

Immaculate Heart of Mary Consultative School Board Constitution and By-Laws

Constitution

Article I – Name

The name of this body will be the Immaculate Heart of Mary School Board, hereinafter referred to as the “Board.”

Article II – Purpose

The Board will function as an advisory body to the pastor and principal in school matters.

The Board will have the following specific responsibilities:

- a. With the leadership of the principal and the approval of the pastor, the Board develops and adopts policies that are compatible with Diocesan policies.
- b. The Board helps the pastor and principal formulate the annual budget and sources of funding it.
- c. The Board recommends to the pastor the person the Board feels should be hired as principal.
- d. The Board represents its constituency when it considers the patrons’ views while formulating policies and helping to determine budget, especially tuition rates and fund raising activities.

When a complaint is received by the Board member he/she is not to attempt to solve the problem, nor discuss it at school Board meetings, but instead should refer the individual to the appropriate person. For example, if a problem arises with a teacher, then the member should refer the person to the teacher. If the problem is not resolved, then the person should be referred to the principal. If the problem is still not resolved, then the person should be referred to the pastor. If a solution is not found, the matter is then to be referred to the superintendent. In all cases, however, the Board member is not to notify the principal when a complaint is received.

There are other areas the Board may be involved in but they all flow from these major responsibilities.

Article III - Membership

All new Board members are required to attend a workshop conducted by the Diocesan School office prior to the opening of the school year. Notification of the date and time of the workshop will be sent to all pastors and principals, who are to notify the consultative Board members. A copy of the Diocesan policies and regulations governing school Boards will be provided to each Board member during his/her time in office.

- a. The pastor will be a voting member of the Board. The pastor must give an affirmative vote for any policy or Board action to be enacted.
- b. The principal will be an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board and acts as the executive secretary.
- c. In each parochial school, the majority of the Board members are to be parishioners who have children in the school.
- d. A parishioner without children may serve on the Board.
- e. The Board will consist of no fewer than five (5) voting members.
- f. Membership on the Board, with the exception of the ex-officio member, will be for a term of three (3) years with the provision made for replacement on a staggered basis.
- g. Interim vacancies on the Board will be filled with the approval of the pastor.
- h. Local bylaws will provide the procedure for the annual selection of Board members.
- i. Any Board member missing three (3) meetings during a school year without valid reason will cease to be a member of the Board.
- j. If a Board member wishes to resign from the Board, he/she will submit a written letter of resignation to the pastor with a copy sent to the principal.
- k. For a cause for the good of the school and parish community a pastor may remove a person from the Board.
- l. Conflict of interest:
 - a. No Board member will have a member of his/her household on the school staff.
 - b. School staff members will not be eligible for election to the Board.
 - c. Not more than one member of a household will serve at a given time.
 - d. No public school administrator will be eligible for election to the Board.
 - e. No salaried employee of the parish will be eligible for election to the Board.
 - f. Heads of firms doing business with the parish/school will be required to make financial disclosure of same.

Article IV – Officers

The Board will elect the following officers at the last regular meeting of the school year: President, Vice-President, and Secretary. The pastor and the principal are not eligible for election as officers of the Board.

The term of office of the officers will run from the close of the meeting during which they elected to close of the last regular meeting of the following school year. Their terms will be for a period of one (1) year. Board members are not eligible for election to any office until they have been on the Board for one (1) year.

The outgoing president has the responsibility of meeting with incoming members to review the constitution and bylaws, responsibilities, and current business.

Article V – Board Relations

The pastor is the head of the parish and as such is a voting member of the Board. The pastor's approval is required before any Board recommendation becomes effective. The pastor supports and cooperates with the principal in the general administration of the school. (See 5.16)

The Board relates to the school only through the principal. The principal is the educational leader of the school and as such determines and selects the needed staff. Administrative decisions are the responsibility of the principal. (See 5.16)

The Board relates to the teachers only through the principal. The Board does not hire the teachers, nor does the Board evaluate teachers.

The Board relates to the parish council only in matters pertaining to the subsidy requested from the parish. The pastoral council does not determine the school budget, but approves the amount the parish will allocate to the school. The Board develops the budget for the school. (See 5.18)

There is a distinction between the Board and the educational committee of the pastoral council. The educational committee does not dictate policy, nor does it exercise veto power over the Board.

The Board relates to the parent-teachers organization in matters concerning fundraising activities and expenditures of funds in the amount agreed upon by the two organizations. (See 5.19)

By-Laws

Section I – Membership

Each member will serve a term of three (3) years. Members may serve only two year terms. Those terms may be consecutive.

During April, a slate of candidates will be developed to replace the members whose tenure has expired. Local by-laws govern the selection procedure. Current members of the Board nominate potential candidates to the Pastor who then appoints Board members upon discussion and consultation with nominees.

The formal installation of the new members takes place prior to the election of new officers.

Members who discontinue their membership on the Board prior to expiration of their term (See Article III) will be replaced by the Board for the remainder of their unexpired term, subject to the approval of the pastor.

Section II – Duties of the Officers and the Principal

The **president** represents the Board in official school matters. His/Her responsibilities are as follows:

- a. Represents the Board in official school matters.
- b. Presides at all meetings.
- c. Develops the meeting agenda with the principal.
- d. Appoints committees.
- e. Assigns additional duties to members.
- f. Instructs new Board members in their duties and responsibilities.

The **vice-president** assists the president and substitutes for him/her when he/she is unable to conduct meeting.

The **secretary** takes the minutes of the Board meeting, handles correspondence, and reads the minutes at the next meeting for the approval of the members present.

The **principal's** responsibilities are as follows:

- a. Functions as the executive secretary of the Board.
- b. Develops with the president, the agenda for the next Board meeting.
- c. Handles correspondence with the Diocesan school office.
- d. Disseminates to all Board members the agenda and any other pertinent information for the upcoming Board meeting.

- e. Assists the Board in its attempt to understand the educational problems relating to the educational policies which it supports and/or recommends.
- f. Keeps the Board, pastor, and the faculty adequately informed about the operation of the school.
- g. Provides the educational direction to the Board, the pastor, and the faculty of the school.
- h. Administers the policies established for the school.

Section III – Committees

- a. **Finance Committee** – The president of the Board, in consultation with the pastor, will appoint a member or members of the Board as a finance committee. The finance committee will work with the principal in drawing up the school budget for the school year. The budget will be approved by the Board, after which a member of the committee will present it to the parish council.
- b. **Public Relations Committee** – A member or members of the Board will assist the principal in publicity for the school, recruitment for enrollment (if needed), and general public relations for the school.
- c. **Special Committees** – Any other ad hoc committee that is needed will handle specific concerns of the Board.

Section IV – Meetings

- a. The Board will hold a minimum of six (6) meetings during the school year. The meetings should last 60 to 90 minutes.
- b. A quorum is needed for the Board to take any official action.
- c. Minutes will be kept at all meetings, excluding the agenda meetings.
- d. Board meetings are closed as regular (open) or executive (closed).
- e. Regular meetings will be announced in advance.
- f. Executive meetings will be held when the Board discusses finances.
- g. Matters discussed at executive meetings are confidential and are not to be discussed with anyone outside Board meetings.
- h. Board members are not to initiate discussion of topics that were discussed even at regular meetings. If questions are asked concerning topics discussed at the Board meetings, members should answer prudently.
- i. Minutes of Board meetings are for members only and not for publication.

Section V – Agenda

The ordinary order of the meeting will be as follows:

- I. Call to order
- II. Opening prayer
- III. Recommended actions

- a. Routine matters
 - i. Comments of non-members if present (See Section VI)
 - ii. Roll of members
 - iii. Reading, correction, and approval of minutes
 - b. Old business
 - c. New business
- IV. Information and proposals
- a. Principal's report
 - b. Committee report
 - c. Pastor's report
 - d. Questions asked of and by Board members
- V. Future Business
- a. Future meeting date(s)
 - b. Preview of agenda topics
 - c. General discussion to guide future recommendations
- VI. Closing prayer
- VII. Adjournment

Section VI – Participation of Non-Members at Board meetings

Even though some Board meetings are open, they are still to be highly regulated and timely affairs. Whenever non-members are present, the following statement should be read, which sets the stage for the meeting:

“The Board functions as an advisory group to the pastor. Our purpose is to share responsibility for Catholic education with the pastor and the principal as the policy making body for the school. The agenda for this meeting has been set for the past week. You will be afforded the opportunity to make comments immediately after the opening prayer. Board members are not permitted to respond to any comments you may make at this meeting, any subjects brought up by non-members will be placed on the next meeting's agenda if the Board deems it necessary. The Board appreciated your attendance and we commend you for your interest in the school.”

Section VII – Effective Date

This constitution and by-laws will become effective after the completion of the following steps:

1. Signature of Board president.
2. Signature of principal.

3. Signature of pastor.

As soon as possible after the effective date of this constitution and by-laws and any subsequent amendment(s) hereto, a copy of the same will be provided to each member of the Board for inclusion in their notebook.

President – Board

Date

Principal of School

Date

Pastor

Date