

August, 2001

Dear Pastors, Board of Education Members and Administrators:

Boards of Education are an excellent example of one way that the laity can assume responsibility for the teaching mission of the Church. To accept membership as a board member, you have responded to a call to ministry in the Diocese of Davenport.

As a board member, you recognize that you have a responsibility not only for policy development but also strategic planning and financial accountability. You must remember that you, as an individual member, are only powerful when you do the work of the Board and as the work of the Board.

The purpose of this Board of Education manual is to assist you in establishing and/or inservicing a Board. We are aware that our parishes and regional education centers have a wide diversity of specific needs throughout our Diocese.

If at anytime you see parts of this manual that need revision or clarification, please free to contact this office.

May the joy, peace and love of Christ be with you,

Mary M. Wieser
Director of Faith Formation and Education
Superintendent of Schools
Diocese of Davenport

BOARD OF EDUCATION MANUAL

Table of Contents

A Board Member's Prayer	1
History	2
Types of Boards of Education	3
Policy Formation	4
Role of Administrators in Relationship to Board of Education	8
Role of Pastor in Relationship to Board of Education	9
Board Membership	10
Election Process	11
Membership	11
Officers of Board	11
Board Orientation	12
Organizational Structure	12
Constitution	12
Bylaws	12
Decision-Making Process	13
Meetings	13
Types	13
Physical Arrangements	14
Chairperson	14
Recording Secretary	14
Agenda	15
Agenda Preparation	16
Analysis of an Agenda	18
What Do We Do To Keep Our Group Working Together	
Audience	19
Board Action	19
Minutes	19
Methods of Decision Making	20
Committees	21
Calendar for the Year	22
Process for Addressing Complaints	23
Evaluation	23
Budget	24
Acknowledgments	26

Appendix

Board's "Calendar" of Responsibilities	28
Code of Ethics for Catholic Board of Education Members	30
Boards of Education - Model Constitution	31
Self-Evaluation of Board of Education	35
Budget Report (Diocesan Format)	1-12

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 conflicts as a sign of diversity
on 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 to whom I should
listen. Help me to learn to use my own gifts to promote
thorough, thoughtful discussion of important concerns
in our Catholic communities.

Help me to develop my skills as a peace-maker,
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."

Be with us now and always. Amen

HISTORY

Documents of Vatican Council II addressed the importance of involvement of the laity in the decisions affecting their lives and urged that appropriate structures be established for this purpose.

"There should be councils which assist the apostolic work of the Church Councils and which should be established on parochial, interparochial and interdiocesan levels."

The Laity - Vatican Council II
Chapter V, Paragraph 26

The Church also called the laity to share in the educational ministry in new and challenging ways through the documents of Vatican II. In 1972, the bishops of the United States spoke to the same issue in the pastoral letter, To Teach as Jesus Did.

"Vatican Council II urged the establishment of agencies by which the laity can express their opinion of things which concern the Church. (Constitution On The Church, 37) One such agency, long a part of the American experience and in recent years increasingly widespread in Catholic education, is the representative Board of Education which, acting on behalf of the community it serves, seeks patiently and conscientiously to direct the entire range of educational institutions and programs within the educational ministry."

To Teach As Jesus Did, 140

Subsidiary-Vatican Council II

Subsidiary, a fundamental principle of Catholic social teaching assumes that problems are best defined and resolved by those most closely affected by them. This principle assumes that diversity and good order can only be maintained through subsidiary. In the spirit of this principle, Boards of Education (Faith Formation Committees) and all ministry groups involved in the process of consolation are vital for the good of the Church.

Documents such as these formed the backdrop for the establishment of parish councils, finance councils and Boards of Education. In the Diocese of Davenport, the Diocesan Board of Education and parish Boards of Education were established beginning in 1968.

TYPES OF BOARDS OF EDUCATION

DIOCESAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Diocesan Board of Education is responsible for giving direction to the total educational ministry of the diocese through policy development and consultation with the bishop of the diocese. 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 or has employed staff for direction of its religious education, youth ministry or adult education programs, must have a Board of Education (Diocesan Policy #s 210, 210.1, 210.2 and 210.5). In such parishes, the Board of Education fulfills all responsibilities of the Faith Formation committee of the parish council. The president of the Board of Education or a member designated by the president is a voting member of the parish council. He/she attends all parish council meetings, providing information on educational matters to the council and serving as the liaison between the parish council and the Board of Education.

REGIONAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION

Several boards of education in the Diocese of Davenport provide direction to programs, which are the result of a collaborative effort by several parishes. Examples of such efforts are the Notre Dame Area Board of Education, the Marquette Schools, Regina Interparish Education Center, the Fort Madison Schools, the Keokuk Schools and Seton Catholic. The constitution of each Board provides for representation by both pastors and laity from the region served. 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 program administrator(s) is similar to the relationship which would exist between the parish Board and program administrator(s) and the pastor.

ROLE OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

It is the role of the Board of Education to provide direction and establish policies, which will enable the stated mission of the educational program to be accomplished. Ordinarily the Board of Education is responsible for the religious education, youth ministry, adult education and, where available, Catholic school programs provided by the parish, region or diocese.

Among activities undertaken by the Board of Education to fulfill its role will be:

- assessment of needs
- implementation of an on-going planning process
- development of policy consistent with Canon Law, Diocesan Board of Education policies, civil law, and Iowa Department of Education regulations
- participation in selection and evaluation of program administrators
- establishment of program budgets to be presented to any designated review group (i.e. parish finance council)
- provision for assessment of programs and policy implementation
- approval of faculty/staff contracts as recommended by the program administrator
- leadership of public relations effort for all educational programs

Pages 27-28 describe nine categories of responsibility, which should be reflected in the Board's activity each year.

The Board must contribute vision, leadership and service to ensure the future of the school/educational centers.

A Board has limited jurisdiction and is advisory: A Board has final authority only in those educational areas specifically delegated by the Bishop.

- To provide an opportunity for laity to participate in the educational ministry of the Church
- To provide unity, direction and stability for educational programs
 - Vision for the future
 - Short-term and long-term planning
- To ensure the rights and duties of those served by or employed by school/educational center
 - Payments of just salaries and benefits
- To foster the schools or educational centers' mission
 - Boards commit to articulate, monitor and ensure the living out of the mission
 - Board members are the front-line public relations persons
 - They must enunciate and clarify the purpose and vision
- To represent the stakeholders
 - Parish
 - Families
 - Create a sense of ownership that is so important for the success of the Board's functioning and ultimately the future

Effective local Boards have actively working committees: finance, nominating, policy, marketing, development, facility and executive committees

- *Finance Committee*
To work with the administrator(s) to develop, review and recommend the proposed budget for the full Board approval. The committee may also oversee the investments and endowments.
- *Nominating Committee*
To identify and recruit candidates for future Board membership and to organize and oversee the nomination process. (This committee may be charged with orientation, continuing education, and evaluation of members/Board.)
- *Policy Committee*
To review at least 1/3 of the current policies and to make recommendations regarding changes, additions or deletions, and to formulate new policies for full Board approval.
- *Development/Marketing/Public Relations Committee*
To develop plans, procedures and schedules for Board involvement in third source funding as well as to address enrollment and public relations.
- *Facility Committee*
To assess the maintenance and expansion needs of buildings and to develop a plan that addresses these needs.
- *Executive Committee*
To prepare the agenda for meetings; to represent the whole Board when commissioned by the Board to make decisions; to deal with urgent situations that cannot wait for the next full Board meeting. (A word of caution, the executive committee does not operate independently of the Board and must report its decisions to the full board.)
- *Ad Hoc Committees*
In addition to standing committees, Board have ad hoc committees, created to accomplish a particular task in a specified time frame.

Keeping Committees Enthusiastic

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

- Keep the committee size manageable: 3- members is a good guideline.
- Develop both a clear and concise charge to keep the committee focused on its task and a time line 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.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

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.

Each Board member must have a complete, current set of Diocesan Board of Education and local Board policies. Local boards of education are responsible for the implementation of Diocesan Board policies and may not establish local policies which would be in conflict with them.

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 Davenport.

I. Determine the need.

Policy suggestions can come from numerous sources:

Administrators

Parents

Faculty

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 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.

IV. Draft the 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 pastor in a parish setting, a selected pastor in an interparochial or regional setting, or the bishop at the diocesan level. In the Diocese of Davenport, this approval occurs at the same meeting of the Board because the designated pastor or bishop will have participated actively with the Board in the formulation of the policy and will be present at the time the board's decision is finalized.

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, 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.

ROLE OF ADMINISTRATORS IN RELATIONSHIP TO BOARD OF EDUCATION

Critical to the success of any Board of Education is the selection of competent and dedicated administrators for its educational 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 educational 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 for policy formation and revision.

Communication with the Board is another component of the administrators' role. Among the ways 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 administrator's responsibility to:

- design and direct the specific program
- formulate processes and regulations
- direct the process for recruiting and interviewing personnel
- recommend initial hiring, renewal, or non-renewal of personnel
- 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 PASTOR IN RELATIONSHIP TO BOARD OF EDUCATION

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 informational needs of the people. The pastor's role is central, he can literally make or break the Board in a parish or regional school.

In the Diocese of Davenport, 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 Davenport, 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.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

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 very 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 and
- 6) serves as an ambassador for all aspects of Catholic education

It is critical that Board members understand that, individually, they have absolutely no power or authority. 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 on (pp. 32) 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 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 (it must be made clear that, according to Diocesan Board policy #210.1, membership on the boards of education is not open to the immediate family - spouse, parent, son/daughter - of employees of that particular Board or of the Diocese of Davenport). 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 for the new fiscal year 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. Provision of spiritual growth opportunities must be an integral part of that on-going process.

Understandings to be Developed

Specific understandings 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.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Constitution

Each parish and/or region in the Diocese of Davenport developed a Constitution when their Board was first established. That Constitution was submitted to the Diocesan Board of Education for approval. Revisions to the Constitution must be approved by the local Board of Education according to its own Constitution and then submitted to the Diocesan Board of Education for its approval. A copy of the most recent Constitution is to be on file with the executive officer of the Diocesan Board of Education for maintenance of the official record of the Board of Education in the Diocesan archives. Each local Board member should have a copy of the Board Constitution and be familiar with its provisions. A model constitution is found on (pp. 31-34).

Bylaws

Bylaws are rules established by the Board to govern procedures for the internal operations of the board. Bylaws must be approved by the local Board members and are usually attached to the Constitution. Each member should have a copy of the bylaws and be familiar with them.

Decision-Making Process

In the context of the community of faith of which the Board of Education is a part, the decision-making process must be one of "shared wisdom." Such a process presumes that each member of the Board has a piece of the wisdom but no member has all the pieces. It presumes receptivity on the part of each member to the "pieces" of wisdom present in his/her colleagues. It also presumes openness on the part of each member to share his/her "piece" with the membership. Complete unanimity, as a goal, is unrealistic and rarely achieved. But consensus is possible if the Board has made full use of the wisdom within and beyond its membership. Consensus will be accomplished when each member is able to accept the decision of the group. This decision may not be the first choice of the entire membership but may be the best that can be made after weighing all the alternatives and concerns.

Ordinarily, consensus can be achieved and will be reflected in the minutes of the meeting by action on motions supported by all Board members. On those rare occasions when consensus is not achievable, the president must determine whether to continue the discussion at the next meeting, table the discussion or bring the matter to a majority vote.

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 to be present depending on the nature of the executive session. Ordinarily executive sessions will occur prior to the announced 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 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.

Chairperson

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.

Recording Secretary

It is strongly recommended that a person who is not a member of the Board be appointed as recording secretary for all open meetings. This frees the elected Board secretary to participate fully in the Board discussion without concern for taking minutes of the meeting.

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 officer.

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. 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 (3-5 minutes)
 - C. Principal (4-7 minutes)
 - D. Other
- VIII. Committee Reports
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
 - D.
- IX. New Business
 - A.
 - B.
- X. Other Business
- XI. Date of Next Meeting
Prayer, etc.
Adjournment

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 going on indefinitely as new items for discussion "come to mind". It also should assure Board members 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.

Agenda Preparation

Constructing an agenda is the joint responsibility of the president, administrator, DRE, and youth minister. However, as a group, build a preliminary, tentative agenda for your next meeting.

Step 1

Make a group of items that might be included in the next agenda. To prod your thinking, how about:

- Items carried over from this meeting.
- Committee reports due.
- Future events or deadlines coming.
- Long range needs or plans.
- New programs or special events happening in the school.
- Calendar for year.

Step 2

Identify the items on the list, which require neither discussion nor action by the board/commission but are merely intended to inform. These can be taken care of by written reports; delete them. Ask the president or principal (pastor, DRE) to contact the people involved and request written reports.

Step 3

Make a judgment: Can the rest of the items be reasonably handled in one meeting of a decent length. If there are too many, delete some. (Put them off until a later meeting or take care of them in another way.)

Step 4

Arrange the remaining items in some logical order. Here are a few norms:

- Schedule participating guests early so they don't have to stay for "all your dull business" unless they choose to.
- Schedule the most difficult item late enough so the group has developed some momentum but early enough so that people are not too tired to give their best to it.
- Avoid putting two difficult or controversial items back to back.
- If the same person is doing two lengthy items, separate them on the agenda. This gives the person and the group a rest.
- Put expendable (or postponable) items at or near the end so they can be dropped if the meeting is going too long.
- Vary the order from your usual pattern. (Ever try putting the prepared prayer at the end?)

Step 5

Assign responsibility for each item. (Also, of course, be sure the person assigned knows that he or she is responsible!)

Step 6

What background information on each item would be helpful for Board members to have ahead of time so that they can make a wiser, more expeditious decision? Who will get it ready? How will it be sent? (Notice that an agenda of this type, with supporting information, must be sent early so members will have time to read the materials.)

Analysis of an Agenda

Here are some observations about an agenda model.

1. Prayer

2. Report on the Religion test taken in November by 8th grade students.

Easy to take at the beginning. Not easy to put in writing. Builds enthusiasm. Lets the teacher go home early.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 3. Open session | Provides parents an opportunity to speak to their boards. Time is controlled for the board's convenience. |
| 4. Approval of January minutes. | Copies sent ahead. No need to read them at the meeting. |
| 5. Review of preliminary budget; determination of tuition rates for next year. (See Finance Committee recommendations.) | A "heavy." Information sent to Board members in writing cuts down presentation time and helps them to formulate questions and preliminary budget. |
| 6. Second reading and vote on proposed policy P-17: "In situations of divorced or separated parents, the parent who does not have custody will, on request, be entitled to general information on the child's progress." | Note: Helpful information (reprint of the proposal) put right into the agenda sheet. |
| 7. Discussion: Would we want to adopt a tuition prepayment policy as a possible means of dealing with delinquent tuition? | Wording an item as a question does wonders to clarify what the Board is supposed to decide. |
| 8. Principal's report | I.e. whatever part can't be put in writing ahead of time |
| 9. President's report | |
| Note enclosures: January minutes, preliminary budget and tuition proposal, principal's report, monthly financial report, Diocesan Board report, Enrollment Committee report. | May take an extra stamp, but makes for more productive, less boring, and shorter meetings! |

Note: Relatively little of the talking at this "Agenda" meeting will be done by the president or administrator. **Is the agenda for your Board meeting posted in a prominent place in the parish well ahead of the meeting?**

Audience

Observers are always welcome to attend open meetings of the Board of Education. A specific time after the agenda has been formally approved should be provided for them to comment. Anyone wishing to comment should sign in (indicating his/her name and the subject of comments to be made) with the Board secretary or other designated person before the meeting begins. Those wishing to speak will then be permitted to address the Board for an equal portion of the total time (usually fifteen minutes) allotted for audience comments. For example, if three individuals wish to address the board, each would have five minutes. If five wish to speak, each would have three minutes.

Comments for the purpose of clarification may be made by Board members. There must be no discussion or debate of issues raised by guests at this Board meeting. Board members listen and, IF NECESSARY, take the matter under consideration through referral to the administrator(s) or a committee or in discussion at a future meeting. In rare cases, the need for more time to seek information and clarify major issues raised by observers may be met by scheduling a special meeting. Ordinarily, any concerns raised can be adequately addressed by staff or in the context of regular Board meetings.

Each Board constitution provides a process through which a person who is not a Board member can request time on the regular meeting agenda.

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 DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION. 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 delegated 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 not 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 must also be sent to the Director of Faith Formation for the Diocese of Davenport.

Sample Format for Taking Minutes:

What happened and how:

1. **Topic:** Indicate *what* was discussed, *whether* it led to any specific action. Indicate *who* will do *what* and *when*. You don't need to indicate in detail everything that was said, but you do need to give the major points that were discussed for the benefit of those not present as well as for the group's memory.
2. **Topic:**
3. **Topic:**
4. **Topic:**
5. **Topic:**

Next Meeting: When, where, what's on the agenda (future plans, next steps).

Methods of Decision Making	Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Decision by authority without discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Useful for simple, routine matters ◆ Useful when very little time is available to make a decision, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ One person is not a good resource for every decision ◆ Advantages of group interaction are lost

	when group members expect the designated leader to make the decision, and when group members lack the skills and information to make the decision any other way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ No commitment to implementing the decision is developed among group members ◆ Resentment and disagreement may result in sabotage and deterioration of group life
2. Decision by authority after discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Uses the resources of group members ◆ All group members can feel listened to/give input into decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Does not guarantee commitment to implement the decision ◆ Does not resolve the controversies and differences of opinion between group members
3. Majority control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Closes discussion on issues that are not highly important for the group agenda ◆ Useful when complete member commitment is not necessary for implementing the decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Does not utilize the resources of total group membership ◆ Widespread commitment to implement the decision may be absent
5. Average of members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Useful when it is difficult to gather group members at one time ◆ Can be helpful when member commitment is not necessary for implementing the decision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The benefits of group discussion are lost ◆ No commitment to implement the decision is gained
6. Expert makes decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Useful when the expertise of one person is so far superior to that of all other group members that little is to be gained by discussion ◆ Should be used when the need for membership action in implementing the decision is slight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ It may be difficult to determine who the “expert” is ◆ Advantages of group interaction are lost ◆ May result in deterioration of group effectiveness ◆ If result isn’t perfect, “blaming” may result
7. Consensus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Produces an innovative, creative and high quality decision ◆ Elicits commitment by all members to implement the decision ◆ Uses the resources of all members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Takes a great deal of time and psychological energy ◆ Takes a high level of member skill ◆ Time pressure must be minimal

Committees

The focused work of competent committees can contribute immeasurably to the overall effectiveness of the Board of Education. Appointment to committees is the right and responsibility of the president of the Board, a responsibility usually specified in the board's Constitution.

Two kinds of committees function within most Board structures. Ad hoc committees are those committees appointed for a specific task for a limited period of time. When the ad hoc committee’s task is completed, the committee dissolves. Standing committees have on-going responsibilities and are sometimes enumerated in the Constitution. As decisions are made about needed standing committees, the Board must be able to articulate a clear purpose for the committee's

existence on an on-going basis. In the absence of clarity of function, the committee members will lose interest and/or move into inappropriate roles as a result of their desire "to do something".

Committee effectiveness is determined by a number of factors. Some of those elements are addressed here.

Clear expectations. It is important that the Board clarify exactly what it expects of a committee. Verbs like "study" and "review" are not usually very helpful in giving direction to a committee. A mandate which says that a committee should assemble data on a specific issue and make a recommendation to the Board on action it might take is much more helpful.

Having made clear its expectations, the Board should hold the committee accountable for its work. How it will report to the Board should be made clear to the committee. A committee does not make decisions for the board; it simply brings information and recommendations back to the board. On rare occasions a committee may be formally authorized by the Board to act on its behalf.

A reasonable timetable. The committee should be told when the Board expects its work to be done and, if that is not for some time, it should be given intermediate dates for partial accomplishment of its task (or at least for progress reports). The timetable ought to allow a reasonable amount of time for the committee to complete its assignment.

Qualified and appropriate membership. The rule on committee membership is that it should be competent for the task and, if necessary, "representative" of the constituency. The competency is a combined thing; no one member need have all the skills required but the membership together should have the capability of doing the task assigned. If the task is sensitive or controversial, the membership of the committee should also reflect the major points of view. This is the "representative" component.

Committee membership need not be limited to Board members. If someone from outside of the Board can bring expertise needed by the project, by all means include that person (or persons). The same is true of representation; if someone from outside the Board's membership can reflect the concerns of a particular point of view, the Board should feel free to ask that person to serve.

Access to relevant data. To be effective, a committee must have access to information regarding its task. The Board and the staff (administrator, secretary, etc.) must cooperate fully in helping the committee get the information it needs.

The assistance of the office staff. The administrator must assure that each committee receives the staff assistance it needs to do its work. This may entail matters like arranging for a comfortable place to meet, providing typing, duplicating and mailing services, and keeping records for them.

Interest and appreciation of the Board and administration. A committee's best reward is to have its work taken seriously by the parent Board. The Board should sustain contact with the committee to ensure that work is progressing and that the committee has whatever it needs to do its job. An occasional question to the committee or offer of

assistance by the Board's leadership or by the administrator lets the committee know that its work is considered important. A word of thanks is also helpful, of course.

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
September	Back to School Night Catechetical Sunday – What does the Board Do? Beginning of Religious Education and Youth Ministry
October	Salary Negotiation Process with Staff Initiation of Budget Process for next year Diocesan Youth Rally (last weekend of October)
November	Executive Session to Review Staff Concerns If Needed Completion of Detail for Following Year of Long-Range Plan World Youth Day – <u>not every year</u>
December	Approval of Budget by Board
January	Submission of Budget to Parish Council Offering of Contract to Administrators (by January 15) Review of Local Board/Committee Policies Catholic Schools Week Evaluation of Directors of Religious Education and Youth Ministry
February	Approval of Budget by Parish Council Presentation of Any Needed Policy Revisions Return of Signed Administrators' Contracts (by February 15)
March	Self-Evaluation of Board Completion of Input for Principal's Evaluation Offering of Contracts to Faculty (by March 10)
April	Goal-setting for Following Year Invitation to Board Candidates to Attend Meeting Updating of Long-Range Plan Return of Signed Faculty Contracts (by April 10)
May	Board/Committee Election Staff Recognition
May - August	Report from Diocesan Staff Regarding Administrator's Evaluation
June	Election of Officers Recognition of Out-going Members and Staff
July	Might be a free month, due to family vacations.

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. A form recommended for this purpose is found on pp. 35-38.

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 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. A general overview of employee performance is provided to the Board in executive session prior to the offering of contracts on March 10. 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(s). This is accomplished within the previously-established guidelines of the Finance

Council and the Board of Education. The school budget should be prepared according to the format provided by the Diocesan Schools Office. (See pp.39).

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 hiring of personnel, most of whom must receive contracts by March 10.

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.

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 item #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.

Acknowledgments

This manual represents many years of experience and a vast array of informal sources which cannot be readily identified but have influenced the work of Boards of Education in the Diocese of Davenport over the past three decades. For all of them, which of necessity are unnamed, we are grateful.

Special credit must be given Sister Dolores Marie McHugh, BVM and Sister Jude Fitzpatrick, CHM. Their work with Board development during their years as the Des Moines Diocesan Superintendents laid a strong foundation on which our Boards of Education have continued to build. The manual they developed was the document basic to this revision.

Other resources used and adapted in the development of this manual include:

Benchmarks of Excellence: Effective Boards of Education authored by John J. Conney and Regina M. Haney

Building Better Boards authored by Lourdes Sheehan, RSM, Ed.D.

School Board Study Programs Series I and II authored by Daniel Brent and Carolyn Jurkowitz for NCEA

Sharing Wisdom authored by Mary Benet McKinney, OSB

This manual has grown out of the seeds of these formal and informal resources combined with the lived experience of many Board members and administrators. May it be a solid resource as future members continue the rich tradition of boards of education in the Diocese of Davenport.

Mary M. Wieser
Director of Faith Formation and Education/
Superintendent of Schools

APPENDIX

BOARD'S "CALENDAR" OF 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 agendas 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 meet 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 decisions 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.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR CATHOLIC BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

As a member of a Catholic Board of Education, I pledge

- to acknowledge that adult education, religious education, schools, and youth ministry programs are a significant expression of the teaching mission of the Catholic Church and function within its structure;
- to become more knowledgeable about the mission of Catholic education, as expressed in these adult education, religious education, schools, and youth ministry programs, and sincerely promote it to the various publics with whom I have influence;
- to recognize the need for continuing education about my responsibilities and know that I do not represent the Board/committee officially unless explicitly authorized to do so;
- to avoid utilizing membership on the Board as a means to accomplish personal goals/desires;
- to be fully and carefully prepared for each meeting by doing the required readings and completing necessary tasks for committee work and reports;
- to support the administrators of the programs in their authorized functions and not to intrude in administrative details unless requested to do so;
- to be alert to alternate solutions to problems by keeping an open mind;
- to 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 any pecuniary or material benefits;
- to be loyal to Board decisions even though personally opposed to the final recommendations and decisions; and
- to pray often for other members of the Board, this educational program and the community it serves.

Adapted from Building Better Boards

By: Sister Lourdes Shechian, RSM

DIOCESE OF DAVENPORT BOARDS OF EDUCATION

Model Constitution

ARTICLE I

Title

The name of this body shall be the _____ Parish Board of Education.

ARTICLE II

Nature and Function

- Section 1. This Board is a governing body operating educational programs at _____ (Parish) _____, _____ (City) _____ subject to provisions of Canon Law, regulations that proceed from the Diocesan Board of Education as well as the Department of Education for the State of Iowa and subject to the laws of Iowa.
- Section 2. The Board shall be responsible for all aspects of formal educational programs in the primary areas of catechesis: catechetical programs for children, youth ministry, Catholic school and adult education.
- Section 3. The Board shall effectively implement at the parish level the policies of the Diocesan Board of Education and the policies of the parish Board.
- Section 4. The Board is the voice of the parish community in educational planning, goal setting and policy development in accord with the intent and spirit of the Diocesan Board.
- Section 5. The Board shall have as an integral part of all its educational programs the four tasks of catechesis: a) to proclaim Christ's message; b) to develop community; c) to lead people to worship; and d) to motivate to service of others.
- Section 6. Specific duties and functions include the following:
- a. Coordinate parish educational programs and activities;
 - b. Build understanding and support for Catholic education in all its forms;
 - c. Develop the educational budget in collaboration with the Parish Finance Council and the administrators, in accord with the Diocesan guidelines and Board procedures;
 - d. Adopt and oversee the implementation of the annual educational budget;
 - e. Retain personnel according to established policies of the Diocesan and the Parish Board;
 - f. Work with the Parish Buildings and Grounds Committee
 - in planning, operating and maintaining facilities
 - in planning and building new educational facilities;
 - g. Serve as a liaison body with public authority as appropriate;
 - h. Evaluate periodically
 - effectiveness of the Board policies
 - the accomplishment of goals and objectives
 - the effectiveness of internal functioning as a Board of Education
 - all programs that the Board governs

ARTICLE III Membership

- Section 1. Members of the Parish Board of Education shall be the pastor (ex officio) and nine elected representatives.
- Section 2. Members of the Board shall be elected for a term of three years. A Board member, having served two full terms, may again be a candidate for Board membership after a lapse of at least one year.
- Section 3. A member of the Board who is absent from two consecutive regular scheduled Board meetings shall, unless excused by the president, cease to be a member. If a member is unable to serve the full term, a vacancy is created. The vacancy shall be filled as stated in the Bylaws.

A member of the Board may be removed for cause only by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members of the Board. Any action to remove a Board member shall be conducted by secret ballot.

Section 4. Election of new members shall be held annually, according to the procedures specified in the Bylaws. New members take office at the first meeting of the Board of the new fiscal year.

Vacancies on the Board shall be filled by appointment by the Board as stated in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE IV Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Board shall consist of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. They shall be elected annually by Board members (as stated in the Bylaws). Officers assume their responsibilities at the first meeting of the Board of the new fiscal year.

Section 2. All members of the Board with at least one year of their term remaining are eligible for any office with the exception of the Pastor who is ineligible to hold any office on the Board.

Section 3. The duties of the officers shall be stated in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE V Meetings

Section 1. The Board shall meet regularly at a time and place specified in the Standing Rules. Special meetings may be called by the President or Pastor as needed, or by a majority of the members.

Section 2. A quorum, a majority of the entire Board, is necessary for the transaction of business at meetings; a majority vote of those present shall be sufficient for any decision or election. Proxy voting is never permissible.

Section 3. All meetings of the Board are open unless designated as being executive. Decisions made in executive sessions must be presented and voted on at open sessions before becoming effective. Only Board members should attend executive sessions. The Board may extend, through the President, an invitation to other persons when circumstances warrant inclusion of non-Board members.

Section 4. A written record of all acts of the Board, maintained by the Secretary, shall be preserved in the parish office.

ARTICLE VI Conduct of Meetings

Section 1. As a Christian community, the Board will endeavor to arrive at consensus in its deliberations. Formal decision-making will utilize parliamentary procedure as outlined in Robert's Rules of Order or another procedure of the Board's choice.

Section 2. The ordinary order of meeting shall be as stated in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE VII Approval

This Constitution must have the approval of the Diocesan Board of Education.

ARTICLE VIII Amendments

Section 1. This Constitution, excepting Required Components, may be amended, substituted or repealed in whole or in part only by two-thirds vote by ALL members of the Board of Education at a special meeting called for such purpose. Notice of said special meeting shall be given in writing to all members of the Board at least 20 days before said special meeting. Notice shall be given to the parish at least 10 days prior to said special meeting. Notice shall state the proposed action. All revisions of the Constitution shall be submitted to the Diocesan Board of Education for final approval.

Section 2. Amendments must be presented to the Board at least one meeting prior to voting on such.

ARTICLE IX

Bylaws

Section 1. Bylaws in accord with this Constitution may be developed to further specify the internal operation of the Board.

Section 2. Bylaws may be developed and amended by a vote of one more than a simple majority at any regular meeting with a quorum present.

Section 3. Bylaws and/or amendments to Bylaws must be presented at least one meeting prior to voting on such.

ARTICLE X

Standing Rules

Section 1. Standing rules are guidelines related to the details of the administration of the Board.

Section 2. Standing rules may be adopted and amended by a simple majority vote at any regular meeting of the Board without previous notice.

OFFICIAL SIGNATURES

Pastor

President of Parish Board of Education

Vice-President of Parish Board of Education

Secretary of Parish Board of Education

Treasurer of Parish Board of Education

Dated: _____

APPROVAL

This Constitution is approved by the Diocesan Board of Education.

Chairperson of the Diocesan Board of Education

Dated: _____

Bishop

Dated: _____

**SELF EVALUATION OF BOARD OF EDUCATION
THE INTERNAL FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD**

There are two major sections to be considered in the internal function of a board: decision making and operations. Please rate each section by circling the appropriate letter according to the following scale:

- A Very satisfied
- B Satisfied
- C Somewhat satisfied
- D Not satisfied

DECISION MAKING

- 1. How satisfied are you with the Board's decision making? A B C D
- 2. How satisfied are you with the Board's willingness to delay action for further discussion? A B C D
- 3. How satisfied are you with the time allowed to prepare and discuss major decisions? A B C D

Please make suggestions, which will improve Board level decision-making.

OPERATIONS

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4. How satisfied are you with the Board's leadership? | A | B | C | D |
| 5. How satisfied are you with the composition of the Board? | A | B | C | D |
| 6. How satisfied are you with the quality of Board materials and information? | A | B | C | D |
| 7. How satisfied are you that participation and comments of Board members are encouraged and welcome? | A | B | C | D |
| 8. How satisfied are you with the level of Board member participation? | A | B | C | D |
| 9. How satisfied are you with Board members' preparation for meetings? | A | B | C | D |
| 10. How satisfied are you with the structure of Board committees? | A | B | C | D |

OPERATIONS - Continued

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11. How satisfied are you with the frequency and length of Board meetings? | A | B | C | D |
| 12. How satisfied are you with the board's participation in the evaluation of the program administrators? | A | B | C | D |

Please suggest how Board operations can be improved?

THE EXTERNAL FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD

The external functions of a Board include areas of responsibility and relationships. Please rate each external function by placing a check in the appropriate column.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Outstanding Good Fair Poor

STRATEGIC PLANNING

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The Board sets goals for the education programs 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 Board has an active development committee.	•	•	•	•
5. The long-range plan for the educational program includes development efforts.	•	•	•	•
6. The mandate for the development committee includes its relationship to the finance committee.	•	•	•	•

Outstanding Good Fair Poor

STRATEGIC PLANNING - Continued

7. The long-range plan for the educational programs includes marketing efforts.	•	•	•	•
8. There are active public relations efforts on behalf of the educational programs.	•	•	•	•

How can the Board's role in strategic planning be improved?

FINANCES

9. The Board has an active finance committee.	•	•	•	•
10. The Board reviews, approves, and monitors the budget for educational programs.	•	•	•	•
11. The finance committee's relationship with the parish council and finance council is clearly stated	•	•	•	•
12. The Board has developed policies for the financial management of the educational program.	•	•	•	•

How can the board's role in finances be improved?

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 13. The Board has an active buildings and grounds committee. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. The Board has developed in its long-range plan priorities for capital repairs and improvements. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. The relationship between this committee and other parish groups is clearly stated. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Outstanding Good Fair Poor

POLICY FORMULATION

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 16. The Board formulates policies in accord with diocesan policies and procedures. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. The Board uses opportunities for input into the policy formulating process of the Diocesan Board. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. The Board evaluates its policies regularly. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19. The Board policies are systematically indexed, codified, and published in a Board policy manual. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. Board policies are <u>communicated</u> to those people who are affected by the decisions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. The Board has a process for ensuring that the policies formulated are formally enacted prior to being implemented by the administration. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

How can the Board's role in policy formulation be improved?

RELATIONSHIPS

Please rate the Board's relationship with each individual or group by placing a check in the appropriate space:
I think that the Board's relationship with the following is...

Outstanding Good Needs Improvement

- | | | | | | |
|--|----|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 1. | director of religious education | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 2. | director of youth minister | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3.	principal	•	•	•
4.	pastor	•	•	•
5.	diocesan staff	•	•	•
6.	parish pastoral council	•	•	•
7.	parish finance council	•	•	•
8.	parishioners	•	•	•
9.	parents	•	•	•
10.	civic community	•	•	•
11.	alumnae(i)	•	•	•
12.	faculty	•	•	•
13.	students	•	•	•
14.	others, please name _____	•	•	•

How can the Board's relationship with others be improved?

New Board Members In-Service

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 kid on the block” 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
- Institutions’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.