

HANDBOOK
for
Archdiocesan Catholic School
Advisory Boards



ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

2009

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PURPOSE OF THE ARCHDIOCESAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD

The concept of the school advisory board is based on a belief in the importance and power of shared leadership. Parents, faculty, administration, and the community work together to provide advice regarding school policies in accordance with the mission of the school and the policies of the Archdiocese of Washington.

The primary function of the advisory board is to provide advice and assistance to the pastor-principal leadership team (pastor/canonical leader and principal).

Advisory board members offer their experience and expertise to strengthen the decision making process. This assistance is provided through the function of committees such as: planning, policy development, finance, public relations/marketing, development/fundraising, and assessment. Committee designations may vary from school to school.

It is through the work of such advisory board committees explained in this handbook that recommendations are made, direction is set and policy is developed.

APPLICABLE POLICIES FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS (REV. 2009)

The following policies are directly applicable to archdiocesan Catholic school advisory boards.

2010 Schools Operated by Parishes or the Archdiocese

Throughout these policies the term “archdiocesan school” refers to those schools that are a program of a parish, a combination of parishes or of the archdiocese. These schools fall directly under the jurisdiction and ownership of a parish or the archdiocese. For convenience sake, even such parish schools are referred to as archdiocesan.

Schools established and operated directly by parishes and/or the Archdiocese participate directly in the Church’s teaching ministry as “Archdiocesan Catholic Schools.”

2400 Level I Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Leadership

All Level I schools owned and operated by the Archdiocese shall adhere to leadership policies regarding sponsorship, responsibilities, school leadership, advisory boards and major expansions and reduction of services.

2412 Archdiocesan Advisory Board of Education

The Archdiocesan Board of Education shall be appointed by the Archbishop for the purpose of advising the superintendent regarding the status and operation of Archdiocesan schools under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop. It operates in accordance with the Board of Education bylaws approved by the Archdiocese.

2413 Parish/Regional School Advisory Board

All Archdiocesan schools shall have an organization, named the School Advisory Board, except when the school is governed by a board of limited jurisdiction. The School

Advisory Board shall be made up of representatives of the school and parish communities appointed by the canonical administrator, and include the canonical administrator, chief administrator and president of the Home and School Association. The role of the School Advisory Board is to advise the canonical administrator, principal and parish council regarding the oversight, mission, status and sustainability of the school. This organization shall adhere to basic bylaws and the guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

NOMINATION AND SELECTION OF SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Recruitment of new members to the School Advisory Board is an ongoing process. The Nominations Committee of the board needs to continually seek out individuals whose philosophy, talents and background make them ideal members of the advisory body.

The Nominations Committee interviews potential candidates and submits their resumes to the full School Advisory Board. After reviewing the credentials of the candidates along with the comments and recommendations of the nominating committee, the board selects the best individuals and recommends them to the pastor or canonical administrator for final approval. The pastor or canonical administrator may or may not accept the individuals on the recommended list.

New School Advisory Board members are usually elected in the Spring and begin their term of office at the first Fall meeting. The Catholic Schools Office provides an orientation to new members at the beginning of every school year. In order for a board member to function properly, all new board members should attend the orientation.

At the final meeting of the year, the School Advisory Board generally elects a member to serve as its chairperson. The School Advisory Board must also elect officers needed for the efficient management of tasks and responsibilities. Suggestions include vice-chair/president-elect, secretary and committee chairpersons. This group, along with the pastor-principal leadership team, constitutes the Executive Committee.

SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION

Members who serve on the School Advisory Board should share the archdiocesan mission and vision of Catholic. They need to be able to think globally and put aside personal agenda. They must be willing to work hard and meet often to accomplish their tasks.

MEMBERSHIP

In order to strengthen the collaborative process, membership on the School Advisory Board should include persons with skills and talents that will make a significant difference to the well being of the school. Persons with expertise in such areas as finance, marketing, legal issues, curriculum and organizational management are among the potential candidates for membership. The board should reflect the diversity in the school community.

A Board with nine to fifteen members, some voting members elected by the board and some serving ex officio, is considered ideal. Among that number, the following people are recommended:

1. Pastors or Canonical Administrators (ex officio)
2. Principal or Chief Administrator (ex officio)
3. Parents or guardians of children in the school
4. Faculty member
5. Representative of Home & School Association (President)
6. Member of the parish without a child in the school
7. Other appropriate members

The regional agreement clearly identifies representative membership on school advisory boards to include each supporting pastor or canonical administrator and parent representation from each school.

QUALIFICATIONS

Qualifications for board members are determined by the by-laws of the individual School Advisory Board. However, members should be at least 18 years of age and able to make a substantial time commitment.

TERM LENGTH

The length of a term is likewise determined by the school's by-laws of the individual School Advisory Board. A three-year term is recommended. Additionally, the School Advisory Board may decide to offer the option of a second term.

SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD COMMITTEES

Advice and assistance are provided to the pastor-principal leadership team through the function of the committees. Certainly, the most important work of the School Advisory Board is accomplished in and through those groups. The following recommended committees are an integral part of the successful advisory boards: planning, policy development, finance, public relations, development/fundraising, and assessment.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Planning Committee works on issues, which involve goal setting in light of the mission and vision of the school, long-range strategic planning, and school improvement projects such as Middle States Accreditation.

The function of the committee is to help articulate the philosophy and mission of the school, identify goals and needs based on that mission and develop an action plan for accomplishing those goals and meeting those needs.

Examples:

The Catholic Schools Office requires schools to submit an end-of-year report (Policy 3350). Helping to develop and review the school's end-of-year report should be an assigned responsibility of the planning and assessment committees.

Archdiocesan schools are required to be accredited by Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. This plan for self appraisal and school improvement is another important shared responsibility of the planning committee.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The role of the Policy Development Committee is to provide advice to the pastor-principal leadership team on important decisions facing the school community. Examples include admissions, curriculum, extra curricular activities, tuition and other policy areas.

The School Advisory Board and the pastor-principal leadership team work collaboratively throughout the entire policy development process.

Policies provide the School Advisory Board direction to be taken by the school on a particular subject. It does not include the procedures or regulations needed to enforce the policy. For example, the School Advisory Board may develop a policy on the integration of technology throughout the curriculum. They do not have the responsibility for scheduling, staffing and purchasing materials necessary to implement the policy. Those tasks belong to the administration and faculty of the school. No school policies may contradict Archdiocesan policies. Policy development begins with a need, which may be brought to the School Advisory Board by the pastor-principal leadership team, the parents or board members themselves. The committee presents the need to the board along with pertinent information, research and rationale for a policy to meet that need. The School Advisory Board discusses the policy and

makes suggestions to the committee, which makes appropriate adjustments. The policy is recommended to the pastor-principal leadership team, who establishes procedure.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee of the School Advisory Board provides assistance to the pastor-principal leadership team on budget issues, tuition policies, financial assistance, and planning for the long-term financial stability of the school.

Traditionally, the Finance Committee works collaboratively with the school principal and pastor or canonical administrator in the development of the budget. Together, they present the budget to the entire board. They frequently present the School Advisory Board approved budget to the parish finance council, the parish council and ultimately the pastor or canonical administrator for final approval.

The Finance Committee works closely with the planning and development committees of the School Advisory Board. For example: a major section of a long-range strategic plan is an historical review of school finances, a projection of the costs necessary to implement goals and an action plan for ways to finance those goals.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING COMMITTEE

The School Advisory Board, in tandem with the pastor or canonical administrator and principal, work collaboratively to market the school. The School Advisory Board should establish goals, assign responsibilities, evaluate success and expect the whole community to participate in marketing the school.

The Public Relations and Marketing Committee should consist of several board members and others in the school and parish community. In formulating the committee, persons who have special skills or experience related to marketing, advertising, business, journalism, etc should be recruited.

Chairpersons of the committee may contact the Archdiocesan Director of Public Relations and Marketing for Schools to arrange a meeting with the committee.

The National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) has authored the *National Marketing Campaign for Catholic Schools Handbook*. Every member of the committee should read the handbook, and become familiar with the fundamentals of marketing and the possibilities that exist for your school. NCEA can also provide a catalogue of short publications on school marketing and public relations. www.ncea.org

The Mid Atlantic Catholic Schools Consortium (MACSC) provides helpful information and recommendations on their website. www.midatlanticcsc.org This is a great source for networking and finding new information.

DEVELOPMENT AND FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Development and Fundraising Committee is twofold. At the simplest level, it offers advice about and lends fundraising support to activities in the school. More importantly, it plans and monitors new sources of revenue such as alumni drives, campaigns, endowments and planning giving programs.

The committee relies on the school's long-range plan and on the participation of the school's pastor-principal leadership team. Through these sources, the needs and dreams of the school are articulated and a development plan is created.

The committee may be expanded to include individuals who are not board members given the levels of expectation for the committee. Members should be chosen for their knowledge, experience, and access to financial support. Often the committee is composed of business leaders, financial management directors, CEO's, lawyers and accountants.

The National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) has an entire division dedicated to assisting Catholic schools with their development needs. The committee chairperson should contact NCEA for advice and additional resources.

ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

The Assessment committee of the board has two tasks. The first is to assess its own effectiveness. The second is to assess the programs of the school in light of the policies and yearly goals for the school.

The School Advisory Board does not assess the faculty of the school. This assessment is the responsibility of the principal. Although input from the School Advisory Board is an important facet of the assessment of the principal, the supervision and assessment of the principal is the shared responsibility of the pastor/canonical administrator and the superintendent.

SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD MEETINGS

Successful board meetings are characterized by careful planning, clear objectives, consideration of the needs of the members, attention to detail, and good meeting management skills on the part of the board chair.

BOARD MEETINGS

The School Advisory Board should meet on a regular basis, usually monthly during the school year. Advance notice of regular meetings will be given to the School Advisory Board members as well as agenda submitted to members in time for them to prepare for the meetings.

Special meetings, when necessary, are called by the chair. Sufficient notice must be given to members if the members of the School Advisory Board feel it appropriate, they may open the meeting to the parents or they may allow someone to directly address the board at a meeting.

At the final meeting of the school year, elections will be held for the Executive Committee. The election of officers is conducted by the current year's members.

The School Advisory Board should decide whether procedural patterns are governed by Roberts Rules of Order or by a consensus-building model.

Guidelines for Meeting Arrangement

Committee assignments are made at the initial meeting of the school year. The individual committees shall choose their prospective chairpersons.

The following is a sample format of regular meetings:

- Call to order and opening prayer
- Review/approval of minutes
- Pastor's report
- Principal's report
- Committee reports
- New business
- Adjournment

Meetings should begin and end at their scheduled time.

The Chairperson

The chairperson facilitates and regulates discussion without directly entering into the discussion. He/She asks clarifying questions when necessary and directs the members toward a resolution using Robert Rules or a consensus model of decision decision-making. The success of the meeting often rests on the meeting management skills of the chair.

Planning the Meeting

The Executive Committee and the pastor-principal leadership team or, at the very least, the pastor or canonical administrator, principal and board chair should plan the agenda together. It is important to provide enough time for information, discussion and action items without exceeding a two-hour time limit. School Advisory Board members should receive the agenda at least a week before the meeting so that they may prepare properly and participate fully.

SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD AND PARISH RELATIONSHIPS

A successful board-school-parish relationship is based on a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of key individuals and groups in the parish. Included in this group are the pastor or canonical administrator, the principal, the home and school association and the pastoral council. Relevant policies describing these positions are listed below.

2400 Level I Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Leadership

All Level I schools owned and operated by the Archdiocese shall adhere to leadership policies regarding sponsorship, responsibilities, school leadership, advisory boards and major expansions and reduction of services.

2410 Pastor or Canonical Administrator

The pastor or canonical administrator shall be appointed by the Archbishop as the pastoral and administrative leader responsible for implementing the educational mission of an Archdiocesan school in collaboration with the chief administrator of the school and appropriate advisory bodies and in accordance with the policies and guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

2411 Chief Administrator

The chief administrator of the school shall be appointed by, and responsible to the pastor or canonical administrator or board of limited jurisdiction and the superintendent for providing spiritual, instructional and administrative leadership in accordance with the policies and guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office. Titles for “chief administrator” may include president, principal, CEO, headmaster and head of school.

3600 Community

All Archdiocesan schools are learning communities of faith and service and shall expect the full participation and support of all registered families, faculty and administrators.

3610 Home and School Association

All Archdiocesan parish schools shall have a formal organization of parents and appointed school personnel, named the Home and School Association. The role of the Home and School Association is to build community by hosting school events and, when appropriate, supporting the school’s fundraising goals as recommended by the School Advisory Board and the chief administrator and canonical administrator. This association shall adhere to guidelines provided by the Catholic Schools Office.

PASTORAL COUNCIL

The pastoral council advises the pastor or canonical administrator on many aspects of parish life including those which concern the school. A member of the School Advisory Board often serves on the Pastoral Council.

SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD ORIENTATION AND IN-SERVICE

School Advisory Board operates most efficiently and work most effectively when members understand certain concepts. They include the purpose and function of the School Advisory Board, the roles and responsibilities of the members and the relationship of the School Advisory Board to key individuals and groups in the parishes. In order to help members develop those understandings, the Catholic Schools Office offers an initial orientation every Fall that focuses on Archdiocesan school policies, procedures, and expectations.

The National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) offers in-service training and support through the NCEA Department of Boards and Councils. Advisory boards that become members of NCEA are entitled to in-service and receive valuable assistance from monthly magazines and publications. For more information, the School Advisory Board should visit www.ncea.org

Additionally, ongoing support for advisory boards is available from the Catholic Schools Office.

APPENDIX

SAMPLE BY-LAWS

Article I – Name, Purpose and Functions

Section 1.

The name of this organization shall be the _____ School Advisory Board, hereinafter referred to as the _____.

Section 2.

The purpose of the _____ Board is provide advice and assistance to _____ School's pastor-principal leadership team (pastor/pastoral administrator and principal) in the governance of the school. The Board fulfills its purpose and exercises its functions in accord with the mission and goals of the parish(es) and with the goals, policies and regulations of the Archdiocese of Washington.

Section 3.

The functions of this Board are:

- a) Planning
- b) Developing
- c) Financing
- d) Public Relations
- e) Development/fundraising
- f) Evaluation

Section 4.

Since the Board is advisory to the pastor-principal leadership team, Board members individually and collectively do not have the authority to bind the pastor or canonical administrator, principal or others in the school. However, when the Board acts together (with the pastor-principal leadership team and the members agreeing), the decisions are binding on all.

Section 5.

Contract for Interparish boards (if applicable).

Article II – Membership of the Board

Section 1.

Membership and Composition of the Board

The _____ Board shall be composed of _____
(name) (number)
members, including ex officio members.

- a. Ex officio members include the pastor who has the title of President of the Board and the principal who is the Executive Secretary of the Board.
- b. Members on the Board shall include persons who are:
 - (1) parents of children in the school
 - (2) members of the sponsoring parish(es)
 - (3) a faculty member (appointed by the pastor-principal leadership team)
 - (4) a representative from the Home and School Association
 - (5) person(s) with special talents in the areas of Board functioning
 - (6) non-Catholic parents
 - (7) members of sponsoring parishes who do not have children in school
 - (8) member of the parish Finance or Pastoral Council

Section 2.

Qualifications of the Members

Board members will be registered members of parish(es) sponsoring the school or parents of children in the school. Members must be eighteen years of age and will and able to make a substantial commitment to the work of the Board.

Section 3.

Selection of Board Members

Candidates for the Board shall be nominated by the board to the pastor-principal leadership team for appointment. The nomination process will be handled by a Nominations Committee and shall include the following steps:

- a. the recruitment of several qualified candidates for each vacancy
- b. the screening and an interview of each candidate by the Nominations Committee to determine the candidates qualifications and understanding of Board functioning and purpose
- c. final recommendations by the Board to the pastor-principal leadership team for approval

Section 4.

Term of Office

- a. Each member shall serve for a term of three years. (Provisions for re-appointment may be indicated here if desired).
- b. Terms of the members shall be staggered so that not more than one-third of membership shall be replaced each year.
- c. Provision for filling a vacancy due to resignation, non-attendance at meetings may be included here.

Article III – Officers

Section 1.

Positions

- a. The Board shall have a Chairman, Vice Chairman, and a Secretary, who shall constitute the Executive Committee (Positions of each may be outlined here).
- b. The Chairman presides at all meetings of the Board and is responsible for developing the Board’s agenda in conjunction with the principal, the Executive Secretary and the Pastor.
- c. The Vice-chairman presides in the absence of the Chairman and performs other duties as required.
- d. The Secretary is responsible for taking the minutes of each meeting and performs other duties as assigned.

Section 2.

Selection procedures and term of office

Officers of the Board are elected for one-year terms by the Board. Officers shall ordinarily be selected at the _____ meeting of the Board.
(month)

Members may not nominate themselves for an office or may be nominated by another Board member.

Article IV – Committees

Section 1.

Standing Committees of the Board include:

Section 2.

The Chairman may appoint ad hoc committees as necessary.

Section 3.

The Chairman of the Board shall appoint the chairman of each committee.

Article V – Meetings

Section 1.

Frequency of meetings

The _____ Board will meet on the _____ of each month (or the Board will meet six to eight times a year). Additional meetings may be called by the Chairman when necessary.

Section 2.

Quorum

_____ members constitute a quorum for board activity.
(number)

Section 3.

Decision-making process

The consensus method of decision-making shall be the process used by the board. Where agreement cannot be reached a vote may be taken.

Article VI

(Provision for amendment of By-Laws)

Notes: