified in the constitution.

- Section 3      Open Meetings
- a.      All meetings of the Board are to be open meetings unless designated as being closed.
  - b.      Decisions made in closed sessions must be presented and voted on at open meetings before becoming effective.

- Section 4      Visitors
- a.      Meetings of the School Board shall be open. The Board reserves the right to declare closed sessions.
  - b.      The right of non-members to address the Board shall be limited to those whose petition has been approved by the school administrator or Board president for inclusion on the agenda in advance of the meeting.

- Section 5      Archives
- A written record of all acts of the Board, maintained by the secretary, shall be preserved in the archives.

- Section 6      Rules of Procedure
- The Board may fix its own rules of procedure, but in the absence of such rules, Robert's Rules of Order shall apply.



**ARTICLE VI**  
**COMMITTEES**

Section 1     Standing Committees  
The Standing Committees for the \_\_\_\_\_ School Board shall be: Finance, Policy, Enrollment/Recruitment, Marketing/Political Advocacy, Publicity, Facilities, Endowment/Development and Election Committees.

Section 2     Temporary Committees  
a.     The Board may, by resolution, provide for such other committees as it deems advisable and may discontinue the same at its pleasure.  
b.     Each committee shall have such powers and shall perform such duties as may be assigned to it by the Board and shall be appointed and vacancies filled in the manner determined by the Board. In the absence of other direction, the president shall appoint all committees.

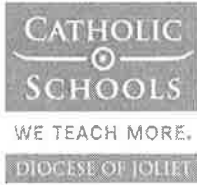
**ARTICLE VII**  
**AMENDMENTS**

Section 1     Amendments  
This constitution may be amended, supplemented, suspended, or repealed, in whole or in part, by a vote of two-thirds of the total voting membership subject only to regulations of the Diocesan Board of Education.

Section 2     Presentation  
Amendments must be presented to the Board in writing at least two weeks prior to the meeting for discussion and voted on at a subsequent meeting.

Section 3     Bylaws  
Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the total members of the Board providing that the amendment has been presented at the previous meeting of the Board.





## MODEL BYLAWS

### SCHOOL BOARD OF EDUCATION

#### ORGANIZATION

##### Jurisdiction

The \_\_\_\_\_ School Board of Education shall provide policy direction for the educational program of the school, shall promote the implementation of said policies, and shall ensure that all local policies are in accord with the intent and spirit of the policies established for the school system by the Joliet Diocesan Board of Education.

##### Number and Terms of Members

The Board shall consist of nine (9) voting members, the pastor of the parish, and the school administrator. The pastor and the school administrator shall constitute ex officio but non-voting members of the Board.

Each elected/appointed member shall hold office for three (3) years. The present and future members shall hold office until May 31 of the year their term expires unless they resign or are disqualified by unexcused absences from two board meetings during one academic year or are disqualified by any policy promulgated by the Joliet Diocesan Board of Education. Newly elected members shall take office June 1 of each year.

##### Membership

Members of the \_\_\_\_\_ School Board shall be elected in a parish-wide election on the last weekend of each April. All candidates are required to submit a written application to the Board by the last Sunday in March. The Election Committee will interview the candidates the following week or soon thereafter. A "Meet the Candidates Night" will be scheduled prior to the parish-wide election date. Election results will be announced at the May Board meeting and published in the Sunday bulletin the following weekend.

Unexpired terms of Board members who resign or are disqualified shall be filled by the pastor through appointment.

##### Officers

The Board shall determine and select its own officers in prayerful discernment at the regular Board meeting in May. The officers shall include a president, a vice-president, and a secretary. The president, the vice-president, and the secretary are to be voting members of the Board. All elected/appointed members of the Board are eligible for any office.

#### School Administrator

The school administrator shall be the executive officer of the Board but shall not be a voting member; s/he shall, however, participate in the deliberations of the Board. The school administrator shall have the responsibility of implementing Board policies and shall have discretionary authority to make administrative decisions.

#### Temporary Board Committees

The Board may, by resolution, provide for ad hoc committees drawn from the community to prepare studies and bodies of information permitting the Board to make informed judgments. The Board may discontinue such committees at its pleasure and, in any event, each ad hoc committee will be considered dismissed with thanks at the completion of its task. Each entity shall have such powers and shall perform such duties as may be assigned to it by the Board and shall be appointed and vacancies filled in the manner determined by the Board. In the absence of other direction, the president shall appoint all committees.

#### Standing Board Committees

The Board may, by resolution, provide for such other committees as it deems advisable and may discontinue the same at its pleasure. Each committee shall have such powers and shall perform such duties as may be assigned to it by the Board and shall be appointed and vacancies filled in the manner determined by the Board. In the absence of other direction the president shall appoint all committees.

The Standing Committees of the \_\_\_\_\_ School Board are Finance, Policy, Enrollment/Recruitment, Marketing/Political Advocacy, Publicity, Facilities, Endowment/Development and Election Committees.

### DUTIES OF OFFICERS/MEMBERS

#### President

The president shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Board; appoint all committees unless otherwise specified by the Board; execute on behalf of the Board all written instruments except as otherwise directed by the Board and, in general, perform all duties incident to the office of president and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him/her by the Board.

#### Vice-President

The vice-president shall be an aide to the president, and in case of the absence or disability of the president, shall pro tempore assume and perform the duties of the president.

#### Secretary

The secretary shall keep the minutes of the meetings of the Board, be they opened or closed; submit a copy of the minutes within a reasonable time to the chief executive officer for editing and mailing; see that all notices are fully given in accordance with the provisions of the constitution; be custodian of the records of the Board and provide the school administrator with copies of same for the school office/archives; and, in general, perform all duties incident to the office of the secretary of the Board and such other duties from time to time may be assigned by the president; in the absence of the president or vice-president, the secretary shall chair the meetings of the Board.

#### Individual Members

Board members have authority only when acting as a Board officially in session. The Board shall not be bound by any statement or action on the part of any individual member of the Board except when such statement or action is in pursuance of specific instruction of the Board.

### METHODS OF OPERATION

#### Adoption of Administrative Regulations

The Board does not adopt administrative regulations unless specifically required to do so by law or unless requested to do so by the school administrator.

#### Adoption/Amendment of Policies and Bylaws

Any proposed new policy or bylaw of the Board must be submitted in writing and read at a regular meeting of the Board and must lie over until the next regular meeting. A two-thirds vote of the Board shall be necessary for its adoption.

#### Meetings (Regular, Special)

The Board shall meet monthly on the second Thursday, subject to change by the Board itself or to postponement by the president, pastor or school administrator. Special or additional meetings shall be held whenever called by the president or the majority of the Board. Meetings will not be held without the pastor and/or principal in attendance.

#### Time, Place and Nature

All meetings may be held at such times and places as fixed by the president or by a voting majority of the Board upon not less than five (5) day's notice. All meetings of the Board are to be open meetings unless designated as being closed.

#### Public Hearings

Upon agreement of the majority of the Board, the Board, or its duly authorized committee may hold public hearings. The time, place, date or dates, the subject matter to be discussed, and the manner in which public hearings will be conducted shall be decided by the Board in each instance.

#### Construction of Agenda

The school administrator with the assistance of the Board president shall be responsible for preparing the agenda. Individual Board members desiring an item to be included on the agenda shall notify the president or school administrator at least ten (10) days in advance of the regular meeting.

Any non-member desiring to place an item in the agenda must deliver the request in writing to the Board president or school administrator at least ten (10) days prior to any regular meeting.

#### Advance Delivery of Meeting Materials

Each board member shall receive notice and a copy of the agenda and supporting materials at least five (5) days prior to the meeting.

#### Quorum

A majority of the voting members of the School Board is necessary for the transaction of any business.

## Meeting Conduct

### Order of Business

- A. Call to Order and Opening Prayers
- B. Recommended Actions
  - 1. Routine Matters
    - a. Approval of Minutes
    - b. Acceptance of Agenda
  - 2. Old Business
  - 3. New Business
- C. Information/Communications/Reports
  - 1. Official Delegations
  - 2. Non-Staff Communications and Reports
  - 3. Principal
  - 4. Board Members
- D. Future Business/Events
  - 1. Meeting Dates
  - 2. Preview of Topics for Future Agendas
  - 3. General Discussion to Guide Future Recommendations
- E. Executive Session (if one is held)
- F. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

### Length of Meetings

The goal of the \_\_\_\_\_ School Board shall be to conduct its meetings within a two hour time limit.

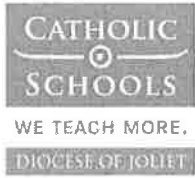
### Parliamentary Procedures

The Board may fix its own rules of procedure to be followed during meetings, but in the absence of such rules, Robert's Rules of Order shall apply.

### Minutes of Meetings

The minutes of each meeting shall be sent by the chief executive officer to the pastor and individual board members with the agenda packet for each meeting. As a courtesy, Board minutes are sent to the superintendent of Catholic Schools.

A digest of the minutes of each meeting shall be written and distributed to school families and parish groups for the purpose of sharing and disseminating information.



# School Board Committee Report Form

School Board Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Town: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Committee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Report Presented: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Members: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Summary of Committee's Actions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Recommendations:

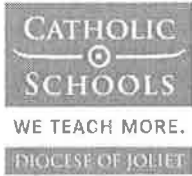
\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Actions Required by the Board:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_







**STATEMENT OF CANDIDACY  
DIOCESAN HIGH SCHOOL BOARD**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to School \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. # \_\_\_\_\_

Work Address \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. # \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Parish \_\_\_\_\_ Town \_\_\_\_\_

Children and Ages \_\_\_\_\_

Schools Attended by Children and Year of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parish Activities \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Diocesan Activities \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Civic Activities \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Specific Talents Available to the Board \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please provide your vision for the future of the school: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

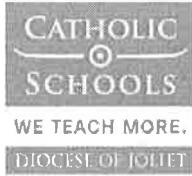
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you willing to give time and energy to membership? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



DIOCESE OF JOLIET  
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE  
PASTOR'S APPROVAL FORM

To: The Reverend Pastor

The person named below is applying for a position on the high school board. We ask that you provide a brief statement attesting to the fact that this applicant is a practicing member of the Catholic faith.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Applicant's Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Applicant's Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Pastor's Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parish)

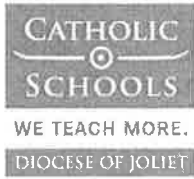
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Street Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Telephone Number)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Town)

Please return this form to: Chief Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of High School: \_\_\_\_\_  
High School Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_





## Confidentiality Statement for School Boards

The members of the \_\_\_\_\_ School Board, in the town of \_\_\_\_\_, must fully understand and appreciate the confidential nature of membership. By virtue of their role on this board, members have access to confidential information. In order to serve as an effective governing body, the Board needs its deliberations to be open and frank. To achieve this, board members pledge not to share what is said with those who are not part of the Board. The issues dealt with and decisions made will be communicated to others through the appropriate channels and publications.

Strictly confidential matters will be discussed in executive session, which may be called by the pastor, by the chief administrator/principal, by the Board president, or by any Board Member. This will include, but not be limited to, personnel issues, legal matters, and financial issues. The content, the discussion, and the decisions reached will not be shared with non-board members except as designated by the Board.

My signature below indicates that I have read and agree to adhere to the above-stated confidentiality statement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member's Printed Name





# School Board Self-Assessment

Board Member Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School Board Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Board President Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Submit completed form to the Secretary of the Board at least seven (7) days prior to Annual Planning Meeting

## MISSION AND PURPOSE

**Fundamental to the school's performance is a clear, strong mission and purpose. A successful board must know what it does, whom it serves and why.**

MISSION AND PURPOSE	Excellent	Good	Poor	N/A
The statements of mission and purpose are well understood and supported by the Board				
The Board consistently relates its decisions to the mission				
The Board is active in ensuring that the school's mission is promoted in the school and on the Board				
The Board reviews the bylaws on a regular basis and revises when necessary				
The Board in collaboration with the school community annually reviews the Mission Statement and revises it when necessary				

Comments:

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## STRATEGIC PLANNING

**Planning for the school's future is critical for its success. Such planning should be reviewed and approved by the Board.**

STRATEGIC PLANNING	Excellent	Good	Poor	N/A
Performance of the Board in initiating strategic planning				
The Board's participation in strategic planning				
The Board accomplishes the activities for which it has responsibility in the strategic plan				
The Board reviews and/or revises its Strategic Plan on a regular basis (annually)				

Comments:

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### ADVANCEMENT/MARKETING

(Public Relations and Marketing, Fund Development, Alumni and Constituency Relations, and Enrollment Management)

The board should ensure that the school has the resources needed to be effective. The role of the Board should include the attraction of funds and friends to the school. It should help build confidence in the school for the long term. The Board should promote public awareness of the school and create good will within the community.

ADVANCEMENT	Excellent	Good	Poor	N/A
Board leadership in adopting and implementing a five-year advancement plan (i.e., endowment, capital campaigns, annual fund, constituency relations)				
Board leadership in adopting and implementing a five-year public relations plan				
Board leadership in adopting and implementing a five-year marketing plan, including enrollment management				
Regular monitoring and updating of plans				

Comments:

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### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Board should assist in the effective management of the school. This may include formulating and adopting policies, overseeing investments, and participating in the budget process and financial plan section of the Strategic Plan of the school.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	Excellent	Good	Poor	N/A
The Board reviews and approves the budget prepared by the Finance Committee				
The Board receives and systematically reviews financial reports (i.e., monthly) on a regular basis				
The Board is consulted in all financial matters concerning the school				
The Board composition includes members who bring special expertise to financial matters				

Comments:

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### THE BOARD AGENDA

BOARD AGENDA	Excellent	Good	Poor	N/A
The Board agenda is prepared collaboratively by the principal/chief administrator (and pastor for parish school boards) and Board president				
The agenda and committee reports are distributed at least one week in advance of meetings				
The agenda and committee report are accompanied by appropriate background data				
The orientation of new board members and the continued updating of all board members are offered				



Comments:

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**PASTOR, PRINCIPAL/CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR AND THE BOARD**

The pastor, principal/chief administrator, and the Board must maintain an effective working relationship. The relationship between the pastor, the principal/chief administrator, and the Board president is particularly important.

<b>PASTOR, PRINCIPAL/CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR AND THE BOARD</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>N/A</b>
The Parish School Board understands its role as a consultative body to the pastor and the principal				
The Diocesan High School Board understands its role as consultative to the chief administrator and superintendent				
The Board President effectively presides over meetings				
Communication between the administration and president is evident				
The Board is faithful to the agenda, moving through items in a deliberate and orderly fashion				
The Board carefully examines all issues and items brought to its attention				
The Board fosters openness and objectivity during meetings, and encourages expression of competing points of view				
The Board makes effective use of the time, talent, and other resources available to it				
The Board has enough time to complete its work				
The Board monitors its decisions to evaluate their effectiveness				
The Board participates in the performance appraisal of the school principal/chief administrator as directed by the Catholic Schools Office.				
The Board evaluates its own performance on an annual basis using the diocesan-approved instrument				
The Board is publicly supportive of the school and its administration				
The Board works as a team to advance the mission of the school				

Comments:

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**COMMITTEES: Strategic Planning, Advancement/Marketing, Finances, Nominating, etc.**

<b>COMMITTEES</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Committee meetings are frequent enough				
Committee addresses issues of substance				
Committee reports are submitted to the president prior to distribution of board agenda				
The committees have clearly defined tasks				
The committees report regularly about their progress on assigned tasks				
Committees are viewed as the "backbone" of the Board				

Committees of the Board think strategically to accomplish their task, which is to ensure the long-term viability of the school				
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Comments:

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### EVALUATION OF INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER

Each member may respond to this section only after having completed all other parts of the Evaluation. Please rate your own performance.

SELF-EVALUATION	Excellent	Good	Poor	N/A
Your familiarity with the school's mission, organization, plans, priorities, finances, and character				
Attendance at board meetings				
Familiarity with agenda items and key issues in advance of meetings				
Active participation in board meetings				
Active work on regular board committees (attendance at meetings, participation in discussions)				
Regularly read the school's newsletters, bulletins, announcements, and otherwise stay abreast of developments in the school				
Maintain a good working relationship with the administration				
How would you rate your own, overall contribution as a board member?				
How would you rate your own, overall personal satisfaction as a Board member				
Active participation in school activities				
Maintain confidentiality of all board business				
Awareness of and adherence to board conflict of interest policy				

Comments:

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## School Board Nominating Committee Guidelines

The Nominating Committee, including the pastor and principal, shall identify potential school board members and present a slate of nominees to the Board. The following eligibility requirements should be considered:

- Eighteen years of age or older
  - Genuine interest in Catholic school education
  - A credible witness of the Catholic faith; a member of a parish; or if non-Catholic, not opposed to the tenets of the Catholic faith.
  - Ability to work with others to achieve consensus
  - Ability to make a time commitment for meetings, committee work, and in-services
  - Willing to maintain confidentiality and a high level of integrity
  - Willing to support the school philosophy and mission.
  - Have a professional and personal life that is reflective of the teachings of the Catholic Church
- \* Experience and expertise in one major committee area encouraged
- \* Members of the school staff or their spouses, children, siblings, or parents shall **not** be eligible for board membership. Staff members may serve on board committees, but cannot be voting members of the Board due to issues of confidentiality and conflict of interest.
1. Standing Committee actively solicits potential members, taking into primary consideration the key needs of the school as stated in the Strategic Plan and targeting those people with the skill sets to assist in meeting those needs. Committee assesses the interest of those potential members and obtains the following information from each interested candidate:
    - \* Biographical sketch (name, family, parish membership, occupation, parish/archdiocesan/civic involvement)
    - \* Statement of candidacy/interest including his/her vision for the school; talents, expertise available to the board; willingness to give time, talent, energy and treasure (in accord with his/her capacity).
  2. Committee reviews all candidate information and prepares its list of recommendations.
  3. Committee submits its recommendations to the full School Board for its vote.
  4. The full School Board submits its recommendations for membership to the pastor of parish schools or to the superintendent for the diocesan high school.
  5. The pastor of a parish school or the diocesan bishop with the superintendent's recommendation decides which candidates to appoint to the School Board and issues a formal invitation to them to join the Board.

## Where to Look for New Members

1. Remember: look first to the school's Strategic Plan and identify the priority needs of the school (marketing, financial planning, capital needs, etc.) and the skill sets needed to meet those needs. Then, actively search for candidates with those skill sets.
2. Consider constituencies beyond the current school community: alumni (particularly those who have been steady donors, indicating a support of the school), past parents, parishioners, local community members, businesspeople and civic leaders, retired educators, grandparents (current and/or past). A diversity of constituencies and viewpoints can be very healthy for a board.
3. Members should not be selected to represent specific constituencies (i.e., an Alumni Rep) since each board member should represent the school community and not any one special interest group. (Every member votes his/her own conscience.)
4. Committee members should clearly articulate the purpose, direction, and mission of the Board when recruiting new members. It is vital to maintain an enthusiastic, responsible, and positive approach before the candidates as well as before the school, parish, and civic communities.

## Examples of Experience or Expertise for Board Member Selection

### Strategic Planning Committee:

Data analysis  
Finance  
Education  
Legal training  
Facilities  
Marketing  
Goal Setting  
Human Resources

### Advancement Committee:

Marketing  
Fund Raising  
Advertising  
Recruitment  
Business/Sales

### Nominating Committee:

Community Connections  
Human Resources  
Local Business  
Active member/leader in community

### Finance Committee:

Certified Public Accountant  
Accounting skills  
Legal training  
Bookkeeping skills  
Budgeting experience

### Policy Development:

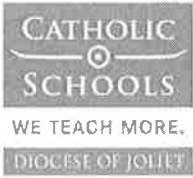
Human Resources  
Education  
Legal training

## Orientation of New Members

1. The Board president and the Nominating Committee should work with the principal to prepare a formal, annual in-service program or orientation for new members.
2. Topics to be addressed include the following: roles and responsibilities of board members, principal, and pastor; specific areas of board governance; expectations of members; meeting skills and procedures; maintaining confidentiality; difference between policy and administrative regulations and procedures; diocesan policies; and school policies.
3. A packet of materials should be given to each new member including the following: church documents on education; school philosophy and mission statements; diocesan guidelines for boards; diocesan and local educational policies; parent/faculty/student handbooks; any marketing material distributed by the school.
4. Board In-Service Training is also available from the Catholic Schools Office during annual sessions held prior to the start of the school year.

## Election of Officers of the School Board

The Nominating Committee shall be responsible to prepare a slate of nominees to be elected as officers of the Board. The Nominating Committee chair shall conduct the election of officers for appointment by the pastor or chief administrator.



# Proposed New Policy or Change in Policy Form

**Submitted by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Individual or Group)

**School Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Town:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ **New Policy**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Change in Policy#** \_\_\_\_\_

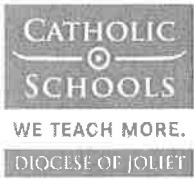
**Recommended new policy or change in policy (change in policy requires copy of the original written policy with track changes in the narrative):**

**Indicate the need for the policy or change in policy:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Perceived consequences of the new policy or change in policy:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_







## Template for School Board Agenda

School Boards may copy the information below in order to customize an agenda for their school board meetings.

**Include:**

**Scheduled start time  
for each agenda item**

**Items for the Agenda**

**Name of the Presenter**

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**Agenda for the \_\_\_\_\_ School Board**  
**School, Town**  
**Date**  
**Time**

Gathering/Opening Prayer

Call to order

Consent Agenda

Presentations (if scheduled)

General Reports

Committee Reports

Standing Committees

Ad hoc Committees

Old Business

New Business

Visitors' Comments

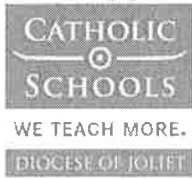
Closing Comments

Closing Prayer

Executive Session (if scheduled)

Closing Prayer/Adjournment





## Prayers for School Board Meetings

### Opening Prayer

Lord God of Holiness,  
You have called us to serve you in the mission of Catholic education.  
We meet here as your disciples,  
and we ask for the grace of your divine guidance.  
Help us to truly serve your holy people  
in your Church as she proposes anew the perennial truth of Christ' gospel.  
May the needs of our Catholic school  
and the common good of our parish be our primary concerns.  
May the material aspects we discuss  
not blind us to the reason for our Catholic school:  
to encounter Christ in His Church so as to grow in holiness.  
May the Holy Spirit who inspired  
the Pentecost meeting of the Apostles,  
visit us and grant us the light of Divine Wisdom.  
We ask this through our Lord, Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,  
forever and ever.  
Amen.

### Closing Prayer:

Lord of Day and Night  
of beginnings and endings,  
as we prepare to conclude this meeting,  
we once again lift up our hearts to You,  
the Divine Source of All Life.  
We thank you for the gifts that have been present  
within this act of service to our Catholic school.  
For the gifts of friendship and understanding,  
of mutual respect and shared vision,  
we praise You.  
For the gifts of perseverance  
and insight into the common concerns we share,  
for these and all other graces, we give you thanks.  
As You have blessed our coming together,  
now bless our departure and journeys homeward.  
Through the intercession of the Blessed Mother, Mary, most holy,  
Queen of the Family,  
may your blessing be upon us,  
in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
Amen.



## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Agenda:** a list of items of business to be brought before a committee, board, etc., as things to be dealt with.

**Action steps:** further specify the how, when, who, where, and cost for each objective.

**Board:** A governing body whose members are selected or elected to participate in decision-making.

**Bylaws:** Rules adopted by an organization to govern its operation.

**Committee-driven:** The work of the school board committees toward the goals and objectives of the strategic plan.

**Consensus:** majority of opinion; general agreement or concord; harmony

**Consent Agenda:** A group of items presented as a package and voted on without discussion. Items included are self-explanatory, non-controversial, written, and submitted to all board members for review prior to board vote. If an item is determined to need discussion, it can be removed from consent agenda and placed on the meeting agenda.

**Constitution:** The founding document of an organization that establishes and defines its mission, structure, and process.

**Consultative Board:** A body that participates in the policy-making process by formulating, adapting, and recommending policy to the person with authority to enact it. The person with authority is required to consult the Board before making decisions in designated areas, but is not bound by the Board's advice.

**Executive Officer:** A person having administrative or supervisory authority in an organization

**Goal:** A statement of broad direction or purpose. A goal, by definition, will identify some outcome that will be achieved.

**Objective:** is the specific time-oriented and realistic statement of what is going to be done to achieve a goal

**Policy:** A policy is a deliberate plan of action used to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes. A guide for discretionary action stating what should be done but not *how* it should be done. A policy must be written.

**Procedure:** A specific way of proceeding, a method of doing things. May include who will do it and when.

**Promulgate:** To put into action or force; to publicly declare or officially make known; to enact, make officially binding.

**Quorum:** The minimum number of people required at a meeting in order for business to be conducted.

**Robert's Rules of Order:** A parliamentary procedure used to conduct meetings that allows everyone to be heard and decisions to be made in an orderly way.

**Strategic Plan:** Strategic planning is a school's process of defining its strategy, or direction, and making decisions on allocating its resources to pursue this strategy, including its capital and people. Strategic planning and decision processes should end with specific, achievable objectives, and a road map of ways to achieve these objectives.

