

**DIOCESE OF NASHVILLE
SCHOOL BOARD GUIDELINES**

GUIDELINES FOR PARISH SCHOOL BOARDS

The Parish School Board is concerned with Catholic school education in the parish. Its purpose is to formulate policy that will guide Catholic school education. All elementary schools shall have a School Board, which adheres to the following guidelines. The School Board is consultative in nature and serves in an advisory role. The *Norms of the Diocese of Nashville* state that “Bylaws of the parish council may provide specific rights and duties of governance of a parish school by the education commission or one of its committees or by a separate board.” (norm 44, page 10). See *Norms of the Diocese of Nashville* (norms 61, page 13) for additional information on school board rights and duties.

FUNCTION

The specific functions of the School Board are:

1. To support the school mission.
2. To recommend goals for the parish school in the area of curriculum, staffing, finance, facilities and development.
3. To propose policy that will guide the principal in implementing the approved goals.
4. To evaluate the effectiveness of School Board policy in achieving goals.
5. To direct the implementation of development goals.
6. The parish school board is not involved in the evaluation of the Principal unless requested by the Pastor.
7. The parish school board does not interfere with day-to-day administration, discipline, curriculum, or hiring of faculty or staff.
8. The parish school board is not a grievance board. All grievances are addressed to the school Principal.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The School Board is accountable to the Pastor and parish Education Commission in the following ways:

1. All long-range plans and development plans will be submitted to the Principal and Pastor for review and approval.
2. Upon approval by the Education Commission, the long-range plans and development plans are submitted to the Pastor and Parish Council for approval.
3. All policies will be presented to the Pastor for ratification.
4. The school budget is developed by the principal with the help of the School Board's Finance Committee and submitted for approval to the School Board and/or Education Commission as defined in local laws. The Pastor in consultation with the Parish Council and Finance Board gives final approval.
5. The School Board will write and submit to the Education Commission an Annual Report, which discusses the progress toward the long-range plan as well as the financial status of the school's development plan.
6. A member from the School Board will sit on the Education Commission to report on the status of the Catholic school program and to promote good communication between groups.
7. The School Board will be responsible for recommending the proper implementation (through local policy) of diocesan policy.

STRUCTURE

1. The School Board will be composed of 7, 9, 11 or 13 members, one of whom will be either elected or appointed to the chair according to local parish council provisions.
2. Ex-officio members of the School Board are:
 - a. Pastor
 - b. Principal
 - c. Member of the Education Commission will sit on the School Board for the purpose of promoting effective communication between the two groups.
3. Membership-at-large of the School Board shall be opened to parents, alumni, parents of alumni, and parish community members at-large.
4. No one who is an employee of the school, or spouse, child, or sibling of an employee of the school is eligible for School Board membership without a waiver from the Superintendent of Schools.

VOTING

All ex-officio members will be voting members with the exception of the principal who will be a nonvoting member.

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Members-at-large may be elected through a general parish election or may be nominated by the School Board and appointed by the Pastor.

TERMS

Term of membership will be for three years with the option of reappointment or reelection for a second three-year term. The maximum number of consecutive terms of membership is two.

MEETINGS

The School Board will meet a minimum of once a month throughout the calendar year. The Principal must be present to hold a meeting. The Pastor should be present if possible. Board meetings are only for board members and guest speakers. They are not open meetings.

AD HOC COMMITTEES

The School Board occasionally may determine the need to appoint ad hoc subcommittees for the purpose of gathering data and records. Efforts should be made to invite the parish school community into membership on these subcommittees. Subcommittees are accountable to the School Board according to the approved charge.

STANDING COMMITTEE

The School Board will create the following standing committees: Executive, Policy and Planning, Finance, Building/Grounds, and Development.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The School Board will determine with the appropriate input of the pastor and principal whether to appoint a Development Council to implement development goals. When appointed, a Development Council is accountable to the principal for the implementation of development goals.