

## **SAINT HELEN SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

### **Article I: Title**

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

### **Article II: Nature and Function**

Section 1. This Board is an advisory body to the Pastor and the Principal for educational programs at St. Helen Catholic School in Georgetown Texas, subject to the policies and regulations that proceed from the Office of the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

Section 2. The Board shall be concerned with all aspects of formal education and sacramental preparation programs in the primary areas of catechesis: at Saint Helen Catholic School.

Section 3. The Board shall follow at the parish level the policies and regulations of the Diocesan Education Board and the Office of the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

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 education offices.

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 a community centered in the Eucharist, the Word of God, and truth of Catholic Christianity; c) to lead people to worship and; d) to motivate parishioners to the faithful stewardship of their gifts and the service of others. It shall operate in the spirit of the parish's mission statement.

Section 6. Specific duties and functions include the following:

- a. Help coordinate and integrate school educational programs and activities
- b. Build understanding and support for Catholic education in all its forms within the parish
- c. Review the educational budget in collaboration with the school Principal.
- d. Consult with and support the school Principal, the Parish Building Committee, and all other relevant parish committees
  - in coordinating educational programs for maximum effectiveness
  - in planning, operating and maintaining facilities
  - in planning and building new educational facilities
- e. Consider whether applicable diocesan Education Board and parish council policies are being implemented effectively
- f. Evaluate periodically
  - the accomplishment of goals and objectives of the educational programs

- the effectiveness of internal functioning as a School Board.

Section 7. The Pastor shall have absolute discretion to amend the Constitution and Bylaws, and to remove members and officers of the Board.

### **Article III: Membership**

Section 1. Members of the Saint Helen School Board shall be the Pastor, the Diocesan Catholic Schools Superintendent, the Principal of St. Helen Catholic School, (all ex officio) and eleven selected voting representatives.

Section 2. Members of the Board shall be selected for a term of three years and may be chosen for a second term. A board member having served two consecutive terms may again be a candidate for board membership after a lapse of at least one year. Board members shall have staggered terms so that one-third of the Board is chosen each year.

Section 3. A member of the Board who is absent from two consecutive regularly scheduled Board meetings (or from three meetings in a given year) shall, unless excused by action of the Board, cease to be a member.

Section 4. Selection of new members shall be held annually toward the end of March or in early April, according to procedures specified in bylaws. New members take office at the first meeting of the Board after their selection.

Section 5. Vacancies on the Board shall be filled by appointment by the Pastor, at his discretion. The appointment shall cover the remainder of the term of the person being replaced.

### **Article IV: Officers**

Section 1. The officers of the Board shall consist of chairperson, vice-chairperson, and secretary. They shall be chosen annually by board members before the start of a new Board year in April. Officers serve for a term of one year and may be reelected.

Section 2. All members of the Board, except for ex officio members, are eligible for any office.

Section 3. The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

- a. The chairperson shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Board; shall be executive head of the Board, shall appoint committees; and, in general, shall perform the duties relative to the office of chair. The chairperson of the School Board, or a person appointed by the chairperson, shall be a liaison to the Pastoral Council and the Finance Council.
- b. The vice-chairperson shall perform the duties of the chairperson at the request of or in the absence or incapacity of the chairperson.

- c. The secretary shall be responsible for the minutes of Board meetings; maintain a written record of all acts of the Board; conduct, receive and dispose of all correspondence as directed; send reminders of Board meetings; preserve reports and documents; and, in general, shall perform all duties incident to the office of secretary. Records of the Board shall be maintained in the School office.

#### **Article V: Meetings**

Section 1. The Board shall meet regularly at a time and place specified in its bylaws. Special meetings may be called by the chairperson or the Pastor as needed.

Section 2. A quorum, a majority of the voting members 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, except for amendments of the Constitution and Bylaws. Proxy voting is allowed. Participation in meetings by electronic means is permitted.

Section 3. All meetings of the Board are open unless either designated as being executive or devoted to selection or removal of Board members. Decisions made in executive sessions must be presented and voted on at open sessions before becoming effective. The right of non-members to address the Board shall be limited to those whose petition has been approved by the Pastor, Principal, or Board chairperson for the agenda in advance of the meeting.

Section 4. A written record of all acts of the Board, maintained by the secretary, shall be preserved in the archives.

#### **Article VI: Conduct of Meetings**

Section 1. As a Christian community, the Board will endeavor to arrive at consensus in its deliberations. If there is a dispute, formal decision-making will use parliamentary procedures as outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order* or another procedure of the Board's choice.

Section 2. Normally, the order of meetings shall be:

- Call to Order and Prayer
- Routine matters
  - Approval of minutes
  - Approval of reports
  - Information/Communications/Delegations
- Board In-service/Study
- Old business
- New business
- Future Business
  - Meeting dates
  - Discussion of topics for future agendas
- Prayer and Adjournment

**Article VII: Amendments**

Section 1. This constitution may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the total voting membership.

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

Section 3. As noted in Article II Section 7, the Pastor has final authority over any amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws.

**Article VIII: 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 a two-thirds majority at any regular meeting with a quorum of the voting members present.

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

## SAINT HELEN CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD BYLAWS

1. **Membership Requirements:** Quality catechesis, a desired goal of Catholic schools is promoted and supported through the effective leadership of the School Board. The parish seeks Saint Helen Catholic School Board members of high caliber in full communion with the Catholic Church (cf. canon 205), who acknowledge that educational programs are a significant expression of the mission of the Catholic Church, and support the teachings of the Catholic Church. Members must also be supportive of all areas of responsibility defined by the Board constitution. The Pastor and Principal are consulted in the nomination process of School Board candidates.

Registered members of the parish and parents of school age children from other parishes, who are at least 21 years old, are eligible for membership on the School Board unless they are prohibited by diocesan or school policy. The Board shall endeavor to procure for board membership a sociologically broad representation from the eligible members of the parish and parent population.

Board members are to be given ongoing in-service and formation opportunities relative to their role. Unless the Board decides otherwise, within three months of joining the Board new members will secure a background check and receive training in the Ethics and Integrity in Ministry workshop required by the Diocese for all persons who interact with school age children.

2. **Nomination and Selection of Members:** In late February or early March, nominations will be solicited from the School Board.

At the completion of the nomination process, the Pastor in consultation with the Principal will appoint members to the School Board.

The selection of members to the Board will take place in late March (the precise date may depend upon the timing of Holy Week). New members will begin their terms in April after completion of member selection.

3. **Election of Officers:** The School Board shall elect its officers for the coming year in the spring before the new term begins in April. Officers assume their responsibility at the first meeting of the new term. Officers may be reelected for more than one term. In case of resignation or death of an officer, the Board shall select a replacement within two months to complete the term of office.

4. **Scheduling of Meetings:** The School Board shall meet either monthly or every other month at a time and location to be determined by the Board. Special and executive meetings may also be scheduled at the Board chairperson's or Pastor's discretion.

5. **Interface with other Parish Boards or Councils:** Appointment of board members as liaison to other parish boards of councils should normally be made at the start of the new term in April.

6. **Standing Committees:** Standing committees may be established by the parish School Board in consultation with the Pastor and Principal. Committees will be made up of board members and other persons appointed specifically for their competence. Each standing committee shall operate within the policies and/or procedures adopted by the School Board. All committee actions require approval of the School Board. A standing committee does not have authority to act in the name of the School Board in matters under consideration, unless explicitly stated.

A minimum of one committee member shall be a member of the Board. Members of the committees need not be members of the Board. Members of each committee shall serve until their resignation, the end of their term, or their removal by the Pastor.

Standing committees shall include Finance, Development, Infrastructure, Curriculum, and Student Life.

7. **Ad Hoc Committees:** Special ad hoc committees may be established by a simple majority of the voting members of the School Board, and will be composed of board members and other persons appointed specifically for their competence. The special ad hoc committees shall operate within the policies and/or procedures adopted by the School Board.

All ad hoc committee actions require approval of the School Board. A special ad hoc committee does not have authority to act in the name of the School Board in the matter under consideration, unless explicitly stated. Upon completion of its work, the committee should be dissolved.