

St. Clare Catholic School Advisory Board

The policies guiding the activities of the Advisory Board come from already existent policies of the Green Bay Diocese Department of Education (published in "In Service to Others: Guidelines for Total Catholic Education Boards, School Boards, and Education Committees," August, 2013).

I. MEMBERS AND ROLE OF THE BOARD

The Advisory Board is a group of lay individuals appointed by the Parish Administrator. They provide administrative advice to the Parish Administrator as well as the School Principal regarding the educational programs in the school. Generally, these people are selected because of their expertise in business, education, finance, fund raising, marketing and non-profit management. Usually, they are a mix of parents of students, benefactors of these programs, as well as members-at large from the parish community. The Parish Administrator and Principal also serve on the Board, but are non-voting members (although the Parish Administrator possesses final say on all matters the Board takes up). The board is advisory only and is not responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school. See Section IV, below, for more information.

II. SIX BASIC FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD

1. Catholic Identity. The board cooperates with the Principal to provide leadership in directing the mission, vision and core values of the educational programs in the school. The foundations of this mission, vision and core values are rooted in Catholic identity. The Board and the Principal ensure that the school conforms to the dogmas, teachings and laws of the Catholic Faith. They are committed to uphold the teaching of Faith and to integrate this teaching and values into all aspects of the student's or other parishioner's life. This is the most important duty.

2. Planning. At minimum the school should have a rolling three-year strategic plan. This plan should be evaluated and added to each year by the Board, so at least three years of planning are in front of the Board. The annual goals are articulated in the strategic plan as well as other short-term goals. The expenses as noted in the budget planning year of the strategic plan should be included in that year's budget that is sent to the Parish Finance Council. Copies of the strategic plan should be shared with the stakeholders of the school, as well as the Parish Pastoral and Finance councils.

3. Policymaking. Communicating educational ideals is another vital function of the Board. In writing, these become policies -- or guides to ensure consistency and efficiency of action. The Board sets the policy and the Principal is responsible to put it into action. It is important to note that the Board does not tell the Principal how to carry out the policy. The Principal should have the professional expertise to do this.

4. Hiring and Evaluating the Principal. The next responsibility is the hiring of a qualified Principal to oversee educational programs and activities. The Parish Administrator directs this hiring process, which includes advertising the position, interviewing, calling on references and using judgment. There should be a job description so that the Board members and applicant all understand the exact duties to be performed. This is vital both for the hiring process and later evaluation of the Principal. (To be clear, this evaluation

of the Principal is the duty of the Parish Administrator.) The Board should review the parish budget and needs with the Parish Administrator and the Parish Finance Council when making recommendations for educational administrators. It is strongly recommended that the school use the partnering services and expertise of the Diocesan Department of Education and the Diocesan Department of Human Resources when the need arises to search for a new educational administrator.

5. Financing/Budgeting. The fifth task of the Board is financing the educational operation. The budget is a decision-guiding tool. Decisions should be based on the needs, priorities and goals of the educational ministry. These action items should be included in the annual goals of the parish as articulated by the Pastoral Council to the Finance Council. Action items from the planning year of the strategic plan should be included in the proposed educational budget. Education is just one of the parish missions, thus the Pastoral Council must determine its place among all parish goals. The Advisory Board should approve a proposed budget, prepared with input from the Principal before submitting it to the Parish Finance Council. Based on input from educational leaders, the Board, and the parish priorities articulated by the Pastoral Council and Parish Administrator, the Parish Finance Council recommends how much will be allocated to the educational mission. The Parish Finance Council drafts an overall parish budget which includes the educational component. After the parish budget has been drafted, a review of the budget is done in a joint meeting of the full Pastoral and Finance councils with the Parish Administrator for consensus approval. If consensus is not realized, then a subcommittee of these two councils is formed. This subcommittee is comprised of two members of the Pastoral Council and two members of the Finance Council along with the Parish Administrator. After no more than two meetings, if consensus is yet to be realized, the Parish Administrator makes the final parish budget determinations, including the allocation for the educational ministries of the parish.

6. Public Relations. The sixth function of the Board is to instill confidence in the wider community regarding its (the Board's and the school's) educational mission and activities. The Board represents and is accountable to the Parish Administrator and parishioners. Communicating with various publics is known as public relations. The community has the right to know: (1) local educational goals, (2) which programs are designed to meet those goals and (3) how effective the programs are. Good public relations includes listening to the various publics involved. The Parish Administrator is generally the spokesperson for the parish and board, and also the key contact, but he may designate someone else for many public relations tasks.

III. STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

Generally speaking, each member of the Advisory Board will serve also on one of the standing committees of the Board. Members of these committees will help monitor and evaluate programs and projects in the school, and formulate policy recommendations for consideration by the full Advisory Board. Final decisions are made by the Parish Administrator, with input from the full Board. Committee members must be sensitive to the policy implications of issues before them which might require Board action. Types of standing committees include, but may not be limited to:

1. Marketing/Recruitment/Communications

- develop and implement marketing, retention and recruitment plans;
- develop marketing materials;
- provide successful marketing procedures which help student recruitment;
- lead public relations efforts;
- assess annual enrollment goals.

2. Home and School (refocused on parent-teacher collaboration)

- foster a spirit of Catholic unity among our families and staff
- brings parent feedback and ideas to the Board for consideration
- hosting various student and parent/grandparent socials
- hosting Staff Appreciation meals
- organizing Catholic Schools Week hospitality

3. Fundraising and Development

- review and evaluate planning and development activities;
- help the Board set fund-raising goals in cooperation with the Parish Finance Council;
- assess achievement of “third-source” funding goals along with the Parish Finance Council;
- oversee, with approval of the Parish Finance Council, third-source funding in the jurisdiction of the Board;
- raise funds in an annual giving campaign in cooperation with the Parish Finance Council.

4. Finance Committee (distinct from Parish Finance Council, focused on school budget)

- review the financial aspects of Board policies;
- monitor and evaluate financial decisions for consistency with the mission statement;
- review planning documents to make sure projected costs are in line with the strategic plan;
- provide timely, clear financial reports to the Board and the Parish Finance Council;
- determine whether funds are available from tuition, parish/diocese, state/federal grants, etc., to meet costs;
- recommend, when insufficient resources are available, that the Board and the Finance Council adjust plans or raise additional revenue;
- review the operating budget process and the revenue/expenditure estimates, and prepare for the Board a recommendation for approval before forwarding the recommendation to the Parish Finance Council;
- develop the budget according to the timeline recommended by the Department of Education for the Diocese of Green Bay.

5. Facilities Management

- monitor building and grounds management;
- identify repair/replacement needs for the school building and grounds requiring Board action;
- write a five-year maintenance plan for the school building and grounds
- recommend spending of funds to meet needs of the five-year maintenance plan;
- evaluate requests for expansion, renovation and maintenance;
- coordinate and communicate with the parish building and grounds committee.

6. Catholic Identity

- suggest ways to increase Catholic identity in all educational programs, including the Board;
- ensure that Catholic symbols are clearly visible throughout all facilities;
- ensure that all educational programs conform with the dogmas, teachings, and the laws of the Catholic Church;
- plan and help implement concrete ways for Catholic youth to take a more active and visible role in the parish.
- committee may take the form of an annual evaluation

IV. ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD

1. Parish Administrator and the Advisory Board

a. The Parish Administrator assists the Board in accomplishing the educational mission within the overall objectives of the parish.

- The Parish Administrator is regarded as an extension of the Bishop in the parish. Church and civil law hold this person responsible.

b. The Parish Administrator fulfills his responsibility in three ways:

- He directs and helps in the spiritual formation of the Board.
- He hires and evaluates the Principal who will uphold the true Catholic message. He may solicit input from the Board in the evaluation process, but the Board members do not themselves evaluate the Principal. Termination, when necessary, is the sole responsibility of the Parish Administrator. (In the event that a termination is being contemplated, the Parish Administrator must contact the diocesan Director of Education and Director of Human Resources for guidance.)
- The Parish Administrator joins in Board discussions, contributing a vision of the educational mission for the parish and making sure that this mission is in keeping with the teachings of the Church.

c. The Parish Administrator is responsible for directing the coordination of educational activities within the overall ministry of the parish:

- He provides the Board with updates concerning programs, facilities and finances that will affect the Board's decisions, and also outlines decision-making processes.

d. The Parish Administrator is not just another member of the Board.

- He is a Board participant and administrator of the parish. It is key to remember that the success of the Advisory Boards is based upon mutual respect and cooperation among the Parish Administrator and Board members.
- When there is a difference of opinion, the Parish Administrator has the final authority.

2. The Parish Finance Council and the Board

The Parish Finance Council and the School Advisory Board coordinate concerning the educational budget of the parish. The educational budget is submitted by the Board to the Finance Council, which evaluates the budget in light of the other needs of the parish. The Finance Council

establishes the educational budget, as part of the overall parish budget. This budget is distributed to the Parish Pastoral Council and to the Parish Administrator. (Note: the Finance Council says only how much money can be spent; the Parish Administrator, Principal, and the Board determine how it will be spent.)

3. The School Advisory Board and the Principal

a. The Board primarily serves in an advisory role for the Principal in administering an educational program or programs.

- The most common example is the hiring of a Principal. The Board may help the Parish Administrator as a potential search committee in the search process, while working with the Diocese of Green Bay Department of Education and Diocese of Green Bay Department of Human Resources. However, the Parish Administrator does the actual hiring.

b. The Principal should help the Board to:
implement Board policies;
assess educational needs and resources;
set educational priorities and goals;
prepare agendas, minutes and records.

c. The Principal also reports to the Board about educational personnel, programs and budget.

d. The Principal is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board.

4. The School Advisory Board and the Staff (Teaching and Office)

a. The Staff is accountable to the Principal.

b. The Principal serves as the intermediary between the Board and the Staff.

c. The Board can (and even should) consult with the Staff in Board discussions; at least two Staff members will be present at Board meetings to serve as resource persons.

d. The Board assists the Principal and Parish Administrator in the hiring of staff, and so to avoid conflict of interests, staff members and members of their immediate families should not be members of the Board).

5. The School Advisory Board and the Parish Community

Members of the parish community should have access to the Board. When a matter concerns the actions or duties of the Principal or of staff members, parish members should first bring their concerns to the Principal or staff member; then to the Parish Administrator who will determine whether the matter should be brought to the Board. An outline of this process will be drawn up by the Board and published.

6. The School Advisory Board and the Diocesan Board and Dept. of Education

As delegated by the Bishop, the Diocesan Board of Education oversees all matters pertaining to education in the Diocese of Green Bay. Therefore, all decisions of the Diocesan Board within its proper arena should be considered binding on parochial school boards, principals, and school staff within the diocese.

In making its decisions, the Diocesan Board often relies upon feedback from appropriate local boards of education in the diocese. Input on proposed policy decisions on the diocesan level are encouraged.

Generally, the Diocesan Board of Education addresses only those issues which affect the entire diocesan educational system. Parochial school boards may be left to decide local issues.

The most effective relationship between the local school board and the Diocesan Board of Education includes working with the Parish Administrator, school Principal and staff, and the Parish Pastoral Council to:

- enact shared decisions;
- respond to proposed policies;
- suggest areas of concern for study;
- join in needs assessments; and
- attend diocesan-sponsored programs.

V. CODE OF ETHICS FOR MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD

As a member of the Advisory Board, there are responsibilities to assume, relationships to tend and a professional ethic that should be understood by all who serve. Board members must understand how to handle sensitive information such as confidences and complaints, and how to relate to various groups. At the beginning of each school year, policies and procedures related to a code of ethics should be adequately discussed and reviewed.

Such a code of ethics should state that Board members must:

- give the needed time, thought and study to the work of the board, to be effective.
- be able to abide by and uphold the final decision of the board.
- work with fellow members in harmony and cooperation -- despite differences of opinion.
- understand that they are consultants and act accordingly toward the Parish Administrator, Principal, educational staff, the local community and media.
- keep all confidences shared during executive sessions of the board.
- put the welfare of those in education programs first in all decisions.
- never use their position on the board to benefit themselves or any other individual or agency apart from the interest of the parish and/or school.
- remember that while the primary function of the board, with the Parish Administrator, is to establish policies to give direction to education programs; the administration of these policies is the responsibility of the Principal.
- refer anyone who approaches with a problem of an administrative nature to the proper administrative person and never attempt to perform functions out of one's jurisdiction.

VI. INTERNAL OPERATIONS OF THE SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD

1. Membership

Section A

1. Members of the Saint Clare School Advisory Board shall be the Parish Administrator (ex-officio) and elected/selected/appointed representatives. All elected/selected/appointed members shall be voting members.
2. Ex-officio, non-voting members of this board shall be:
 - a. The Bishop of the Diocese or his representative.
 - b. The Diocesan Director of Education or a representative.
 - c. The Parish Administrator
 - d. The Principal of Saint Clare School

Section B

Each elected/selected/appointed voting member shall serve a term of three years and may serve a second term but may not serve more than two consecutive terms. Terms for members shall be staggered so that approximately one-third of the members' terms expire each year. Following one year of absence from the board or committee, a former member may be elected/selected/appointed for another three-year term.

Section C

Any registered adult (18 years or older) member of the parish and/or school community eligible for membership on the board.

Section D

In the event of a vacancy among the elected/selected/appointed positions on the Board, the Board shall recommend to the Parish Administrator a qualified member from the parish and/or school to fill the unexpired term.

Section E

Elections/selections/appointments for membership on the Board shall take place in May and membership on the Board will begin with the August meeting. A term shall expire on June 30 each year of the last year of a member's term.

2. Officers

Section A

The officers of the Board shall consist of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Reserve Secretary all of whom shall be elected annually at the August meeting of the Board.

Section B

Any elected/selected/appointed member of the Board is eligible for any office. No member shall hold more than one office at a time. Ex-officio members of the Board are not eligible for any office (see above, 1, Sec. A2)

Section C

The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

- a. The Chair shall facilitate and run all meetings of the Board.
- b. The Vice-Chair shall perform all duties of the Chair when the Chair is absent or unable to act.
- c. The Secretary shall maintain a written record of all official acts of the Board; receive and dispose of all correspondence as directed; maintain the minutes and

all reports and documents committed to the care of this office.

Section D

There shall be an Executive Director appointed by the Parish Administrator to the Board; this person shall be the school Principal. This additional responsibility shall be added to the job description of the Principal. As the Executive Director to the Board, the duties are to execute the actions of the Board and to assist the officers and the Board as directed. The Executive Director is an ex-officio, non-voting member of the Board.

Section E

The Parish Administrator, as the one presiding over the work of the Advisory Board, will be referenced as the Board President. There is no Vice-President.

3. Meetings

Section A

The Advisory Board shall meet regularly (as determined by the Board, but at least bi-monthly) in a publicly designated room. Special, additional meetings may be called by the Parish Administrator as needed.

Section B

To transact official business, it is necessary for a majority of the voting members to be present. A simple consensus of the majority of those present (and voting) shall carry the motion unless otherwise specified in the operating guidelines.

Section C

All other decisions will also be made by consensus.

Section D

All meetings of the Board shall be open meetings unless designated as being executive sessions. Executive sessions shall be limited to discussions of personnel, finances and subjects that ethics dictate be respected as confidential. These sessions are held to allow free discussion and to formulate a decision. Decisions formulated must be moved and voted on in open session before becoming effective. Minutes of executive sessions must be kept in a locked file --- accessible to Board members only.

Section E

The right of non-members to address the Board shall be limited to those approved by the Parish Administrator and Board Chair in advance of the meeting. Requests to be on the agenda should be received at least five days before the meeting.

Section F

A written record of all acts of the Board and minutes of all meetings, maintained by the Secretary, shall be preserved in a secure, designated place.

4. Amendments

These guidelines may be amended by consensus of the total voting membership of the Board and approval of the Parish Administrator. A proposed amendment must be presented to the members of the Board in writing at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which it will be presented for consensus.