

Updated 7/1/2018

**SERIES 7000  
SCHOOL BOARDS**

SCHOOL BOARDS	7000
DIOCESAN ADVISORY BOARD OF EDUCATION	7100
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS	7110
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL BOARDS	7200
CONSTITUTUIONS AND BY-LAWS	7210
MEMBERSHIP	7220
ROLE	7221
RESPONSIBILITIES	7222
MEETINGS	7230
AGENDA	7240
ETHICS	7250
PHYSICAL PLANT	7260
FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT	7270

## **7000 SCHOOL BOARDS**

*“Be aware that your fundamental difference lies in the fact that your BOARD has a Catholic identity. Because of this IDNETITY you are in service to your church. You share in the ministry of EDUCATION and therefore, the policy direction you give possesses a spiritual dimension that makes it unique. Do not forget you are ‘witnessing Christians’ who serve Christ in a leadership position!*

*You really can make the difference in the future direction of your SCHOOL BOARDS. Though we celebrate the present and the god things we have accomplished, we still must create the future through the use of development programs and long range planning if we want to keep our quality Catholic Schools.”*

Sharing the Vision – Sister Mary Benet McKinney

## **7100 DIOCESAN ADVISORY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The Diocesan Advisory Board of Education is appointed by the Bishop to serve as a source of counsel and advice in matters related to the elementary and secondary schools in the Diocese of Fresno.

This Board shall act in this advisory capacity to the Bishop and the Superintendent of Schools. The body is governed by a Constitution approved by the Bishop. All board decisions, when ratified by the Bishop, are binding upon the Superintendent, the pastors, school principals, all local parish school boards, and all personnel associated with the Catholic School.

## **7110 CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

### **ARTICLE I: NAME, PURPOSE, AUTHORIZATION AND FUNCTIONS**

Section A: NAME The name of this body shall be “Diocesan Advisory Board of Education for the Diocese of Fresno”, hereinafter referred to as the “Board”.

Section B: PURPOSE The purpose of the Board shall be to assist the Bishop of the Diocese of Fresno, hereinafter referred to as “Bishop” and his Superintendent of Catholic Schools in establishing educational goals, priorities, and policies for the Catholic schools of the diocese of Fresno.

Section C: AUTHORIZATION The Board and its members shall serve at the pleasure of the Bishop and function as an advisory board to the Bishop and his Superintendent of Catholic Schools. All decisions of the Board, when ratified by the Bishop, shall be binding on the Superintendent of Catholic Schools; the Office of Catholic Education; pastors; principals; local boards; and staffs of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Fresno.

### Section D: FUNCTIONS

1. **Goal Setting Function:** The Board shall assist the bishop in developing, prioritizing, and implementing long range educational goals for the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Fresno.
2. **Policy making Function:** The Board shall assist the Bishop in establishing diocesan educational policies for Catholic schools in accord with diocesan policies. General policy areas are as follows: School Philosophy, Administrative Practices, Personnel Practices,

Updated 7/1/2018

Student Practices, Instructional Programs, Fiscal Management, School Board, Public Relations, and Educational Planning.

## **ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP OF BOARD**

Section A: NUMBER AND COMPOSITION The Board shall be composed of up to twelve (12) voting members:

1. Vicariate Representatives: One lay person from each of the nine vicariates;
2. Priests' Council Representatives: Two representatives (preferably one pastor with a Catholic school and one without);
3. Principal Representatives: One elementary school principal and one secondary school principal; and
4. At-Large Representatives: Up to three at large members as selected by the Bishop in consultation with the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

No employee of the Diocese of Fresno Education Corporation may serve as either a Vicariate Representative or At-Large Representative. All voting members must be approved by the Bishop and serve at his pleasure.

Section B: TERM OF MEMBERSHIP All voting members shall serve for a term or three (3) years. Voting members shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms. Membership shall be staggered so that only approximately one-third (1/3) of the terms of member shall expire each year.

Section C: VACANCIES Vacancies on the Board shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner as members are selected for the Board (see Article II, Section A).

Section D: REMOVAL All voting members serve at the pleasure of the Bishop and may be removed from the Board by him with or without cause. Any voting member of the board who is absent from two (2) regular meetings of the board per year shall, unless excused by action of the Board, cease to be a member.

Section E: EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS The Bishop or his delegate, the Superintendent of Education, the Assistant Superintendent, and the diocese Director of Formation and Evangelization or their delegate shall be Ex-Officio (non-voting) members of the Board.

## **ARTICLE III: OFFICERS**

Section A: OFFICERS The officers of the Board shall consist of a President, a Vice President, an Executive Officer, a Recording Secretary, and such additional assistants as the Board may elect.

Section B: THE PRESIDENT The President shall act as the chairperson of the Board and of the Executive Committee; shall appoint all committees unless otherwise specified by the Board; shall be responsible, in conjunction with the Board's Executive Officer, for the meeting agenda; and in general shall perform all duties as from time to time may be assigned by the board.

Section C: THE VICE-PRESIDENT The Vice President, as the request of the President, shall perform the duties and exercise the functions of the President and when so acting shall have the power of the President and shall perform such other duties as delegated by the President.

Updated 7/1/2018

Section D: THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER The Superintendent of Catholic Schools shall be the Executive Officer of the Board. The Executive Officer shall be an ex-officio member of the Board and shall keep the Board informed on all matters pertaining to the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Fresno. The Executive Officer shall execute on behalf of the board, all written instruments except as otherwise directed by the Board. The Executive Officer is accountable to the Bishop and shall keep him informed on the actions of the Board.

Section E: THE RECORDING SECRETARY A Recording Secretary, not necessarily a member of the Board; shall be appointed by the Executive Officer. This secretary shall keep the minutes of each meeting of the Board; shall see that all notices are fully in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws; shall be custodian of the records of the Board; and shall perform such duties as from time to time may be assigned by the President or Executive Officer of the board.

Section F: ELECTION AND TENURE OF OFFICERS All officers, except the Executive Officer and the Recording Secretary, shall be elected annually at the meeting of the Board designed for this purpose. A slate of candidates shall be submitted by a nominating committee appointed by the President. Other candidates may be nominated by any member from the floor. The newly elected officers shall take office beginning with the first regular meeting of the next academic year and thereafter until their successors are duly elected and have taken office.

#### **ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS**

Section A: REGULAR, SPECIAL, AND ANNUAL MEETINGS The Board shall regularly meet in September, November, January, March, and May, subject to change by the Board itself or to postponement by the President. Special or additional meetings shall be held whenever called by the Bishop, the Executive Officer in consultation with the president, or by a majority of the Board. The last regular meeting of each academic year shall be designated the annual meeting for the purpose of election of officers.

Section B: TIME, PLACE, AND NOTICE Regular meetings of the Board are normally held on the first Monday of the month at the Office of Catholic Education in Fresno. All regularly and special meetings may be held at such times and places as designated by the President, the Executive Officer, or by the majority of the Board. All meetings of the Board are open to clergy, religious, and laity involved in the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Fresno unless designated by the President as being executive or closed. All matters of a confidential nature regarding individual school personnel shall be discussed in closed session. Only Board members and those individuals invited to speak with the Board shall be present at closed sessions and only the final actions taken by the board shall be formally recorded.

Section C: QUORUM A majority of the current voting members of the Board is necessary for the transaction of business at meetings; and a majority vote of those present shall be sufficient for any decision or election.

**Section D: RULES OF PROCEDURE** The Board may set its own rules or procedures but in the absence of such, Robert's revised Rules of Order shall apply. The usual agenda format for regular meetings is as follows:

- I. Call to Order and Opening Prayer
- II. Recommended Actions:
  - A. Routine Matters
    1. Roll Call

- 2. Approval of Minutes
- 3. Approval of Agenda
- B. Old Business
- C. New Business
- D. In-service
- III. Information and Proposals for Discussion:
  - A. From Committees of the Board
  - B. From Office of Catholic Education Staff
  - C. From Non-Staff Communication
  - D. From Bishop
  - E. From Delegates
- IV. Future Business:
  - A. Meeting Dates
  - B. Review of Topics for Future Agenda
- V. Adjournment

#### **ARTICLE V: COMMITTEES**

Section A: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE The Board may create, by resolution, an Executive Committee consisting of four (4) more members. The President and Vice-President shall be ex-officio members. The President shall be the Executive Committee's chairperson. The other two (2) members shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Board. During intervals between meetings of the Board, the Executive Committee shall possess and execute all the powers of the Board to the extent authorized by the resolutions of the Board creating an Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall meet at the call of its chairperson and shall fix the rules and procedures to be used at its meetings. Minutes of the Executive Committee's meetings shall be taken and submitted to the entire Board at the next regular meeting. At Executive Committee meetings, a majority shall constitute a quorum.

Section B: OTHER COMMITTEES The Board may create by resolution such other committees as it deems advisable and may discontinue the same at its pleasure. Each committee shall have such powers and shall perform such duties as may be assigned to it by the Board. Unless otherwise directed by the Board, the president shall appoint all committee members and chairpersons.

#### **ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENTS**

Section A: AMENDMENTS This Constitution and By-Laws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present and voting at a regular meeting; the amendment having been presented in writing at the preceding regular meeting. Any amendment shall become effective when ratified by the Bishop.

#### **7200 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL BOARDS**

The local school board is intended to involve parents and parishioners in the education of their children as well as in the life of the church and its decision-making process. Its mission is to bring wisdom, talent, experience, faith life, and good will into the process of providing quality education for all the children served by the school. The local school board furnishes the support and leadership to carry out the church's commitment to Christian education. All decisions of the local school board that are in conformity with diocesan policy become final when approved by the pastor (or Superintendent of a

Diocesan Administered School). Decisions of diocesan high school boards that are in conformity with the diocesan policy become final when approved by the rector.

### **7210 CONSTITUTIONS AND BY-LAWS**

Elementary Schools: Each elementary school's constitution and by-laws for its school board shall substantially conform to the "Model Constitution and By-Laws" adopted by the diocesan Advisory Board of Education. Each school's constitution and by-laws and all subsequent amendments or revisions shall be submitted for approval to the diocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools for ratification by the Bishop. An approved copy of these documents shall be filed at the school and at the Office of Catholic Education.

Secondary Schools: The constitution and by-laws for the school boards of diocesan secondary schools and all subsequent amendments and revisions to these documents shall be submitted for approval to the Diocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools who will seek the advice of the diocesan Advisory Board of Education before submitting it for ratification to the Bishop. An approved copy of these documents shall be filed at the school and at the Office of Catholic Education.

### **7220 MEMBERSHIP**

The Catholic school is a complex organization which provides important services to the family, to the church, and to the community as a whole. The school is accountable to these three entities in the performance of its function and also depends on all three for survival.

The Catholic school board should be composed of members who:

- A. Bring a wide range of skills, knowledge, and experience to their task (Membership should be diverse, including not only parents, but persons of different professional, occupational, and social backgrounds and non-parents from the larger community).
- B. Have the wisdom and maturity to make good judgments and participate in constructive dialogue.
- C. Have the serious commitment which will keep them faithful to the hard work involved in being board members.
- D. Avoid partiality, to look beyond the narrow interests of their own children or special groups, and to work for the good of the whole school.
- E. Understand and observe confidentiality.

### **7221 ROLE**

The local school board brings together the educational and administrative talents of the principal, the spiritual leadership of the pastor, and the experience, knowledge, and insights of the laity in a collegial effort to create for the children of the parish a Christian educational community. To be an effective board, the members need to understand their role and how it relates to the operation of the school.

The proper activity of the local school boards and diocesan high schools is school development, recruitment, public relations, budgetary review and accountability, and plant management. It is not the role of the School Board to involve itself in administration, i.e. hiring, terminating, supervision, or evaluation.

The local school board shares with the pastors and principals a responsibility for providing quality education. It is important the boards understand their role and function as an advisory body to the pastor and principal.

## **7222 RESPONSIBILITIES**

A local school board member represents the school to the total community and, therefore, membership on a local school board involves stimulating responsibilities and relationships. Information that is confided demands a professional ethic so board members must be educated to handle confidential matters, to deal with issues fairly, and to represent the school to the surrounding community justly. Its responsibilities are;

- A. Determine policies in collaboration with the pastor and principal on finances, public relations, and other school policies within the framework of diocesan regulations.
- B. Reflect the views of parishioners by acting as a liaison group between parents and school.
- C. Help create a better understanding of Catholic education in the parish and in the community.
- D. Plan with pastor and principal for the school's educational needs of the future.

## **7230 MEETINGS**

Meetings of the local school board should be held at least monthly with the possible exception of a summer break. They should normally be held in the same place, on the same day of the month, and at the same time. Admission to both open and closed meetings of the local school board is determined by the Board's constitution and by-laws.

## **7420 AGENDA**

An agenda is the official road map for a school board meeting. Careful preparation of the agenda gives direction and cohesiveness to board meetings. The agenda should be prepared by the board president and the principal and given to the board members together with pertinent documents at least one week before the meeting. The agenda should also be posted in prominent places for the benefit of interested parishioners. Written recommendations from committees, calling for an action of the board, should be supplied to the board members prior to the meeting.

Non-board members or delegations may address the board as determined by the Board's constitution and by-laws. Non-board members and delegations shall petition either the principal or board's president for inclusion in the board's agenda.

## **7250 ETHICS**

School board members are expected to perform their duties according to the following "Code of Ethics:"

Code of Ethics: As a member of a Catholic School Board of Education, I pledge to:

- A. Continually become more knowledgeable about the teaching mission of the Catholic church, the mission of Catholic schools, the specific mission, philosophy, and goals of the school I serve, and my roles and responsibilities as a board member;
- B. Promote Catholic school education to the various publics with whom I have influence and recognize the public nature of my membership on the board;
- C. Know that I do not represent the school or board unless explicitly authorized to do so;
- D. Support the principal in his/her authorized functions and avoid involvement in the school's administration unless requested to do so;
- E. Be fully and carefully prepared for each meeting by doing the required readings and completing committee work and reports;
- F. Be alert to alternate solutions to problems by keeping an open mind;
- G. work with other board members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinions;

Updated 7/1/2018

- H. Base my discussion and decisions upon all available facts in each situation, voting with honest conviction unswayed by partisan influence;
- I. Disqualify myself from discussion or voting on issues that may create a conflict of interest for me, for my family, or business, especially any issue that may grant me any personal or financial gain;
- J. Abide by and uphold the board's final decisions even though I may have opposed or voted against them; and
- K. Pray often for members of the school board, my Catholic school, and the parents, parish, and community it serves.

#### **7260 PHYSICAL PLANT**

It is the board's responsibility to assist the pastor and principal in creating and maintaining a physical environment that is conducive to learning, community building, and both extra-curricular and religious activities. It should be consistent with reasonable expectations of future funds and enrollment trends. Decisions that involve the campus master plan and the capital outlay budget request are the major concerns. Prudence demands that optimal use be made of the present physical plant before construction or remodeling is considered.

#### **7270 FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT**

The board must make sure the school has financial resources sufficient to meet operating costs and to maintain the school in a manner consistent with the school's stated philosophy and goals. The collective effort of all board members is essential to the responsibility of seeing that secure financial resources are established. The specific character of each member's contribution to this effort will vary according to his/her skills, time, and resources. Those board members having special financial expertise will be able to offer especially helpful financial advice and assistance.