



***BOARD OF EDUCATION MANUAL***  
***SUMMER 2018***

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## Letter from Superintendent



June 1, 2018

School Board Presidents and members,

A successful Catholic School must have strong leadership from its administrator(s), pastor(s) and its board of education. Each group serves a unique role and represents different perspectives necessary for a fully developed Catholic School environment. The board of education represents the parishioners, parents, and overall community in the management of the board. In its role as an advisory board with limited jurisdiction, the board serves to inform and provide financial oversight and a vision for the future of the school.

During the 2016-2017 school year, our schools completed a new round of strategic planning for the next five years. Part of this effort focused on governance and leadership in our schools. Specifically, all schools have been charged with creating committee-driven boards that monitor and implement the strategic plan. This manual is intended to provide guidance for a successful and effective board.

For the board of education to be successful, they must have a solid foundation of knowledge about the types of boards, code of ethics, constitution, bylaws, membership, and the appropriate role of the board, pastor and administrator. In addition to these important subjects, specific job responsibilities are outlined for each of the five required committees of each local board. Additional resources including committee reports and a board of education self-survey are included in the appendix.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patty Lansink". The script is cursive and fluid.

Patty Lansink

Superintendent of Schools

Diocese of Sioux City

## INTRODUCTION

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Sioux City, 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. Within the Church there is understanding and appreciation for the role of the laity. The laity's effectiveness is clearly demonstrated in the activity of the Local Board of Education to assist in advancing the school's mission. The Boards of Education in the Diocese of Sioux City are advisory in nature and have limited jurisdiction. Board authority is limited to financial oversight, creation of local policies, and developing a long range vision for the school. Viability and vitality are safeguarded and promoted through the tremendous effort of the Local Boards of Education.

The call to 'universal holiness' is echoed in every group of volunteers who so generously give of their time, talent, and treasure to work as a Local Catholic School Board.

Guiding these volunteers is the Board of Education Leadership Manual which is a resource for Local boards. It should be used for initial in-service of members, for guidance and reference, for review, and for evaluation of the board's effectiveness. As the Local boards in each school assume the general responsibilities of school board membership as well as those which arise from the individual committees, the manual will reflect an adherence to the Diocese of Sioux City policies and procedures for Catholic Schools.

Each Local Board of Education has the unique opportunity to protect and advance the teaching mission of the church. The dialogue which is created among local board members stimulates unity of purpose and success. The authority of Local Boards of Education underscores our commitment to actively integrate the school community, including parents, into the ongoing life of the parish.

Each Local Board of Education agrees to follow the policies and administrative procedures of the Diocese of Sioux City and the Catholic Schools Office. Local Board of Education members agree that they will use their expertise and insights for the common good of the school community and to promote the mission and goals of Catholic education. They will defer any personal agendas in order to discern with other school board members the issues, concerns, and challenges their schools face in meeting the educational needs of the students.

# TYPES OF BOARDS OF EDUCATION

## DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Diocesan Board of Education is responsible for giving direction to the individual schools of the diocese through policy development and consultation with the Bishop of the Diocese of Sioux City. Its policies and regulations must be followed by all Local (parish and regional) Boards of Education and parish council education committees in the diocese. Implementation of those policies is monitored by diocesan staff whose departments relate to the Diocesan Board of Education. The Diocesan Board also serves as the “identifiable agent” required by the Iowa Department of Education for all schools holding state accreditation.

## PARISH BOARDS OF EDUCATION

Each parish, which operates a school, must have a Board of Education. In such parishes, the board works in conjunction with the parish council. A board of education representative should attend all parish council meetings, providing information on education matters to the council, and serving as a liaison between the parish/finance council and the board of education. The parish board has a responsibility to set policy and act in an advisory role to the administrator. They should advise in 3 main areas: planning and policy preparation, finances, and selection, development, and evaluation of the administrators.

## REGIONAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION

Several boards of education in the Diocese of Sioux City provide direction to programs which are the result of a collaborative effort by several parishes. Examples of such efforts are the Bishop Heelan Catholic Schools, Kuemper Catholic School, Remsen St. Mary Schools, Spalding Catholic School, Bishop Garrigan Catholic School and St. Edmond Catholic School. It is possible for the Bishop of the diocese to designate one of the supporting parish pastors as the canonical administrator. In that case, the canonical administrator’s relationship to the regional board and school administrator(s) is similar to the relationship which would exist between the parish board and school administrator(s) and the pastor. The parish board has a responsibility to set policy and act in an advisory role to the administrator. They should advise in the areas of planning and policy preparation, finances, and selection, development, and evaluation of the administrators.

## CODE OF ETHICS

The Code of Ethics for Local Board of Education 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, as described below.

### ***CONFLICT OF INTEREST***

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

### ***CONFIDENTIALITY***

Local Board of Education members 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 are asked to 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.

### ***JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS***

Decisions made by the Local Board of Education in conjunction with the pastor and the school administration should be the result of honest and open discussion by all members. Consideration of the good of the total parish/school community **and Catholic school students** should be integral to the decision-making process. Every member shall 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.

# CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

All Catholic schools are required to follow Diocese of Sioux City policy in all matters related to the operation of the schools. Each school shall have an advisory Board of Education with limited jurisdiction. An advisory board is a body that participates in the policy-making process by formulating and adopting policy. The president/principal is tasked with ensuring compliance with the policy. However, the president/principal creates the procedures to enact the policy independent of the board. The division of authority is important to include the laity in the governance of the school, while allowing the trained administrator to manage the school. The ultimate authority, in any school, lies with the Bishop and the Superintendent if the Bishop chooses to appoint this person as his designee.

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.

Constitution	Constitution Topics included in the Constitution are as follows:
	<i>The official title of the Board</i>
	<i>The purpose and function of the Board</i>
	<i>The responsibilities of the Board</i>
	<i>Membership</i>
	<i>Officers of Board</i>
	<i>Meetings</i>
	<i>Quorum</i>
	<i>Role of Pastor/Chief Administrator</i>
	<i>Role of Committees</i>
	<i>Amendments</i>
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  
Procedure for publication of new policies

## **Selection of the Principal**

Policy 4116.31 established by the Diocesan Board of Education

## **Performance Appraisal for President and Principal**

Policy 4119.4d established by the Diocesan Board of Education

## **Developing the School Budget**

Policy 3100 established by the Diocesan Board of Education

## **School Improvement Process**

Participate in and monitor the School Improvement Process

**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

**Chair**

Presides at all meetings  
Develops agenda with the Principal/Chief Administrator  
Appoints committee Chairs and members  
Assigns additional duties to members

**Vice-Chair**

Performs duties in absence of 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” (see Appendix)  
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 it:

Models the faith community.

Is consistent with the Diocese of Sioux City Policies and Procedures of the Catholic Schools Office.

Is clear and readable.

Articulates the roles and responsibilities of the members.

Describes the school board as advisory with limited jurisdiction.

Indicates how the board operates.

Before final approval of the board's constitution and bylaws, a copy should be given to the 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 public. The minutes of the executive session are confidential. These minutes are not made public. Some 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 president/principal is always present for an executive session except when his/her performance is being evaluated.

## Board of Education Membership

*It is recommended that the Board be composed of 7-9 members (excluding Pastor, Superintendent, Principal, and Chief Administrator).*

*They should include:*

### **BISHOP**

*Ex-Officio, voting member with final decision making authority*

### **PASTOR**

*Ex-officio, all School Board votes are subject to Pastor's representative's approval*

### **SUPERINTENDENT**

*Ex-officio non-voting member of all school boards*

### **PRESIDENT/PRINCIPAL**

*Ex-officio non-voting Executive Officer of the Board*

### **PARENTS**

*The Catholic Schools Office recommends having members who are not currently parents, if possible, to avoid conflicts of interest.*

### **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.*

## Membership And Eligibility

### **Qualifications**

Each Board of Education constitution will detail the pre-requisites for membership in areas including age, parish membership, etc. Outlined below are a list of some qualities and qualifications necessary for one to be an effective member of a Board of Education.

#### **Personal**

- A willingness to give the time to serve conscientiously
- A willingness to attend board functions regularly
- The highest level of honesty, integrity and prudence
- The ability to act without bias toward any employees of the educational program
- An inquiring mind - open to both sides of an issue
- The courage to face unpleasant tasks and decisions

- The ability to be objective and to set aside personal interest
- A willingness to disclose any existing or potential conflicts of interest
- A sense of humor

### **Professional**

- A commitment to the importance of service to the community
- The ability to influence public opinion favorably in areas of importance to the educational programs
- A willingness to balance a prudent concern for fiscal stability with a spirit of creative risk-taking
- A willingness to learn while preparing for, and serving as a board member
- A demonstrated competence in his/her chosen field

### **Board**

- A commitment to understand and support the mission of the educational programs
- A commitment to support the teachings of the Church on education and directives of the Bishop and diocesan offices
- A willingness to exercise the delegated authority of the board for conducting business related to the educational programs
- An appreciation for, and commitment to maintenance of confidentiality in matters pertaining to the board, parish(es) and educational program
- A willingness to support board decisions even if he/she does not fully agree.

### **Responsibilities**

Active participation in all aspects of the board functions is the responsibility of each member. The most productive Board of Education will be one in which each member

1. prepares for meetings by reading and reflecting on reports and other materials received with the agenda prior to the meeting
2. arrives on time and remains for the entirety of the meeting
3. actively participates in the discussion of the meetings
4. is an active member of committees and is willing to serve as committee chair or an officer of the board
5. supports administrators of the educational programs without becoming involved in administration
6. serves as an ambassador for all aspects of Catholic education

It is critical that board members understand that they do not have power or authority individually. It is only the board as a whole, which can function with authority.

Respect of confidential information must be maintained by all board members at all times. Such information will not be discussed outside of the executive session with anyone including other board members and spouses. Inability to maintain confidences violates stated eligibility requirements and is sufficient reason to request a resignation.

The NCEA code of ethics for Catholic Board of Education members found in the appendix is a valuable summary of the standards to which board members must conform.

## **ELECTION PROCESS**

### **Membership**

Each Board of Education must develop a clearly defined election or appointment process, which is communicated openly to the parish(es) it represents. Specific details to be addressed in the process include, but need not be limited to, the election timeline, membership of the nominating/election committee and number of nominees desired for each vacant position. The process should also provide procedures for addressing a tie in the voting and for the appointment/election of someone to replace a member unable to complete his/her term.

### **Officers of the Board**

Election of officers for the board should occur no later than the June meeting in order that they can assume their roles before the new fiscal year begins in July. Provision for this timetable may appear in the board constitution.

## **BOARD ORIENTATION**

### **Need for Orientation**

One's new role as a member of the Board of Education will be challenging and can, at times, be confusing. Orientation to roles, relationships and responsibilities and opportunity to strengthen group cohesiveness will be significant in helping the new members meet the challenge and become effective members in a short time. On-going board in-service must be a priority for the entire board and should occur annually. Provision of spiritual growth opportunities must be an integral part of that on-going process. Local schools can conduct their own orientation for new members, or may contact the Catholic Schools Office for assistance. It is recommended that schools with new administrators contact the CSO to conduct orientation for the board and new administrator.

### **Understanding to be Developed**

Specific understanding and/or skills which must be present in each board member include but are not limited to:

- the mission of the board and the ministry of board membership
- board organization/structure
- components of an effective meeting
- conduct of responsible members during and outside the meeting
- process for the formulation of policy
- role of the board in planning, budgeting and evaluation.

## Role of the Board of Education

The Board of Education is by its nature advisory with limited jurisdiction. In parish schools the advisory board shall relate to the parish finance council as directed by the Pastor. The Board of Education 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 strategic 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 and receiving periodic reports from the President/Principal on the implementation of the budget.
6. Evaluation: systematically evaluating:
  - The school's mission statement, goals and policies
  - The board itself
  - The President/Principal in collaboration with the Superintendent
7. Hiring/Termination of the President/Principal in collaboration with the Superintendent.

## Role of the Pastor

The pastor's role in the board is one of leadership and support. His contribution to the board is unique because of his vision of ministry, his broad perspective of the faith community and its needs, his spiritual leadership, his familiarity with the financial situation, and his awareness of the educational information needs of the people. The pastor's role is critical, and central to a board's operation.

In the Diocese of Sioux City, it has been the history and is the expectation that the pastor be an active participant in all board meetings. His pastoral leadership and unique perspective are key to the effectiveness with which the board can function. In an environment of openness and trust, the pastor and all other board members clearly articulate their personal insights. Only then will the collective action of the board be reflective of all of the "pieces of wisdom" present in each member.

It is important for board members to understand that ultimate approval for board decisions rests with the pastor. In the Diocese of Sioux City, this approval is accomplished in the context of the regular board meetings because the pastor will have participated actively in the formulation of the decision and will be present when that decision is finalized. On rare occasions, a pastor may not be able to approve a board decision because of major concerns in the area of faith and morals or for the good of the community. However, such a situation should come as no surprise to the board because the pastor will have made clear his serious concerns throughout the deliberation. Ideally, that clarity will cause the board to modify the direction it is proposing thus eliminating the need for any “veto” of its action by the pastor. It is important to remember that expenditures of cash over \$20,000 require a resolution signed by the Bishop.

## Role of the Administrator

Critical to the success of any Board of Education is the selection of competent and dedicated administrators of its education programs. Equally critical is the building of a strong relationship of mutual trust between the board and its administrators.

The primary role of the administrators relative to the Board of Education is the implementation of policies established by the board for each educational program. This function will entail the development of regulations, processes or programs through which the board policies are translated into action. A significant responsibility of the administrator is also the recommendation of policy for the board’s consideration. Because of familiarity with the education programs, administrators are in a unique position to recognize the need for policy development relative to a particular program. It is their responsibility to provide leadership to the board of policy formation and revision.

Communication with the board is another component of the administrator’s role. Among the way this will be accomplished are:

- *Participation in establishing the agenda for board meetings*
- *Preparation of monthly reports for the board*
- *Provision of information needed by the board to fulfill its planning function*
- *Involvement in preparation and monitoring of the annual budget*
- *Facilitation of on-going in-service for board members*
- *Assistance in strengthening the communication between the board and its public regarding the educational programs*

As educational leader, it is the administrators responsibility to :

- *Design and direct the specific program*
- *Formulate processes and regulations*
- *Direct the process for recruiting and interviewing personnel*
- *Hiring and offering of contracts*
- *Supervise and evaluate staff*
- *Assign and schedule within the program*
- *Provide for resolution of any conflicts/grievances of staff, students, and parents*

## Role of the Superintendent/Assistant Superintendent

- Chief spokesperson for school's mission
- Ex-officio voting member of Diocesan School Board
- 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 Bishop in the Diocese of Sioux City Manual of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools.
- The Superintendent of Catholic Schools interprets diocesan policies; provides in-service programs; and consults and receives recommendations for additions/changes to diocesan policies
- Evaluation of principals and/or presidents

## Role of Chairperson/Officers

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

- **Chairperson** 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 board Self Assessment and guides board to consensus on future plans.
- **Vice Chairperson** in the absence of the Chair performs all duties of the Chair.
- **Treasurer** serves as the Chair of the school finance committee. Regularly reports to the board about the state of the school's finance committee.
- **Secretary** maintains written record of all acts of the school board; handles all correspondence for the board; preserves reports and documents; Secretary may also notify members of date and time of meetings; distribute meeting agendas and committee reports at least seven (7) days in advance; distribute minutes following each meeting; and send copies of minutes to the Catholic Schools Office.

## Role of Members At Large

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

# Role of 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.

## Standing Committees

### Catholic Identity

Purpose of the committee: To advise the administration, system leadership team, and staff on ways to enhance the Catholic Identity of the local school. The committee should review data and perceptions about our faith program to determine what areas could be improved and to recommend possible paths to improve these programs. Potential broad topic of discussion should include increasing students' understanding of Catholic doctrine, participation in the sacraments, and strengthening school relationships with parishes.

### **Responsibilities can include:**

- Ensure that the goals of the Religious Studies and Campus Ministry program clearly reflect the mission of the school and the goals of Catholic education in terms of mission, community, liturgy, and service.
- To review the ACRE assessment data from students in grades 5, 8, and 11 to determine areas of focus for coming school years.
- With the assistance of the administration and system leadership team, to carry out the goals of the strategic plan including improving faith knowledge, practice of the sacraments, and integration of the Catholic faith into the student's life, and education.



## Standing Committees

- To strengthen the relationship between the school and the parishes which support the school or system.
- Ensure that the values of the sponsoring community and the school philosophy are clearly articulated in the school's academic and co-curricular programs.
- To create programs or initiatives as necessary to create awareness on particular programs or initiatives such as the Year of Faith or other programs.
- To advise administration and staff on ways to integrate the faith element into formational and professional development programs for faculty/staff.

### **Enrollment Management/Marketing**

Purpose: To serve as an advisory group to the administration/marketing/enrollment management staff. The committee helps formulate strategies to enhance the marketing and enrollment of the school through an organized and systematic approach.

#### **Responsibilities can include:**

- To help determine marketing and enrollment goals.
- In collaboration with school staff to create and implement a comprehensive enrollment management plan.
- To analyze enrollment data and target audiences with the purpose of attracting new families and students to the local Catholic school.
- To analyze enrollment data and target audiences with the purpose of retaining current families and students to the local Catholic School.
- To create marketing materials for enrollment management purposes.
- To create key marketing concepts and align them with target audiences.
- To assist with the training of school staff, i.e. principals, teachers, staff, students, and families on how to share key marketing concepts in recruiting efforts.
- In collaboration with staff help create the regular communication of key marketing concepts to prospective families and current families.
- Participate in conversations about enrollment activities, i.e. open houses, new family nights, etc., for each school and the system.
- Provide insight on creating and implementing a comprehensive communication and or marketing plan.

## Standing Committees

### **Academic Excellence**

Purpose: The academic committee combines board representation, parents, and members of the local Catholic school system leadership team. This group is charged with providing an overall vision for the academic programs of the local school. The committee will achieve these goals by creating unifying vision for the future academic efforts of the system by analyzing student achievement data and public perceptions of the system. In conjunction with the school system leadership team specific initiatives will be identified to enact the agreed upon vision.

#### **Responsibilities can include:**

- To create a common vision for the future of academic programs at the local Catholic school .
- Review student achievement data to help identify strength areas and areas that need improvement.
- Review current families' perceptions about academic programs through the use of surveys, focus groups or other data analysis.
- To serve as the system's School Improvement Advisory board and to make recommendations to the board of education for the state required Annual Progress Report goals.
- To serve as a sounding board for the system's leadership team of administrators and teachers.
- To research educational opportunities that could enhance the current academic offerings within the system.

### **Governance and Leadership**

Purpose: Assist the board to determine desired board composition in terms of influence, diversity, and talents. Arrange the orientation and development of new board members. Direct the yearlong ongoing education and formation of the board as a whole. Research policies to provide direction to administrators on appropriate topics. Write policies on appropriate topics. Make recommendations to the board of education on policies.

#### **Responsibilities can include:**

- Research policies.
- Write policy and present it along with rationale to the board of education.
- Identify potential board members.
- Cultivate prospects.
- Enlist new board members (including written documents presented).
- Orient new board members.
- Maintain a current profile of membership.
- Identify educational/board development needs and plan for the ongoing board education/development.
- Recognize exceptional board service.
- Continuously maintain a viable list of candidates and cultivate top prospects.
- Review the performance of incumbent members and make recommendations regarding those up for re-election/reselection.

## Standing Committees

### **Funding/Finance**

Purpose: The funding /finance committee members should monitor the current year finances. Create and propose to the board a budget for the next school year. Prepare, update, and monitor long-range financial plans for the school. Oversee, from a planning and policy perspective, business operations of the school. Recommend policies to enhance the school's internal controls, its ability to collect tuition and fees, and the generation of interest income.

#### **Responsibilities can include:**

- Monitor and report to the board on the status of the current school year finances and relate them to the budget (monthly, quarterly, and annual report).
- Formulate with the principal a proposed budget for the upcoming school year, based on recommendations from all committees.
- Recommend to the board (and its Planning and Policy Committee) financial policy and procedures that ensure sound and consistent financial management, just salaries, fair tuition increases, and payment plans.
- Oversee the school's endowment and investments, including policies for endowment growth, management, and distribution of proceeds.
- Formulate with the school's administration (and the Planning and Policy Committee) policy concerning the business affairs and activities of the school, including such areas of concern as: cafeteria, bookstore, transportation, outside contactors, purchasing.
- Gain the expertise to review and understand the school's financial reports and annual audit
- Review:
  - Bookkeeping/accounting procedures, policies, practices
  - Audit report and management letter
  - Salaries
  - Tuition/fees
  - Tuition collection policies, procedures
  - Tuition aid and scholarship policies
  - Investment policies and practices.
  - Relationship to the advancement committee
- Formulate policy concerning those business affairs that impact the school, including:
  - Outside contracting
  - Normative internal controls
  - Responses to external audit
  - Purchasing policies in general

## **Keeping Committees Enthusiastic**

Once set up, how does one keep committees fired up? Here are some tips.

- Keep the committee size manageable: 4-7 members is a good guideline.
- Develop both a clear and concise charge to keep the committee focused on its task and a timeline for its completion.
- Recruit non-board members with experienced related to the committee's task to provide expertise and community/faculty input.
- Maintain a link with the board by having a board member chair each committee.
- Hold committee meetings at a time that will encourage members to get their work done quickly and efficiently, such as the end of the business day and before dinnertime. Committees will be much less likely to stretch a one-hour meeting to three hours if they know they need to be somewhere else. If it fits members' schedules, a breakfast meeting is another strategy.
- Promote a sense of ownership by making each committee responsible for its own report. The administrator should not do the committee's work or present the report.
- When the committee submits its final report or recommendations, congratulate the committee members on a job well done. Celebrate their accomplishments in some concrete way, for example, serve refreshments prior to the meeting, and/or recognize the committee at the home and school meeting.

## Strategic Planning

*A goal is a statement of broad direction or purpose. A goal, by definition, will identify some outcome that will be achieved. 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 have been developed in each school's strategic plan. They are specific, measurable, attainable, reasonable, and timely. School boards, in collaboration with their administrators, will annually review their strategic plans to determine progress and next steps. This review will take place in regionals meetings each spring.

## Policy Development

*Parish and Regional Boards formulate and adopt policies, the Pastor/Superintendent enacts or promulgates them, and the Principal/Chief Administrator implements them.*

The Catholic schools of the Diocese of Sioux City follow the policies developed by the Diocesan Board of Education. There are various procedures provided by the Diocesan Board of Education 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 board.

A **policy** is a deliberate plan of action for the operation of the school used to guide decision 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, parents 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*.

The primary responsibility of the Board of Education is the development of such policies as are necessary for the governance of the educational programs for which it is responsible. A policy is a guide for discretionary action, which clearly and simply states an expectation but not how it is to be achieved. Determining how policy is to be implemented is the responsibility of the administration.

## Policy Development (cont'd)

Local boards review diocesan policies the year after the diocesan board reviews and approves policy readings. A diocesan policy review schedule is included in Appendix I. Local boards do not need to approve diocesan policies, but should review them annually after diocesan board review, so local boards know what is contained in them and any changed that might have occurred. The policy review process described in the following pages should be followed for any policies that are created at the local level that address specific needs of local schools and boards.

In the NCEA publication, *Building Better Boards*, ten steps in the life cycle of a policy proposal were outlined. They are listed below with brief explanations adapted to acceptable practice in the Diocese of Sioux City.

### I. Determine the need.

Policy suggestions can come from numerous sources:

Administrators

Parents

Board members

A generally recognized need arising from a unique set of circumstances

Questions to be answered:

Is a policy the best way to respond to the need?

Is the item petty?

Is it likely to recur?

Does it really require a program rather than a policy?

### II. Identify the issues involved and the facts surrounding them.

Questions to be answered:

What do we know about this matter?

Are there likely to be varying points of view on how to address it?

What assumptions, beliefs and values underlie these points of view?

Who has vested interests?

What authorities, laws or principles need to be respected?

### III. Gather Data

The identification of issues and facts surrounding them will lead to a search for further information to support one or more policy options. The information is used for formulating the policy, building the rationale for it and projecting possible consequences for the position recommended. The board may find it desirable to consult "experts"; this is particularly advantageous if the subject matter is complex or controversial.

## Policy Development (cont'd)

### IV. Draft of Policy

Generally, one person is designated as the writer of a policy proposal. If the board uses a policy committee, committee members might serve as readers to critique the draft before its presentation to the entire board or to choose one of several options to present. It is wise to seek legal counsel before presentation of the policy to the board. The recommended policy proposal should be briefly and clearly stated and supported by documentation. The person presenting the proposal must be prepared to explain the rationale for the recommendation and to project possible consequences if the policy is adopted.

### V. First Reading

At the first reading of a policy proposal, the policy is presented for understanding and clarification of what is being recommended. This is an opportunity to “make the case” for the proposal and for questions to be answered. The proposal is not debated at this time, nor (as a rule) are changes to be made.

### VI. Consultation

Time provided for consultation will depend on the immediacy of the need for the board policy, the board’s calendar, the desire for additional input from experts, the board’s decision as to the need for a public hearing to serve the best interests of those concerned. There must be time and opportunity for groups/individuals affected by the policy to be informed about it and submit their opinions to the board.

### VII. Second Reading

The second reading of a policy proposal affords formal opportunity for discussion and action. At this time, the proposal can be accepted, amended and accepted, sent back to the writer for revision or rejected.

### VIII. Approval

The formal approval of the policy is given by the local board in a parish or regional setting, or the diocesan board at the 3rd and final reading. Approval may be postponed if a board feels additional readings are necessary to allow for more discussion and input from board members or other sources.

### IX. Promulgation

All of those affected by board policy must be informed when policies are added, deleted, or changed. Those who must use it should receive copies of it. Other channels of communication may include educational program newsletter, post on websites, parish bulletin, church bulletin boards, letters to parents, handbooks or presentation at meetings (should the issue require it).

### X. Follow up

It is the responsibility of the board to evaluate the effectiveness of its policies after they have had a reasonable time to be implemented. This might be several months or a year depending on the circumstances. In addition, the board must have an internal process for reviewing all policies on at least a three-year cycle/five-year cycle. The State of Iowa requires a 5 year cycle.

# Meetings

## Types of Meetings

All meetings are considered open meetings unless specifically designated as executive session.

- **Open Meetings**

Open meetings are to be announced well in advance so that observers have the opportunity to attend. "Open" indicates that all discussion and action may be observed by non-members. If the discussion during an executive session requires action by the board, the motion must be made and voted during the open meeting.

- **Executive Session**

Executive sessions are closed sessions held to discuss personnel or other matters, which are confidential in nature. Executive sessions must be kept to a minimum. Notice of the need for an executive session and the reason for it must be provided to the board members in advance. The board president may request specific administrators or others present depending on the nature of the executive session. Ordinarily executive sessions will occur prior to the announce open meeting so that necessary action can occur in the open meeting. If an executive session occurs within an open meeting, a motion to go into executive session should be made and voted and similar action taken to return to open session. This helps to "frame" the discussion which occurs in closed session and serves as another means of reminding participants of that material which must be maintained as confidential. No action is taken during executive session. If action is necessary as a result of executive session deliberation, it is taken in open session with no discussion.

## Physical Arrangements

Day:	The day for the regular monthly meeting is established in the bylaws (i.e. the first Tuesday of the month).  A change of meeting day would be subject to the provisions made for any change in the bylaws of the Board of Education.
Communication:	Information regarding the date, time and location of the board meeting must be communicated regularly to the parish/region served by the board.
Room Arrangement:	The meeting room should be arranged with a table large enough to accommodate all board members and administrators. This allows them to have easy access to their materials and to see and hear each other. They are the only persons to be seated at the table. Seating for observers should be provided in an area away from the table but close enough for observers to be able to hear the discussion. If a person who is not a board member is to give a presentation to the board, he/she may be invited to the table for the presentation and question period only. Non-members participate only when making a presentation or when asked by the chairperson to comment.

## Chair Person

The chairperson of the board is usually the president. If the president wishes to participate extensively in the discussion, he/she must relinquish the chair. He/she may not resume the chair until after completion of the discussion of the particular agenda item and/or action is taken on it.



## Meetings (cont'd)

### Agenda

Preparation of the agenda is ordinarily the responsibility of the president and executive officer of the board. In some cases, the executive committee or additional program administrators participate directly in that process. The logistics of involving these additional participants in an extra meeting for the agenda preparation usually makes this impractical. However, all board members and program administrators must be able to recommend agenda items through the president or executive officers.

**The agenda, accompanied by minutes of the previous meeting, administrators' and committee reports and any other material pertinent to specific agenda items, must be in the hands of each board member five to seven days prior to the meeting. It is the responsibility of each member to carefully study the agenda and accompanying materials in preparation for the meeting.**

The following format is recommended for the agenda of each regular board meeting. It will help if there are time limits for agenda items. It must be understood that open forum is for issues, and not about students or staff. The board is to listen and ask for clarification if necessary. The board president will direct the issues to the proper administrator or board committee.

- I. Opening Prayer
- II. Roll Call
- III. Acceptance of Agenda
- IV. Approval of Minutes from last meeting
- V. Comments from Audience/Open Forum (15 minutes)
- VI. Unfinished Business
  - A. **Action** on (3-5 minutes)
  - B. **Report** on (3 minutes)
  - C. **Discussion** of (10 minutes)
- VII. Administrators' Reports
  - A. Director of Religious Education (4-7 minutes)
  - B. Director of Youth Ministry (3 minutes)
  - C. Principal (10 minutes)
  - D. Other
- VIII. Committee Reports
  - A.
  - B.
  - C.
  - D.
- IX. New Business
  - A.
  - B.

## Meetings (cont'd)

- X. Other Business
- XI. Date of Next Meeting
- Prayer, etc.

The agenda should be prepared in such a way that the meeting will not ordinarily last more than two hours. Adding time limits to each agenda item is one way to help achieve this goal, as is the focused preparation of each member prior to the meetings. Formal action to accept the agenda occurs immediately after roll call. This action will assure that no additions to the agenda are made, thus eliminating the possibility of the meeting and administrators that there will be no surprises. If an emergency requires an addition to the agenda distributed prior to the meeting, action to add that item to the agenda will occur as part of the motion for acceptance of the agenda at the beginning of the meeting.

### Board Action

Motions must be recorded in the minutes. If the motion is lengthy, it should be written and given to the secretary to assure accuracy. The name of the person making and seconding a motion should be recorded, i.e. Tom Smith moved THAT MARY GREEN BE OFFERED A CONTRACT AS PRINCIPAL. Seconded by Jean Adams. Yes: 6 No: 1 Abstained: 0 Motion carried.

### Minutes

The elected secretary of the board is responsible for complete minutes of board meetings. The recording secretary may be designated the responsibility for taking the minutes and preparing them for distribution to the board. Members of the board must approve minutes. They should be provided a copy of the minutes prior to the meeting so they can be prepared for the action to approve them. Time during the meeting must be spent reading the minutes. A permanent file of all board minutes is to be maintained by the executive officer of the board. Copies of all board meeting minutes should be made available upon request.

### Calendar for the Year

It is helpful to the board for the president and executive officer to develop a calendar for the year. This calendar outlines matters which will require the board's attention at particular times of the year. The following sample of such a monthly plan can serve as the skeleton for each local board's plan, which will include additions based on the needs of the local community it serves.

August	Orientation of new members Back to school night Approve annual goals
September	Beginning of religious education and youth ministry Review of long range plan – outline goals for current school year

## **Calendar for the Year (continued)**

October	Policy review – 1st reading
November	Begin first draft of budget for next school year
December	Fundraising activities
January	Submission of budget to parish council Policy review – 2 <sup>nd</sup> reading Catholic Schools Week
February	Approval of budget by parish council Approval of teacher salary scale for contract preparation School registration Completion of input for principal evaluation
March	Self-evaluation of board Offering of contracts to teachers and administrators Updating of long range plan / Diocesan regional board meetings
April	Invite new board candidates to attend meeting Return of signed teacher and administrator contracts
May	Board / Committee elections / appointments Report from Diocese regarding Administrator's evaluation Recognition of out-going staff
June	Election of officers Recognition of out-going members
July	Free month/or board orientation

## **Process for Addressing Complaints**

Individuals or groups may, on occasion, approach a member of the board with issues, which should be addressed by the educational program administrator. Board members must know the process and direct the concerned person to the administrator for appropriate action.

The following procedure shall be followed by the board and its individual members. Neither the board as a whole nor any individual member will invite or consider concerns or complaints from staff, parents or patrons until they have first been referred to the proper administrators. Only in those cases where issues are not addressed by the administrator and/or staff shall concerns or complaints be referred to the board. It is important that board members withhold comment about an issue until that matter has been addressed through proper channels. It is also wise for board members to postpone formulation of a judgment in the matter. If the matter is serious and remains unresolved after being addressed through administrative channels, board members will have the benefit of hearing the issue discussed in a setting where all aspects are considered.

## Evaluation

- Board:** Board members should evaluate their work as board members individually and collectively at least once each year.
- Administrators:** The Board of Education participates in the formal evaluation of its administrator(s) through the process outlined by the diocesan office(s), which relate it to the administrator(s).
- Staff:** Administrators are responsible for the evaluation of staff employed in each educational program. The board should have some assurance that evaluation is occurring. It is suggested that a brief executive session in late October or early November be scheduled to allow information about any major personnel performance concerns to be shared. Written evaluation reports for an employee's file are confidential documents and must not be given to the board.
- Programs:** The board evaluates programs through the administrator. This can be accomplished through administrative reports, staff reports, local assessment, or an "outside" evaluation process.
- Policies:** The effectiveness of board policies will be evaluated especially through process and product reports. All policies must be reviewed at least on a five-year cycle.

## Budget

Initial preparation of the educational budget is the responsibility of the educational program administrator. This is accomplished within the previously-established guidelines of the Finance Council and the Board of Education.

Budget information prepared by the administrator(s) is then presented to the Board budget or finance committee and ultimately to the Board for its approval. Having approved the educational budget, the Board then presents it to the Finance Council of the parish for inclusion with the total parish budget. The primary responsibility of the Finance Council in regard to the educational budget is to determine the level of parish support, which will be provided. If, for any reason that amount will be different from what was requested by the Board, it is the responsibility of the Board in consultation with its administrator(s) to make necessary adjustments in the educational program budget line items.

The budget process should begin in the fall so that it can be completed with final approval in February. This timeline will facilitate the firing of personnel, most of whom must receive contracts by April 15th.

## Visitors

It is important that the Finance Council not micromanage the education budget. This is the responsibility of the Administrator(s) and the Board of Education Finance Committee. It is the responsibility of the Administrator(s), with the cooperation of the Business Manager/Bookkeeper to oversee the education budget.

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

## **Catholic Schools Office**

Diocese of Sioux City  
1821 Jackson St.  
Sioux City, IA 51105  
Phone 712-233-7527  
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## **Appendix**

- A. A Board Member's Prayer
- B. Code of Ethics
- C. Robert's Rules of Order
- D. Visitor Letter
- E. Board Responsibilities
- F. Board Self Evaluations
- G. New Member Orientation
- H. Committee Worksheet and Report Form

# A Board Member's Prayer

I have been asked to serve Lord and I have agreed.

Help me to know my fellow board members:

Their gifts, their concerns, their lives.

I am doing Your work, Lord,

and Your love for me and for them is,

above all, personal.

Help me to welcome conflict

as a sign of the diversity in this board,

as an opportunity to reach for creative solutions.

Help me to recognize this diversity

as a sign of Your capacity to love us all

and help me to cherish it as a great strength.

Help me to approach issues with an open,

inquiring mind, free from prejudice,

with my spirit depending on Yours

for the strength to make hard decisions.

Help me to listen; to know when and whom

and to whom I should listen.

Help me to learn to use my own gifts

to promote thorough, thoughtful discussion

of important concerns in our community.

Help me to develop my skills as a peacemaker,

to know how and when to mediate,

to conciliate, to negotiate.

Help me to enjoy doing Your work

and to remember your promise:

whenever two of us are gathered

in Your name, You are with us.

Sit with me now.

AMEN

# CODE OF ETHICS FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

*As a member of a Catholic school board, I...*

- \* acknowledge that schools are a significant expression of the teaching mission of the Catholic Church and function within its structure;
- \* will become more knowledgeable about the mission of Catholic education, as expressed in this school, and sincerely promote it to the various publics with whom I have influence;
- \* will keep confidential all information pertaining to matters dealt with by the board;
- \* recognize the need for continuing education about my responsibilities and know that I do not represent the board officially unless explicitly authorized to do so;
- \* will be fully and carefully prepared for each meeting by doing the required reading and completing necessary tasks for committee work and reports;
- \* support the administrator in authorized functions and avoid intruding in administrative details unless requested to do so;
- \* will be loyal to board decisions even though personally opposed to the final recommendations and decisions;
- \* will be alert to alternate solutions to problems by keeping an open mind;
- \* will disqualify myself from discussion and vote on an issue where there is a conflict of interest with my family or business interests or if the outcome will grant me an pecuniary or material benefits; and
- \* pray often for other members of the board, this Catholic school and the community it serves.

***National Association of Boards of Education***

***National Catholic Educational Association Washington, DC***

## **Robert's Rules of Order - Agenda**

An agenda according to Robert's (RONR(10th ed.),p.342-351), with a few comments.

### **Reading and approval of the minutes.**

(Motion to approve is not necessary. The minutes are either approved as read or as corrected, but without a vote.)

### **Reports of Officers, Boards, Standing Committees.**

(This includes correspondence, treasurer's report, etc. Treasurer's report is never adopted or voted upon unless it has been audited.)

### **Reports of Special Committees.**

(Each report could conclude with a motion which the assembly must address.)

### **Special Orders.**

(Any motion which was adopted as a Special Order which guarantees that the motion will be dealt with before the meeting is adjourned.)

### **Unfinished Business and General Orders.**

(Any issue which was not concluded, was postponed, or was tabled during the prior meeting. The secretary's minutes should inform the chair which items to add to this section. Only a clueless chair would ask the assembly, 'Is there any unfinished business?')

### **New Business.**

(This is when the chair and the parliamentarian can be surprised by the sequence of events. It is best to always anticipate issues the membership may present, or else be embarrassed by the complications.

It is at this time that announcements, educational programs, and speakers are introduced.)

### **Adjournment.**

(A motion to adjourn may be made at any time of the meeting. The assembly should never be forced to meet longer than it is willing to meet.)



## Welcome Visitors

Visitors are always welcome to our meetings! Our meetings are open to all unless there is a need for an executive session. Executive sessions are closed to all non-board/committee members in order to protect the rights of personnel or other matters that are confidential. Usually executive sessions are very brief and held sometime before or during the scheduled meeting. During executive sessions all visitors must leave the room or the board/committee moves to another room.

In an effort to make your visit beneficial and for the official business to be transacted,

### PLEASE NOTE:

As a visitor you are here to observe the meeting processes, procedures and discussions. As an observer, you are not able to participate in the deliberations nor are you to indicate your approval or disapproval of any discussions or actions taken. If you have a concern(s), please utilize the proper procedure listed below:

1. If you have a classroom concern, you are expected to contact the teacher for clarification and resolution. If the teacher is not able to satisfy the concern, you should then contact the administrator.
2. If you have a non-classroom concern, you are expected to contact the administrator directly, as the administrator is the person who has the responsibility to bring resolution to matters of concern. If the administrator is not able to satisfy the concern, you may then contact a board/committee member.

(board/committee—include items #3 only if it is your local custom or you wish to do so)

3. If you would like to informally address the meeting during the time on the agenda marked as comment time, audience comments or open forum, you must check with the chairperson/president prior to the beginning of the meeting to receive permission and any stipulations as to time, etc. This opportunity is for those times when a simple concern or comment is appropriate. This is not the time for major or complicated matters. You should know that no discussion or action would be taken on the matter at this meeting.
4. If you wish to formally address the board/committee concerning a major and/or complicated matter, you must contact the chairperson/president at least (insert the local custom or stated stipulation as found in the constitution here) \_ week(s) or \_ days in advance of the meeting to present your request. The request must include the exact nature of your concern/issue, any materials or other persons you will utilize during your presentation and any other helpful information. The chairperson will relay your request to formally address the board/committee to the group that establishes the agenda for their decision and inform you of their decision and any stipulations that are to be followed if your request to address the board/committee is granted.

Please be advised that the board/committee may or may not take any action on your concern/issue at the meeting or at any future meeting.

## **BOARD'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

Here are nine categories of activity that should, over the course of the year, occupy the board's calendar. If a board is active in all or most of these categories, members can be reasonably sure that they are busy with the right things.

### **PLANNING**

The board should be looking ahead to the parishes' educational needs and how they will be addressed. If the board is doing this, its agenda will reflect these kinds of activities:

- Assessing parish needs; listening to parishioners, staff and administration as they outline needs
- Setting goals; deciding what the board will do to achieve them.
- Developing, revising, and "tracking" a long-range plan

### **POLICYMAKING**

The board should be adopting policies appropriate to meeting educational needs. Here are agenda "symptoms" that this is happening:

- Identifying policy needs.
- Receiving and reading policy drafts and discussing and adopting policies.
- Monitoring whether policies are working effectively.
- Reviewing existing policies, as they "age" - are they still useful?

### **FINANCES**

The board should be adopting a financial plan and monitoring how it is working. This will involve meeting time spent on:

- Approving the board budget.
- Determining salary and benefit plan for staff.
- Determining necessary fee structures.
- Regularly reviewing the educational program financial status.

### **PROJECTS**

The board spends time pursuing whatever special activities it has taken on. This will involve agenda attention to items like these:

- Commitments the board made when it did its planning and goal setting.
- Participation in educational programs.
- Activities to support staff efforts or morale.

## **EVALUATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

This should take place annually and will involve such activities as:

- Reviewing the administrators' service, offering suggestions.
- Contributing to a diocesan evaluation of the administrators and administrators' self-evaluation.

## **BOARD'S SELF EVALUATION**

The board should be checking on its own performance periodically, "Symptoms" that this is happening will appear by:

- Tracking the goals and objectives set by the board in planning.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of its policies.
- Doing an annual review of the board's performance. The board may choose to solicit the input of others (administrators, staff, parishioners, pastors) as part of this review.

## **INFORMATION SHARING**

The board should receive information about the educational program to do its job and make decision in an informal manner. The board also communicates with its constituents. Here are some things which show this is happening:

- Reports are received from administrator and from committees.
- Staff gives input to board.
- Parishioners speak to board and are surveyed about needs.
- Dialogue takes place with Pastoral Councils, Finance Councils, Diocesan Board, etc.

## **CONSULTATION**

The board responds to questions and issues brought to it by the administrators. Board energy then gets used for:

- Responding to the administrators' request for advice.
- Providing members for special committees requested by the administrators.

## **INTERNAL LIFE OF THE BOARD**

The board must provide for its own operation. The following kinds of things will be happening in a healthy board:

- Candidates for board membership will be recruited and election of members and officers will take place.
- Orientation will be given to new members.
- In-service study will be shared by all members.
- Agenda planning will take place in a systematic way.
- Provision will be made for committee structure.
- Minutes of meetings will be officially recorded and approved.
- Constitutions will be reviewed and updated as necessary.
- The board will spend time praying together.

**ELEMENTARY and HIGH SCHOOLS**  
**DIOCESE OF SIOUX CITY**  
**BOARD EVALUATION**

For the purpose of stimulating your thought about how a Board of Education Committee should work and how its operations might be improved, there are set forth below six basic fields of board involvement. Please consider each of the fields and rate the performance of the board in terms of each statement and the field as a whole. The rating system to be used follows:

- |          |          |   |
|----------|----------|---|
| <b>5</b> | <b>=</b> | <b>very good performance, standard fully and completely met</b> |
| <b>4</b> | <b>=</b> | <b>good, standard met in all but minor reports</b>              |
| <b>3</b> | <b>=</b> | <b>adequate, standard substantially met</b>                     |
| <b>2</b> | <b>=</b> | <b>poor, standard not met in significant respects</b>           |
| <b>1</b> | <b>=</b> | <b>very poor, standard not met in any respect</b>               |
| <b>0</b> | <b>=</b> | <b>object to, or disagree with standard</b>                     |

<b>Part One</b> <b>External Functions</b>
--

**Mission**

- |       |  |
|-------|--|
| _____ | 1. The statement of philosophy, purposes, and objectives is both clear and useful as a guide to planning and decision making.                                      |
| _____ | 2. The board keeps this statement in mind as it reviews policies and practices.  |
| _____ | 3. The institution lives up to its stated mission.   |
| _____ | 4. The board periodically reviews—and, as necessary, revises the school's statement of philosophy and mission.   |
| _____ | 5. The board is adequately informed of broad issues and concerns in the field of education that can influence the direction of the institution and its management. |

\_\_\_\_\_ Overall rating of board performance in this field.

**Comments and Suggestions:**

## **Strategic Planning**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The board sets goals for the school and works toward the achievement of those goals.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The board involves other appropriate individuals and groups in its planning process.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The board accomplishes the activities for which it assumes responsibility in the goal setting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The long-range plan for the school includes development efforts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The board provides for satisfactory planning concerning:
  - a. Enrollment
  - b. Staffing
  - c. Quality Catholic Education
  - d. Catholic Identity/Religion Program
  - e. Physical Plant and Facilities
  - f. Finances
  - g. Development
- \_\_\_\_\_ Overall rating of board performance in this field.

**Comments and Suggestions:**

## **Physical Plant/Buildings and Grounds**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The board has an active Building and Grounds Committee.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The board has fulfilled its role in studying and recommending a master plan for meeting plant needs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The board has developed in its long-range plan, priorities for capitol repairs and improvements.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The board gives the chief administrator/principal appropriate guidance and assistance in developing policy and procedure in this area.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The plant is well kept.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Board members avoid involvement in decisions on details that properly should be made by the administrative staff.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Overall rating of board performance in this field.

**Comments and Suggestions:**

## **Finances**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The board has an active finance committee.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The board reviews, recommends and monitors the school budget.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The board has developed policies for the financial management of the school.

\_\_\_\_\_ Overall rating of board performance in this field.

### **Comments and Suggestions:**

## **Development**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The board has an active development committee.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The mandate for the development committee includes its relationship to the finance committee
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The Development work of the board includes:
  - a. **Public relations** efforts on behalf of the school.
  - b. An aggressive **student recruitment** component.
  - c. **Alumni relations** - as the primary beneficiaries of the Catholic education provided at the school, alumni/ae are being positioned and prepared to serve as “ambassadors” and leaders in the area of philanthropic support to their alma mater.
  - d. Other constituency relations - targeting past parents, grandparents, friends, etc. to join in a broad-based effort to ensure the long-term well-being of the institution.
  - e. A comprehensive **annual fund** program to raise unrestricted dollars in support of the operating budget.
  - f. Efforts to generate support for selected capital projects.
  - g. Efforts to raise endowment funds for the school.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Each board member gives philanthropic support to the school, within his or her capacity, and influences other persons to do the same.

\_\_\_\_\_ Overall rating of board performance in this field.

### **Comments and Suggestions:**

### **Policy Formulation**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The board formulates policies in accord with diocesan policies and procedures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The board evaluates its policies regularly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Board policies are communicated to those people who are affected by the decisions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The board policies are systematically indexed, codified, and published in a board policy manual.

\_\_\_\_\_ Overall rating of board performance in this field.

### **Comments and Suggestions:**

**Board/Community Relations** help determine the image of the institution in the eyes of the community and significantly affect image, fundraising, reputation and other aspects of institutional well-being.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Board members accept responsibility of representing the institution in the community.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Board members exercise professional discretion in discussing the affairs of the institution with members of the community.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Board members take an active role as advocates of the institution in the community.

\_\_\_\_\_ Overall rating of board performance in this field.

### **Comments and Suggestions:**

## Board Evaluation

<p><b>Part Two</b></p> <p><b>Internal Functions</b></p>
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Board membership should be such that the needed skills, experience, perspectives, and sensitivities are brought to bear during its deliberations while at the same time members perceive themselves as serving the institution as a whole rather than acting advocates for particular constituencies.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The size of the board is appropriate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The board contains a sufficient range of talents, experience, and attitudes to accomplish its purposes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The board takes adequate advantage of its members' skills and interests.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Board members serve the whole institution, not a particular constituency.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The composition of the board is sufficiently diverse with respect to:
  - a. representation from appropriate constituencies.
  - b. age composition
  - c. sex composition
  - d. minority composition
  - e. persons with educational expertise
  - f. geographic representation
  - g. conflict of interest issues.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The board has a satisfactory process for the review of its membership's composition and participation and for planning for future membership and leadership needs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The nominating committee is effective in:
  - a. identifying and recruiting new board members.
  - b. identifying potential officers.
  - c. identifying and developing candidates for committee membership.

\_\_\_\_\_ Overall rating of board performance in this field.

**Comments and Suggestions:**



**Board Organization** plays an important part in determining how effectively board members will perform and how the board's work will be accomplished.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Board processes are such that board members are kept well informed on matters which they must evaluate and/or make decisions on.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The number and duration of board meetings are such as to enable it to do its work well.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The present committee structure enables the board to fulfill its role effectively.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. All committees are performing effectively.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. No small group dominates decision making.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Each member has a proper voice in decision making.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Board members are provided with an orientation that supports their effective participation early in their term of service.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The board is perceived as fulfilling an important leadership role at the school.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Satisfactory processes exist to evaluate board members' effectiveness.

\_\_\_\_\_ Overall rating of the board performance in this field.

**Comments and Suggestions:**

**Board/Principal Relations** must be open and mutually supportive, fostering a total institutional perspective and good working relations.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The board and the chief administrator/principal are well defined and understood by the members.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. No board member interferes improperly with the administration of the institution.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The board gives the chief administrator/principal adequate personal support and guidance.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The board participates in the evaluation of the principal in terms of his/her relationship to the board.

\_\_\_\_\_ Overall rating of the board performance in this field.

**Comments and Suggestions:**

## Board Evaluation

### Part Three

It is suggested that each board member respond to this form only after having completed Parts One and Two of the Board Evaluation Form, which offers a comprehensive review of board responsibilities and activities. Use the other side as needed.

1. In addition to serving as a board member, I stand in the following relationship with the institution (check as many as appropriate):

alumnus/alumna: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent \_\_\_\_\_ Past parent \_\_\_\_\_ Grandparent \_\_\_\_\_

other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

2. I have served as a board member of this institution for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

3. Do you find your work as a board member satisfying? In what ways?

4. In what areas do you feel you are most effective as a board member?

5. In what areas do you feel least effective?

6. What do you perceive to be the principal strengths of the institution?

7. On what goals should the board concentrate in the next few years?

\* For itself?

\* For the institution?

## New Board Member Orientation

Orientation is necessary if the new member is to feel part of the team. Team spirit is fundamental to an effective and productive board. This in-service can take several forms.

One method that is extremely helpful in introducing the newcomer to the team is to assign a mentor. The mentor welcomes the new member and informally familiarizes him/her with the board. The mentor highlights the board's past achievements, member's background, and current projects. At another time, the mentor and newcomer can talk about materials sent by the administrator.

Below is a list of information to be presented during newcomer in-service sessions:

- First-hand information about the organization and the mission of the diocese/parish/school

- Constitution and bylaws

- Policies, regulations, and publications

- Board handbook

- Meeting dates, and times for board meetings

- Board members' directory (names and phone numbers of board members)

- General explanation of the board's role and responsibilities

- Achievements highlighting annual reports and the board's plan

- Current projects highlighting plan

- Challenges and recurring issues

- Relationships with key groups and persons

- New member profile sheet (What the new members will bring to the board. Members are asked to fill out a profile sheet that lists other boards served on, community involvement, relationship to the school, parish, diocese, graduate of the school, children enrolled, grandchildren attending.)

- Meeting structure

- Member preparation for the meeting

- Schedule of tour of the parish/school/diocesan office

- Institution's history and key programs

- Schedule of meetings with key people

In preparation for their initial in-service, it is suggested that new members read this book, *Benchmarks of Excellence Boards of Catholic Education*, or *Building Better Boards* and view the *Building Better Boards* video tapes. This will be excellent preparation for the in-service since the new members will be presented at the meeting with specific applications of the information found in these resources.

Another recommendation for in-service preparation for all new comers is to visit the school. A new board member's education includes an invitation to walk in the footsteps of students and staff whom the board serves. This includes a tour of the parish, school or diocesan office to experience the operation and to meet key people. In addition, the newcomer can hear short presentations about the institution's history and programs.

When and where should the newcomer in-service take place and who should conduct it? One or two board members and the administrator would meet the newcomer(s) in a comfortable setting to present the materials. The topics would be the same as those listed above, but the environment would be more relaxed. This may help the newcomer to ask more questions and to interact more with the presenters.

# COMMITTEE WORKSHEET

(Update after each meeting and distribute to committee members and board chair as soon as possible.)

Committee Name \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_

Member's Names \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Date \_\_\_\_\_

Issue/Goal	Action Strategies	Next Steps	By Whom	By When	Resources Needed
1.					
2.					
3.					

## COMMITTEE REPORT FORM

(Include in pre-meeting materials to board members before each board meeting.)

Committee Name \_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_

Member's Names \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Report to Board Meeting \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Issue/s** (Describe as briefly as possible, in as much depth as appropriate.)

**Solutions** (List the tow or three most likely options the subcommittee considered, with advantages and disadvantages of each. )

**Recommendation/s or Progress Report** (Specify which solution is being recommended and why, or date it will be presented.)

**Action/s Required by the Board** (Define what action is needed by the total board.)

**Next Steps**