

**Bylaws for the
Commission for St. Joan of Arc Catholic Elementary School
of St. Joan of Arc Parish, Inc.**

Article I Name

The name of this body shall be the School Commission of the Parish of St. Joan of Arc Roman Catholic Church, Inc. of Indianapolis, Indiana, hereinafter referred to as the Commission.

Article II Purpose and Function

Section 1. The Pastor or Parish Life Coordinator (PLC) or assigned parish administrator (hereinafter referenced as Pastor) and the Parish Pastoral Council shall establish the Parish School Commission as a “consultative/advisory” body to assist the Pastor and School administrator (Principal) in the governance of the Parish School as defined in *A Primer on Educational Governance in the Catholic Church* (NCEA, 2009). As such, the Commission serves as a policy-recommending body for St. Joan of Arc School, hereinafter referred to as the School.

The Commission is responsible for plans and policy and the School administrator is responsible for policy implementation and the day-to-day details of educational administration in the School. Commission policy and decisions shall be binding throughout the School upon written ratification by the Pastor. The School operates under the authority of the Pastor, Parish Pastoral Council, and the policies of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and under the Sole Member (Archbishop of Indianapolis or designee) as provided in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Parish.

Section 2. The School Commission shall promote and advance the mission of the School in conjunction with the Parish for the faith formation, education and instruction of students in St. Joan of Arc Parish of Indianapolis, and adopt in connection therewith a course of education in Catholic principles as well as a secular educational program for elementary schools as prescribed by the Archdiocese and the State of Indiana. The School is established to carry out the teaching ministry of the Catholic Church. As such, the religious and academic programs shall at all times be in accordance with the teachings and laws of the Roman Catholic Church and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

Section 3. The School Commission of St. Joan of Arc School shall have as its primary concern the ministry of Catholic School education: the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development of the students. The Commission, operating under the guidance of the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools and in conformity with the policies of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Indianapolis, Inc., shall concern itself with planning and policy issues pertaining to the general excellence of Catholic education at the School as a ministry of the Parish.

Section 4. The Commission shall be responsible to the Pastor and delegates for consultation on all aspects of the formal educational program of the School. Working in close consultation with its Administrative Officer, (Principal as educational delegate of the Pastor), and hearing its many constituencies, the Commission Members shall formulate and recommend to the Pastor and his delegates, plans and policies that will enable the School to reach agreed-upon goals. These goals will be related, but not limited to the overall goals established by the Parish and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. In consultation with the Pastor and his delegates (school administrators), the Commission shall be responsible for:

- a) Establishing and recommending to the Pastor for his approval a three-to-five year strategic plan for the School with ongoing monitoring and annual review/revisions. Said strategic plan shall be based upon the

National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Elementary and Secondary Catholic Schools (NSBECS 2012 or latest edition) (including required school improvement plans for the School as prescribed by the Archdiocese and State of Indiana for accredited non-public schools);

- b) Formulating and recommending general educational and financial policies that guide the administration in achieving the objectives of the strategic plan. Said policies recommended by the Commission to the Pastor shall be in compliance with the Canon Laws of the Roman Catholic Church, Indiana civil law regarding accredited non-public schools and the policies of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Such policies shall guide planning and administration in the following areas:
 - 1. Academic affairs;
 - 2. Student affairs;
 - 3. Faith Community affairs;
 - 4. Business affairs;
 - 5. Institutional Advancement/Development/Enrollment affairs; and,
 - 6. Personnel affairs.
- c) Providing input to the Pastor on the performance appraisal of the effectiveness of the School administrator (Principal) on how he/she has administered Commission policy and met the goals set by the Commission, using the prescribed Archdiocesan performance appraisal process for school administrators;
- d) Participating in the evaluation of policies and plans and the effectiveness of Commission operations;
- e) Developing and preparing the long-term financial plan, annual operating budget, monthly financial reports, and end-of-year financial statement of the School, in conjunction with the School administration and Finance Council or Commission of the Parish, and presenting these to the Pastor for ratification;
- f) Directing the implementation of Archdiocesan, state and local educational policy in the schools through the School administrator (Principal);
- g) Oversight of and active participation with the administration in comprehensive institutional advancement/development planning and programs for the School designed to attract human and financial resources including: communication, public relations, marketing, fund-raising, student enrollment management and retention, alumni affairs, etc.;
- h) Communicating effectively with the School community, which includes the Pastor, Principal, staff, faculty, parents, students, alumni, parishioners and others;
- i) Oversight and evaluation with the Pastor of the overall mission effectiveness of the School in the context of the Catholic Faith.

Adapted from CSM

Article III Pastor

Section 1. The Pastor, Parish Life Coordinator or assigned parish administrator shall be an *ex-officio* member of the Commission. He or she has no voting rights and shall not be counted for purposes of determining quorum. The Pastor consults with the Commission and ratifies or vetoes all formal actions of the Commission in writing.

Section 2. The educational delegate of the Pastor and administrator of the School (usually the Principal), shall be an *ex-officio* member of the Commission and serve as its Administrative Officer, providing professional educational leadership. He or she has no voting rights and shall not be counted for purposes of determining

quorum.

Article IV Members

- Section 1.* Nine (9) to twelve (12) persons elected by the parish, or discerned by the Commission members and/or appointed by the Pastor shall be decision-recommending (voting) members of the Commission. Whether elected or discerned or otherwise selected, all new members are officially appointed by the Pastor.
- Section 2.* The Commission shall establish a schedule that will provide for replacement of approximately one-third (1/3) of the voting members of the Commission each year (staggered terms).
- Section 3* New members of the School Commission shall be nominated annually in May in accordance with a nomination process developed and approved by the Commission.
- Section 4* Each Commission member shall be appointed to a term of three (3) years. No voting member may serve more than two (2) consecutive three-year terms. Terms begin on July 1 and end June 30. The Pastor and Administrative Officer serve as long as they continue to be officers of the Parish.
- Section 5* Special membership provisions may be considered to better serve the population of the School by amendment of the Bylaws and ratification by the Pastor. These provisions may include: Catholic persons from other parishes, non-Catholic persons involved with the School, and representatives from School-supporting organizations. In all cases, the majority of the Commission must be Catholic and the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Commission must be Catholic. No more than sixty-six percent (66%) of the Commission members should be current School parents to ensure diversity of opinion. The membership of the Commission should mirror the diversity of the community.
- Section 6.* Membership Criteria: Potential members should meet the following criteria:
- a) Demonstrate an interest in and a commitment to Catholic education, and to the philosophy and mission of St. Joan of Arc Catholic School;
 - b) Attend Commission meetings regularly and fully participate in the inservice programs and committees of the Commission;
 - c) Maintain the highest level of honesty and personal integrity, actively and fully support Commission decisions, and avoid disclosure of confidential matters;
 - d) Abide by the Bylaws and policies of the Commission and support the school administrators in the performance of their duties;
 - e) Deliberate on all matters before the Commission in good faith and for the common good of the School, the Parish, community that it serves, and the Archdiocese of Indianapolis;
 - f) Be a credible witness to the Catholic faith and to Catholic moral values and religious teachings in the School community and beyond;
 - g) Demonstrate a willingness to actively participate in and provide leadership for resource development and advancement programs for the School and financially support the School to the best of their ability.
- Adapted from CSM
- Section 7.* Vetting of Potential School Commission Members: The purpose of vetting is to guarantee the selection of the best qualified persons who will be recommended in advance to the Pastor to hold leadership positions on the School Commission. These standards may also be used as guides for selecting committee or task force members. Each Commission, Council, Committee or Task Force may have separate requirements for membership. However, the basic requirements are:

- a) Catholic members are to be active and practicing adult Catholics (e.g., registered and participating members of the parish);
- b) If married, the marriage is recognized by the Catholic Church;
- c) Attend Saturday evening/Sunday Mass weekly;
- d) Reflect the teachings and values of the Catholic Church in their lives;
- e) Non-Catholic members are to reflect the teachings and values of the Catholic Church in their lives;
- f) Those persons who intentionally are former or inactive Catholics are not eligible for membership.

Section 8. Paid employees and spouses of paid employees of the School or Parish are not eligible for Commission membership. Business interests with the School or Parish may also cause a conflict-of-interest. Each Commission Member shall annually sign a Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure form for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and make known any potential conflicts of interest that may impair the member's ability to serve on the Commission.

Section 9 Members are expected to attend all scheduled meetings and to participate in committee work. A member who has more than three unexcused absences from regularly scheduled meetings may be asked to resign by the Chairperson and Pastor. Any member may recommend to the Chairperson and/or Pastor, disciplinary action, suspension, or the discharge of a member for failure to perform requisite duties or other good cause. The Pastor shall have the power to remove a member for any reason, whatsoever, with or without cause.

Section 10 The Commission shall fill vacancies for the remainder of vacated terms with consultation and approval of the Pastor.

Article V Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Commission shall include a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Administrative Officer (Principal).

Section 2. Commission officers shall be determined annually at the June meeting and serve from June 30 until July 1 of the following year. All officers shall serve one-year terms and may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms in the same office except for the Administrative Officer who serves *ex-officio* because of his/her position as Principal.

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

- a. **The Commission Chairperson** shall preside at all meetings and represent the Commission at all Parish Pastoral Council meetings either in person or through a designated Commission member; The Chairperson must be a practicing Roman Catholic in good standing with the Church.
- b. **The Vice Chairperson** shall preside in the absence of the Chairperson or when the Chairperson desires to introduce, second or speak to a motion; The Chairperson must be a practicing Roman Catholic in good standing with the Church.
- c. **The Secretary** shall keep accurate minutes of meetings, forward the minutes to each Commission member, and with the assistance of the Administrator and Executive Committee, provide each member with the agenda and preparation materials for the next meeting, and handle all necessary correspondence. Note: Any of the duties of the Secretary may be performed by an assistant (non-Commission staff position), who shall be responsible to and work with the Commission Secretary for purposes of carrying out these responsibilities.

- d. **The Administrative Officer** (administrator of the School, usually the Principal) shall be the Administrative Officer of the Commission, providing professional leadership to the Executive Committee and the Commission and shall be responsible to the Pastor and Commission for implementation of Commission policy and plans and the day-to-day administration of the School. The Pastor is the employer of the Principal.

Section 4. The Executive Committee of the Commission shall consist of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Administrative Officer (Principal) The purpose of the Executive Committee is to formulate the Commission meeting agenda, make committee appointments, and to serve as informal advisors to the Administrator.

Section 5. Removal of Officers. Except for the Principal, any officer may be removed by the Commission and Pastor when in the judgment of the Commission, the best interest of the School will be served thereby. Such actions require a quorum, majority consensus and approval of the Pastor.

Section 6. The Executive Committee shall meet at least one-two weeks prior to the regular meeting of the Commission to prepare the regular meeting agenda. The agenda and written committee and School reports should be available to members at least one week prior to the regularly scheduled meeting to ensure adequate time for members to read and understand the documents presented before the meeting.

Article VI Meetings

Section 1. Regular meetings of the School Commission shall be held monthly.

Section 2. Special meetings of the School Commission may be requested by the Chairperson, Pastor, or Administrative Officer at any time. Written notice must be made to all voting members and be postmarked or if electronic communication, time-stamped at least five days prior to special meetings. Notice must be by first class mail, courier service, telephone, electronic mail or text message, facsimile or such other such communication reasonably designed to provide prompt notice to the time, place and purpose thereof to each member.

Section 3. Members or any committee appointed by the Commission may participate in a meeting by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment if all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other simultaneously, and participation in such manner shall constitute presence in person.

Section 4. Any action required or permitted to be taken at any meeting of the Commission or any committee thereof may be taken without a meeting, if all members of the Commission or of such committee consent thereto in writing and the writing or writings are filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Commission or of such committee. Action taken under this section is effective when the last member signs the consent and the Pastor ratifies the action in writing, unless the consent specifies a prior or subsequent effective date.

Section 5. All written notices required to be given by any provisions of these Bylaws shall state the authority pursuant to which they are issued. Every written notice required pursuant to these Bylaws shall be deemed duly served when the same has been deposited in the United States Mail with first class postage fully prepaid, delivered to a courier service, transmitted by facsimile, transmitted by electronic mail, text message or such other written communication reasonably designed to provide prompt notice, plainly addressed to the addressee at his/her last address appearing on the appropriate record of the Commission.

Section 6. All meetings of the Commission are to be open meetings unless designated as being executive sessions. Policy decisions made in executive sessions must be presented and voted on at open sessions before

becoming effective. In order for the Commission to go into an executive session, a motion for executive session must be made, seconded and approved by the Commission. The right of non-members to address the Commission shall be limited to those whose petitions have been approved for the agenda in advance of the meeting. Petitions must be addressed to the chairperson of the Commission and approved at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting. As a private non-public organization, in some rare cases, the Commission may restrict persons from attending or addressing the Commission.

Section 7. Quorum: A simple majority of the appointed voting members of the Commission constitutes a quorum for each meeting.

Section 8. Decisions/recommendations regarding policy matters and other major issues are not generally made at the “first reading.” The “second reading” of the resolution occurs after additional consultation, clarification and possibly amendment. At that time the Commission begins its decision-making for recommendation to the Pastor.

Section 9. The Pastor and/or Administrative Officer (Principal) must be present at all meetings of the Commission.

Article VII Committees

Section 1 The recommended standing committee structure for a Parish School Commission is as follows and corresponds to the four Domains (of the *National Standards and Benchmarks for Effective Catholic Schools*)

I Domain: Mission and Catholic Identity

- a) Mission Effectiveness Committee

II Domain: Governance and Leadership

- b) Executive Committee
- c) Policy and Planning Committee

III Domain: Academic Excellence

- d) Administrative Function monitored by School Commission

IV Domain: Operational Vitality

- e) Facilities /Safety Committee (aka Buildings and Grounds Committee)
- f) Finance Committee
- g) Institutional Advancement Committee (Formerly Marketing/Development Committee).

(The following committees should not be operated separately from the Institutional Advancement Committee and function. These can also be considered sub-committees or as part of the Advancement Committee function.)

- Marketing or Enrollment Committee
- Communication Committee

Adapted from CSM

Section 2. The Commission may establish such other standing committees or special *ad hoc* committees or task forces as it determines are warranted in the exercise of its discretion. *Ad hoc* committees are considered temporary with a set or very specific task, selected and appointed by the Chairperson and Executive Committee as the need arises. When the task has been completed and a report made to the Commission, the *ad hoc* committee

or task force is dissolved.

Section 3. All standing and *ad hoc* committees should receive a formal charge from the Executive Committee.

Article VIII Amending the Bylaws

The Bylaws may be amended by a consensus of two-thirds of the members of the Commission and formal ratification by the Pastor. Commission members must receive written notice of proposed Bylaw amendments two months prior to the call to consensus or vote. Amendments may not deviate substantially from the “spirit” of the Bylaws.

Article IX Administration vs. Governance Function

With Parish Commission and Archdiocesan policy as a guide for administrative discretion, the Administrator of the School reporting to the Pastor of the Parish Corporation, not the School Commission, shall be vested with authority in all decisions related to the day-to-day ordinary administration of the School including professional educational decisions, academic affairs, student affairs and personnel affairs including employee relations, hiring and termination of employees, administration of salaries and benefits and other related employment related matters. The Administrator and his/her delegates (professional educators) shall coordinate major educational, student and employment decisions with the Pastor and Superintendent of Catholic Schools or his/her designee.

Article X Secretariat for Catholic Schools

The Secretary for Catholic Schools (aka, Superintendent of Catholic Schools) is appointed by the Sole Member (Archbishop of Indianapolis) and is delegated authority as his appointed designee to act on his behalf in the area of Catholic school education for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. The Office of Catholic Schools provides services, guidance, training, evaluation/accreditation review and leadership for Catholic schools.