

St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School

Bylaws for Parish Elementary School Advisory Board Archdiocese of New Orleans

Preamble

St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Elementary School is owned and operated by St. Catherine of Siena Parish. The school is established to carry out the teaching ministry of the Catholic Church. As such, the religious and educational work efforts shall at all times be in accordance with the teachings and laws of the Roman Catholic Church and the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

The pastor has established a School Advisory Board to further the advancement of excellence in Catholic school education for students at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School, by providing leadership, direction, and support.

Introduction and Rationale

This School Advisory Board shall have as its primary concern the ministry of Catholic school education: the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional and social development of the students. The School Advisory Board operates under the guidance of the pastor. In collaboration with the principal and in conformity with the policies of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, the board shall concern itself with planning, marketing the school to the various communities, operational vitality of the school, and policy issues pertaining to the general excellence of Catholic education at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School.

Article I - Name

The name of this organization shall be School Advisory Board.

Article II - Purpose

The School Advisory Board operates only in an advisory capacity to the pastor and principal to set the school's goals and direction. The overseeing of the day-to-day operations and allocation of resources of St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School are entrusted to the principal and his/her staff.

Article III – Authority

The Pastor:

The pastor is the spiritual and temporal shepherd of the parish. He is responsible for presenting the Catholic message under the jurisdiction of the archbishop according to the mind of the Church and the contemporary needs of the people (Canon 528.) A portion of this responsibility is carried out through the parish school. He is the key person in relation to the parish educational program.

The pastor is an extension of the archbishop, and as such he is the leader in all the decision-making processes within the parish. The pastor, with the advice of the School Advisory Board, has the responsibility to make decisions consistent with the educational policies established by the Archdiocese. The pastor's authority at the parish level includes the right to approve or disapprove all recommendations made by the School Advisory Board (including budgetary recommendations), and to select the principal of the school. In addition, the pastor has the authority to ratify the hiring of all school employees (including the ratification of teacher contracts).

The Principal:

The principal is accountable to the pastor for the spiritual leadership and the administration of the school. The principal has a serious responsibility as spiritual leader of the school. The principal assumes responsibility for understanding and accepting the unique role that Catholic schools serve in the educational mission of the Church. The principal serves as the chief spokesperson in articulating this mission and in calling the faculty and students to participate in a significant way in the life of the Church.

In addition to spiritual leadership, the principal is responsible for the administration of the school program. This responsibility includes the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff, the establishment of educational programming, and the evaluation and management of student behavior. These responsibilities are assumed with archdiocesan and local policies.

Also, the principal serves as the chief executive officer of the School Advisory Board, and as such is not a voting member. The responsibilities of the chief executive to the School Advisory Board are to:

- A. Set the agenda with the chairperson and officers in consultation with the pastor.
- B. Keep the School Advisory Board informed of the policy needs of the school.
- C. Establish administrative regulations to implement policies.

- D. Keep the School Advisory Board informed of such implementations.
- E. Assist the School Advisory Board in annual goal setting.
- F. Report on school finances.
- G. Assist in annual self-evaluation of the School Advisory Board.
- H. Keep the School Advisory Board adequately informed about the operation of the school.
- I. Inform the School Advisory Board of major school events.
- J. Review the School Advisory Board meeting minutes before disseminating them.
- K. Help to provide appropriate in-services for the School Advisory Board.

The School Advisory Board: The functions of the School Advisory Board shall include advising in the following areas:

- 1. Mission Advancement/Catholic Identity
- 2. Relationship with the Parish
- 3. Strategic Planning
- 4. Public/Community Relations, Communications and Development
- 5. Finances
- 6. Facility Management
- 7. Crisis Management and Safety
- 8. Special Projects

Article IV - Membership

- A. The membership of the School Advisory Board shall consist of 7-11 members (usually an odd number).
- B. Board members are appointed by the pastor in collaboration with the principal, and discerned by the School Advisory Board. Members are expected to actively participate in recommending individuals for possible candidacy to the School Advisory Board.
- C. The pastor and principal are permanent, non-voting members of the Board. The pastor, in consultation with the principal, may appoint an officer of the PTO to be a non-voting member of the board.
- D. School Advisory Board members shall serve a term of three (3) years. No more than one-third of the members will end their term in any one year. The pastor, in consultation with the principal, may appoint members to serve less than a three-year term in order to achieve this ratio and stability of the board. Members are limited to two (2) consecutive terms. In the event that a member of the School Advisory Board is unable to complete

his/her term, the pastor, in collaboration with the principal, will appoint a replacement to finish the term of that individual.

E. Ordinarily, the majority of the board members shall be practicing Catholics. The board shall consist of parents (the national trend is to set a limit to the number of current parents - one third), alumni/parents of alumni, active parishioners, and leaders within the community who have expertise in the areas defined in functions of the board (Article III.)

F. The following persons are ineligible to serve on the School Advisory Board:

1. Any current school or parish employee or family member of the said employee;
2. Any person whose membership would pose a conflict of interest.

G. Removal of School Advisory Board Members:

1. Any member not in attendance for two (2) regular meetings in a year will relinquish membership on the School Advisory Board unless, in the board's opinion, a reasonable excuse for these absences has been given.
2. The pastor may remove a member if it is deemed that removal is in the best interest of the school.
3. A member may be removed if the member is negligent in duty or other serious reasons.

H. School Advisory Board members shall meet the following criteria:

1. Have interest in, and commitment to, Catholic education and to the school's philosophy and mission;
2. Have views and actions that are consistent with the Catholic faith;
3. Have willingness to enhance the school environment and facilities;
4. Have expertise in the specific areas defined in the functions of the School Advisory Board (Article III);
5. Have the ability to make the time commitments for meetings, board work, and in-services;
6. Maintain high levels of integrity and confidentiality;
7. Provide leadership for resource development programs for the school;
8. Deal with situations as they relate to the good of the entire school community; and
9. Be able to work in a collaborative manner with the other members.

Article V - Officers of the School Advisory Board

The officers of the School Advisory Board shall consist of a chairperson, vice-chairperson and secretary, all of whom shall be elected by the School Advisory Board at the first regular meeting. All members of the School Advisory Board are eligible for any office. Officers shall serve one-year terms. No officer shall hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms.

Chairperson – The chairperson shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the School Advisory Board, shall appoint all board unless otherwise specified by the Advisory Board, shall determine the agenda for all regular and special meeting in collaboration with the principal, and in general, perform all the duties of the office of president and other duties that may be assigned by the Advisory Board.

Vice-Chairperson – The vice-chairperson, in the absence of the chairperson, shall perform all duties of the chairperson.

Secretary - The secretary shall maintain a written record of all meetings of the School Advisory Board. The principal must approve all minutes. The secretary shall furnish a copy of the approved minutes of each meeting.

Article VI - Meetings

- A. The School Advisory Board shall meet at least quarterly at a designated time and place.
- B. Special meetings of the School Advisory Board may be called, with the approval of the pastor, and in consultation with the principal, by the chairperson or by a majority of the School Advisory Board members.
- C. No School Advisory Board meeting will be held without the principal and the pastor (or his designated representative) in attendance.
- D. Quorum: For the purpose of transacting official business, it shall be necessary that a majority of the total members be present.
- E. The consensus method of decision-making shall be used. Consensus is a Christian approach to group decision-making. It presents an opportunity for all to be heard and avoids a “win/lose” posture that voting promotes. Consensus results in the growth of the group and in fuller ownership of decisions. Consensus has been achieved when there is general agreement or accord among the members. If the board fails to arrive at a

consensus and the issue must be decided immediately, the chairperson shall call for a majority vote.

F. The board may fix its own rules of procedure, but in the absence of such rules, Robert's Rules of Order shall apply.

G. The ordinary order of business shall be:

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer and Reflection
3. Delegations (if any)
4. Approval of Minutes
5. Principal's Reports
6. Old Business/Decision-making items
7. New Business
8. Board Reports
9. Pastor's Comments
10. Closing Prayer

H. The right of non-members to address the School Advisory Board shall be reserved to those whose petition has been approved by the principal or chairperson for inclusion on the agenda in advance of the School Advisory Board meeting. The chairperson shall control the speaking time for such person(s).

Article VII – Board

A. Standing committees of the board shall be:

- a. Finance — The Finance Committee shall assist in developing the plans and means to finance the on-going educational program (i.e. setting the tuition, negotiating the parish subsidy with the Pastor and Parish Finance Council, and developing the annual operating budget) according to the Archdiocesan format.
- b. Development/Advancement — The Development/Advancement Committee shall assist in the formulation and implementation of an advancement program, including public relations and marketing, fund development, alumni and constituency relation.
- c. Strategic Planning — The Strategic Planning Committee shall assist in the development and annual updating of the long-range strategic plans and goals of the school as well as the School Advisory Committees' plan for its work.

- d. Selection Committee — The Selection Committee shall recruit new members and develop a slate of eligible candidates, given to the Chair for discussion and consensus by the School Advisory Committee and submitted to the pastor for appointment; orientate new members to the School Advisory Committee; facilitate election of officers; provide ongoing education for the School Advisory Committee members.

- B. The chairperson, in consultation with the principal, shall establish ad hoc committees as needed. Examples of such ad hoc committees are: Catholic identity, enrollment/recruitment, safety/crisis management, facilities, and endowment/development.

- C. The School Advisory chairperson, in consultation with the pastor and principal, appoints the chairperson of all committees.

- D. The School Advisory chairperson and principal, in consultation with the chairperson of each committee and approval of the pastor, may invite persons who are not members of the School Advisory Committee to serve as members of these committees.

- E. The responsibility of all committees shall be fact-finding and advisory, but never legislative or administrative. Recommendations by any committee shall be subject to ratification and approval by the School Advisory Board.

Article VIII – Approval and Amendments

- A. All Advisory bylaws must be approved by the Office of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of New Orleans through the process formulated by the superintendent.

- B. Bylaws may be amended by a School Advisory consensus at any meeting. Any such action shall be subject to review and approval by the pastor and superintendent of the Office of Catholic Schools.

