

St. Mary's Catholic School Advisory Council

Revised June 2017

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I

TITLE

The name of the body shall be the St. Mary's Catholic School Advisory Council, herein referred to as the "Advisory Council" or "Council."

ARTICLE II

NATURE AND FUNCTION

The purpose of the Advisory Council shall be to support the spiritual, educational and financial direction of St. Mary's Catholic School, by advising the Parish and School administration regarding the operations of the School.

The Council's purpose may be best accomplished by daily prayer, by presence at school activities, by supporting the development and implementation of a balanced and reasonable budget, by supporting policy direction for educational and spiritual programs, by advising the Parish and School regarding the School's operations and financing, and by ensuring that all local and School policies are in proper accord with the intent and spirit of the policies established for the school system by the Diocese of Alexandria, and the State of Louisiana.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL

Section 1. Number and Composition

- a. Members of the Council ("Members") shall be appointed by the Pastor, and shall include the Pastor of the Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception (or his representative), the School Principal, the president of the Finance Council for the Minor Basilica, and other appointed persons, as further outlined herein.
- b. The Council should include Members that can provide guidance to the School administration (and Parish, as necessary) on all matters relating to the success and well-being of the School and its students. To support this objective, to the extent possible, the Council should include a group of Members with collective experience and expertise in the following general categories: (a) Catholic spirituality; (b) academics; (c) finance; (d) fundraising / alumni outreach; (e) sports and extracurricular activities; and, (f) physical plant / construction. The Council should, to the extent possible, include a balance of Members from the following cross-categories: (i) those with students enrolled in the

School; (ii) those with academic experience; (iii) alumni; and, (iv) those with a good understanding of the local community.

c. Except as otherwise provided herein, and to the extent that votes are cast by Members, each appointed voting Member is permitted one vote.

d. The Council shall consist of the following Members:

Pastor (or his representative)

Deacon (Non-voting)

School Principal (Non-voting)

Faculty Representative (Non-voting)

President of the Finance Council of the Minor Basilica (or a Trustee of the Minor Basilica, in the President's absence)

Two Parent Representatives (Appointed by the Pastor)

Five Other Members appointed by the Pastor

Section 2. Tenure of Office

Each appointed Member shall serve a term of three years, serving no more than two consecutive terms, unless otherwise appointed by the Pastor. The Pastor may appoint some Members for terms of less than three years, to provide for staggered terms of membership on the Council.

Section 3. Participation

- a. Unexpired terms of Council Members shall be filled by the Pastor through appointment.
- b. In order to be an effective body, Members are expected to participate in all regular meetings and applicable school activities. Members may be removed from the Council for failing to adequately meet the requirements to serve, as outlined in this Constitution.

ARTICLE IV

OFFICERS

Section 1. Organization

The structure of the Council shall include the full body of Council Members, and within it an Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Officers, the Pastor (or his representative) and the School Principal. The purpose of the Executive Committee shall be to establish administrative guidance for the Council, and to act on behalf of the Council when required, and a regular meeting cannot be held due to unavoidable time or logistical constraints. The Officers of the Council shall include a President, a Vice-President, and a Secretary, all to be chosen from the voting Members of the Council.

Section 2. Election of Officers

- a. The President, Vice-President, and Secretary shall be elected annually through the process of prayerful discernment and voting by the Council Members at the final meeting of the academic year.
- b. All appointed Members of the Council are eligible for any office.

Section 3. Duties of the Officers

- a. The President shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Council.
- b. The Vice-President shall perform all the duties of the President when the President is absent or unable to act.
- c. The Secretary shall: (i) maintain minutes and a written record of all acts of the Council; (ii) receive and transmit all correspondence, as directed by the Council; and, (iii) with the support of the School's secretary, preserve all written records, reports, and documents committed to the Secretary's care.

ARTICLE V

MEETINGS

Section 1. Regular and Special Meetings

- a. The Council shall meet regularly in a publicly designated room.
- b. Special Meetings of the Council may be called by the Pastor or the School Principal.
- c. Because of the advisory nature of the Council, no meeting shall be held without the Pastor or his representative and/or the School Principal in attendance.
- d. The Council shall follow a "standing agenda" for each meeting, which standing agenda shall typically include the following: (a) finance report, and review of financial statements; (b) reports from the Principal; (c) reports from Members, as applicable; (d) reports from committees, as applicable; (e) old business; and, (f) new business.

Section 2. Voting

- a. Because of the advisory nature of the Council, the Council may deliberate and make recommendations on matters without formal votes being cast.
- b. To the extent that votes are cast on a matter, a simple majority of those Members present and voting shall carry any motion, decision, or other matter, unless otherwise specified herein. The outcome of any such votes shall remain advisory to the Pastor, who shall make the final decisions on such matters with prayerful discernment.

Section 3. Open Meetings

- a. At least once in the Fall Semester and at least once in the Spring Semester, the Council may provide for a special open meeting of the stakeholders of the School. During such open meetings of the stakeholders, the Council may provide for a special agenda to accommodate the purpose of such meetings.

- b. Alternatively, at least one Council meeting in the Fall Semester and one meeting in the Spring Semester may be designated as open meetings, during which stakeholders may attend and participate.

Section 4. Visitors

The Pastor and/or Principal may invite visitors to attend Council meetings. The Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Alexandria Diocese may be invited to attend and participate in Council meetings in an advisory capacity.

Section 5. Minutes and Archives.

Once approved by the Council, the Secretary shall certify the minutes of all Council meetings to the School's secretary (and the School Principal). Upon such certification, the School Principal shall ensure that the certified minutes are made available to all interested persons including without limitation the Members, School employees, and the parents of School students.

A written record of the minutes and all acts of the Council, maintained by the Secretary, shall be preserved in the School office, with the support of the School's secretary, in accordance with any applicable retention guidelines required by the Diocese, State or other applicable authority.

ARTICLE VI

COMMITTEES

Section 1. Standing Committees.

Standing Committees may be established by the Council to address specific needs within the School, in support of the Council's objectives and responsibilities. Standing Committees shall have a designated committee chairperson, who shall report periodically to the Council regarding the committee's progress.

A Standing Committee may consist wholly or partly of Members of the Council. A Member may serve as the chairperson of a Standing Committee.

The Council may maintain Standing Committees for the following general categories:

Spiritual—with responsibilities including without limitation: (i) regular prayer for the School and its students, teachers, faculty, staff, parents, and other persons associated with the School; (ii) recommendations regarding the development and implementation of Christian evangelization opportunities within the School, and beyond the School, including specifically to the local community; and, (iii) documentation and preservation of the history of St. Mary's Catholic School.

Academics—with responsibilities including without limitation evaluation and recommendations regarding the academic curriculum.

Finance – with responsibilities including without limitation: (i) evaluation and recommendations for all financial matters affecting the School; and, (ii) preparation of financial components of the School’s Annual Report.

Fundraising / Alumni Outreach / Public Outreach—with responsibilities including without limitation: (i) raising funds from outside sources to finance the needs of the School; (ii) establishing meaningful ties with alumni of the School; (iii) establishing meaningful ties with persons and organizations outside the School, to further the purposes of the School.

Sports and Extra-Curricular Activities—with responsibilities including without limitation: (i) evaluation and recommendations regarding all matters concerning School sports; (ii) evaluation and recommendations regarding all matters concerning extra-curricular activities; (iii) evaluation and recommendations concerning School facilities for sports and extra-curricular activities.

Physical Plant / Construction—with responsibilities including without limitation: (i) long range site planning and facilities planning for the School; (ii) evaluation and recommendations regarding immediate, near-term, and long-term physical plant needs for the School; (iii) evaluation and recommendations regarding maintenance and construction issues.

Section 2. Temporary Committees

The Council may provide for Temporary Committees as it deems advisable, and may discontinue the same at its pleasure, for the purpose of addressing specific, non-recurring situations.

Each Temporary Committee shall have such powers, and shall perform such duties, as may be assigned to it by the Council. Temporary Committees shall be appointed, with vacancies filled, in a manner determined by the Council.

ARTICLE VII

AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Amendments

This Constitution may be amended, supplemented, suspended, or repealed, in whole or in part, by a vote of two-thirds of the total Membership, with such action subject to approval of the Pastor. The Pastor also retains the authority to amend this Constitution under extraordinary circumstances.

Section 2. Presentation

Proposed amendments must be presented to the Council in writing at least four weeks prior to any meeting for discussion and consideration of the amendment.

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