

# BYLAWS OF THE ST. ANNE SCHOOL BOARD

## INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The mission of the Catholic School Board of St. Anne School is to promote a Catholic School system with an excellent academic program founded on Christian virtues, directing students towards a conscious choice of living a responsible Catholic life.

**It is extremely important to understand that Catholic School Boards are NOT like public school boards. Public school boards hire and fire, approve expenditures, and mandate the implementation of procedures and programs. Catholic School Boards assist the Pastor (Parish Schools) or the Superintendent (Diocesan Schools) in hiring the Principal. It is important for Board Members to understand that a Board Member's assignment is to give advice and not to become involved in the day-to-day operation of the school.**

**For the purpose of these bylaws, the word consensus indicates group solidarity that is expressed as a united voice on Board issues. Consensus is built through discussion which leads to the articulation of "the mind of the Board".**

### Article I

#### Name of the Organization

The name of this body shall be the School Board of St. Anne Catholic School.

### Article II

#### Purposes and Functions

Catholic School Boards are advisory and consultative to the Principal/Pastor (Parish Schools) or to the Principal/Superintendent in Diocesan Schools. When the Board meets as Principal and Members, and formulates and proposes written policies on school issues, the decision is effective and binding on all. Policy recommended by Diocesan Schools must be submitted to the Superintendent who seeks the approval of the Bishop.

Consultative Board Members can act only as a Board when the Board is meeting and cannot act in any of these areas apart from the School Board.

**Section 1:** The Board shall be consultative to the Principal in all school matters for which the Principal seeks the Board's advice and expertise.

**Section 2:** The Board shall give advice to the Principal and the Pastor on financial matters concerning the School.

**Section 3:** The Board, with the Principal, shall help and formulate and monitor the School's budget.

- Section 4:** The Board shall be involved as advisors in issues and written policies that further the mission and goals of the School and are subject to the approval of the Pastor (in Parish Schools) and the Bishop (in Diocesan Schools).
- Section 5:** The Board shall continually monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and feasibility of its policies once approved by the Priests/Bishop. The Priests/Bishop shall receive any reports concerning the effectiveness of the policy/policies.
- Section 6:** The Board will research, develop, and communicate for itself and the school specific actions and strategies for a 3-5 year long range plan. The plan will be reviewed and updated annually.
- Section 7:** Board Members shall be actively involved in the fund-raising efforts of the School, including the Annual Appeal, in collaboration with the Development Committee of the Board.

### **Article III Membership**

**Rationale:**

Serving on a Catholic School Board is a ministry. Members provide a service for the Catholic School community. Members should never be motivated to serve on a Board for the purpose of accomplishing personal agenda items. A Member who offers to serve needs to be open-minded and use relevant data to make informed decisions. The Member must keep in mind the overall good of the school as the basis for one's advice and input. A Board Member has no authority as an individual. Only when the Board meets as a group does the person function as a Board Member. Board Members do not serve as conduits to the administration for parents/guardians who have questions, complaints and/or concerns. Board Members must always refer such calls to the appropriate school representative. An explicit chain-of-command must be followed or parents/guardians will not be communicating with the appropriate School representative. Additionally, the process of discernment, not appointment, is the process for choosing Board Members.

Discernment is a process by which we try to decide what God wills us to do in particular circumstances. Discernment should be used as an operating principle for Boards.

- Section 1:** The Membership of the School Board will consist of a minimum of nine (9) and a maximum of twelve (12) voting members. Every effort must be made to represent the diverse populations of the schools. Membership must include person/s with a background in finance. The Principal, Pastor, the Bishop, the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, the Home and School President, the Foundation President, and the Development Director (if applicable) serve as Ex-Officio Members of the Board.

**Section 2:** A Board Member term is two (2) years, renewable for One (1) additional two-year terms, for a total of four (4) consecutive years. Following four consecutive years of service, a break of two years must occur before the former member is again eligible to serve on the Board. If a person is appointed to complete a vacated Board position, the appointed Member may serve the remainder of the vacated term, provided that the appointed Member's consecutive year of service will not exceed a maximum of four consecutive years.

**Section 3:** Those ineligible for service on the Board (applicable to Members selected after the date these bylaws are adopted) are:

- A. Paid employees of St. Anne Catholic School or their immediate relatives\*, whether teachers or non-teaching personnel;
- B. Persons with a vested interest in the business of the School or their immediate relatives or persons whose positions would constitute a conflict of interest or their immediate relatives;
- C. More than one member of a family at any time.

\*Immediate relatives include spouses, children, siblings, and/or any relative closer than a first cousin.

#### **Article IV Nominations, Selections, Absences and Appointments**

**Section 1:** Those eligible for service on the Board:

- A. Are members of St. Anne Parish or any other Catholic parishes or non-Catholic faith communities that are representative of said School's student population;
- B. Have interest in and commitment to Catholic education and the philosophy and mission of St. Anne School;
- C. Are available to attend meetings;
- D. Shall participate in yearly in-service programs specifically designed by the Diocesan Superintendent in collaboration with the Diocesan School Board;
- E. Shall participate in committee work;
- F. Shall maintain a high level of integrity and confidentiality;
- G. Shall deal with situations as they relate to the good of the entire school community;
- H. Shall be a credible witness of the Catholic faith (or to one's own religion) and to the School community.

**Section 2:** Selection of New Board Members by Discernment

During the months of January and February, the nomination committee will seek and invite individuals to allow their names to be proposed for a Board position. Those seeking a position will apply with the nominating form which shall then be

reviewed by the Executive Committee of the Board. Those approved candidates' forms will be sent to the Priest/Bishop for final approval. A discernment process will then be held with the approved candidates.

The Discernment Process shall include the following: all voting members of the Board, the Principal, the Pastor, the past President, and the candidates. In the Diocesan Schools, the Superintendent will represent the Bishop. Those present will vote on the candidates until the appropriate numbers of Board Members are chosen.

**Section 3:** Absences

A member who has three excused or unexcused absences in a twelve (12) month period may be removed by the Board. Absences are excused if the Member calls the Principal or School Secretary before the meeting to explain the reason for the absence. The following procedure will be used:

1. The Member will be notified by the Executive Committee;
2. The Member shall be given the opportunity to respond.

If the Member is removed, a replacement will be appointed by the Chairperson and Principal to fill the unexpired term of the removed Member (if the number of Board Members falls below nine regular Members.)

**Section 4:** Vacated Position (if total Membership of the Board will be less than 9 regular members, excluding Ex-officio members)

In the event that a Board Member must vacate his/her position during the term, an alternate from the most recent discernment process will be appointed. If any candidate is unavailable or unwilling to serve, then an alternate from previous discernment processes will be appointed. If all candidates are unavailable or unwilling to serve, then a replacement will be appointed by the Chairperson with the agreement of the Principal.

**Article V**  
**Officers**

The process of discernment is recommended for the selection of Officers. A platform statement given by those interested in serving as Officers may be beneficial to the discernment process.

**Section 1:** Officers

The Chairperson is selected by the following process:

Board Members nominate candidates for the position of Chairperson. Candidates develop a platform statement for presentation to the Executive Committee of the Board. The Executive Committee seeks approval of the candidates from the Priest in parish schools and from the Bishop in Diocesan schools. A discernment process then takes place.

Other Officers are selected by consensus and officers serve one-year terms. The Chairperson shall assume his/her duties July 1.

Once elected, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson must attend a Diocesan training with the Superintendent before beginning their term of office.

Duties include meeting with the Principal, other members of the Executive Committee so named in the Bylaws, and the Pastor, to set the agenda at least one week prior to the meeting. Other Board Members and parents will be notified or the date of this agenda planning meeting in order to propose agenda items. All agenda items will be recorded at this time.

The Officers of the Board shall be:

- A. *Chairperson*, who shall preside at all meetings of the School Board, conduct internal elections, call all regular and special meetings, assist in preparing the school budget, direct the functions and goals of the School Board, appoint all committees not otherwise provided for, enforce the By-Laws, and perform any and all duties incident to the office of Chairperson.
- B. *Vice-Chairperson*, who shall prepare for and perform the duties of the Chairperson and should be prepared to assume the role of Chairperson in the succeeding school year, if so elected.
- C. *Secretary*, who shall record and maintain minutes of all regular and special meetings, be the custodian of the By-Laws, present the minutes and other material as required at the meeting, answer correspondence, and perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary. In the absence of both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, the Secretary shall call the meeting to order and a Chairperson Pro-Tempore shall be chosen by the Members present. The minutes of the meetings shall be sent to the Diocesan School Board for review.
- D. *Committee Chairpersons* shall be appointed for the following committees: Executive, Finance, Buildings and Grounds, Development, and Membership.
- E. Board Members shall serve as Chairpersons of the Committees. Committees shall include persons who are not members of the Board.

**Section 2:**

Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy in the office of Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Chairperson. Should the Vice-Chairperson be unable to perform the duties of the Chairperson, a Chairperson shall be selected for the unexpired term from among the remaining School Board Members by a majority of the Members of the School Board. Should a selected office other than the Chairperson become vacant, a new Officer shall be selected by consensus for the unexpired term from among the remaining Board Members.

**Article VI  
Meetings**

During the school year, the Chairperson and the Principal shall decide what months to hold meetings and shall inform the Board. No less than six meetings shall be held during the school year. The standing committees shall meet as needed. Special Board meetings can be called by the Pastor, Principal, and/or Chairperson. If Board meetings are attended by non-members, the

Board will go into Executive Session whenever the issue/s is of a confidential matter. Two-thirds (2/3) of the regular Members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business in any special or regular meeting. Following discussion, Boards shall reach consensus on all issues. All Members will support the decision reached by consensus. Meetings shall last no longer than two hours.

The Long Range Plan with Mission Sustainability Standards must be an agenda item at each meeting. A review of the progress toward completion of selected Sustainability Standards will be discussed until all items are covered.

The Board shall conduct a self-evaluation at least twice a year.

## **Article VII Standing Committees**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** – The Members of the Executive Committee are the Principal, Chairperson of the Board, Vice-Chairperson of the Board, Finance Chairperson, and Secretary of the Board. The Pastor (of Parish Schools) and the Superintendent (as Bishop’s representative) shall be invited to participate when this committee meets. The Executive Committee shall meet a week before the regular meeting to plan the agenda.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE** – There shall be a Finance Committee whose duties shall include the preparation of appropriate financial reports in order to provide clear and concise financial information to the School Board relating to the operations of St. Anne School.

**BUILDING AND GROUNDS** – There shall be a Building and Grounds Committee whose duties include the oversight of the maintenance and expansion of the physical plant, including, but not limited to, building, furniture, fixtures, equipment, vehicles, and landscaping.

**DEVELOPMENT** – The Development Committee recommends specific action for each of the components of the development program. This Committee shall promote the image of the School in the community through marketing efforts, take a lead and make a major effort in student recruitment, and build alumni relations.

**MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE** – The Membership Committee shall consist of the Principal, the Chairperson of the School Board, at least one other Board Member, and Members-at-Large appointed by the Chairperson of the Board.

## **Article VIII Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended by consensus of the Board with approval by the Bishop and Diocesan School Board and Parish Priests (Parish Schools), provided the amendment has been recorded. Any proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the Bishop and Diocesan School Board.

**Article IX**  
**Rules of Order**

Ordinarily, input toward policy development and other major issues are not made at the “first reading,” which is for information and clarification. The “second reading” of the proposed policy occurs after additional consultation and clarification.

In order to make the best decisions, the consensus method of decision-making shall be used. In all matters of procedure, Roberts Rules of Order, Revised, should be used.

Approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2008.

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Most Rev. Curtis J. Guillory, S.V.D., D.D.  
Bishop of Beaumont

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Bret Duplant  
Chairperson, Diocesan School Board  
Diocese of Beaumont

The Bylaws of St. Anne Catholic School are hereby ratified by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vice-Chairperson

Date: \_\_\_\_\_