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**School and Community Relations**

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“Communicators breathe life into the dialogue that happens within the family of man. It is they who preside while the exchange proceeds around the vast ‘round table’ that the media have made. Their vocation is nobly to promote the purpose of social communications. This purpose is to accelerate every sort of human progress and to increase cooperation among men until there exists a genuine communication among them.”

Declaration on Christian Education  
Vatican II

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Home and School Association

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are a valuable resource within the parish and school community. The parent(s)/guardian(s) should be informed of the Home and School Bylaws.

**Refer to: SCR 1101.1**

**I. Governing Principles**

“What is the Home and School Association?”

The **H**ome and **S**chool **A**ssociation is an adult education program for teachers and parent(s)/guardian(s). It is an organization that provides teachers and parent(s)/guardian(s), as well as all other members of the parish, with an opportunity to learn how to become effective teachers in the parish by bringing the home and the school together so that both can share mutually their successes and failures.

**A. Primary Purposes:**

1. To develop skills for parent(s)/guardian(s) that are essential in the fulfillment of the responsibilities in the proper training of children
2. To give parent(s)/guardian(s) and teachers a means of sharing experiences for the benefit of the child, the school and the home

**B. Secondary Purposes:**

1. To help all parishioners learn more about education at the local, state, and national levels, so that they can judge and act more intelligently in these important matters
2. To offer opportunities for all concerned to understand the Archdiocesan school program and the Catholic philosophy of education
3. To offer the services and talents of the parishioners to the pastor and the administrator to aid and assist the educational process
4. To acquaint the entire parish with the financial commitment needed to maintain a Catholic school

**II. Organization of a Home and School Association**

The Home and School Association cannot function in a parish without the active, wholehearted support and direction of the pastor and the administrator. If this is not present, no attempt to organize should be made. This organization will operate in an advisory capacity, not as a governing board.

**III. Sample Constitution and Bylaws**

This is not a rigid statement but just a model of what can be used at the start. In each parish, one finds change and modifications that grow out of the parish experiences.

**Article I. Name**

The name of this organization shall be:

St..... Home and School Association

**Article II. Objective**

**Section 1** The objective of this association shall be the advancement of Catholic education and the welfare of all school children of this parish.

**Section 2** Further, it shall attempt to enhance the parent(s)/guardian(s)' and the teachers' role in the education of the child by increasing their knowledge of education and its processes, by increasing their mutual understanding of children, and also by providing an opportunity for parents and teachers to work together for the good of the child.

**Section 3** Finally, it shall be to act in the promotion of parent/guardian-school activities and to increase among its members, interest in Catholic education and civic affairs.

**Article III. Authority**

The pastor has the responsibility for the management of the parish school and receives that power from the Archbishop. This association shall function only with his consent and receive its authority to act directly from the pastor who in effect delegates some of the responsibility he receives from the Archbishop.

Article IV. Membership

Section 1. The membership shall be open to individuals interested in the objectives of this association, and who express this interest by applying for membership and paying dues. Furthermore, meetings shall be open to all members of the parish, but voting is open only to dues paying members. Faculty members are guests. They do not pay dues.

Article V. Officers

Section 1. The officers of this association shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The term of office shall be for two years, and no person shall be eligible to hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms.

Section 2. The president shall preside at all meetings of the association and of the Executive Board; shall appoint special committees; shall be an Ex-officio member of all committees; and shall receive notice of all meetings.

Section 3. The Vice-President shall perform these duties whenever the President is absent; shall assume the duties of that office until the next election if the office of President becomes vacant; and shall assume the office of President after one year of service as Vice-President.

Section 4. The Secretary shall keep a minute book showing a true and accurate record of all meetings of this association and of the Executive Board and shall send notices of regular meetings to members prior to said meetings.

Section 5. The Treasurer shall receive all dues and other monies and shall make disbursements only as directed by the Executive Board. The Treasurer shall make a verbal financial report at each general meeting in addition to a written report. This shall be examined and certified by an Auditing Committee of three members of the Association.

Article VI. Executive Board

Section 1. The administrative body of this association shall be known as the Executive Board. The Board shall consist of a Priest-Representative of the parish, the Association's President, Vice-President, the school administrator, and the chairperson of all permanent committees.

No parent who is a teacher and who has a child in the school in which he/she teaches may be elected to the Executive Board of that school.

The administrator is the representative of the faculty.

Section 2. A quorum of the Executive Board shall be a majority of the members thereof.

Section 3. Meetings of the Executive Board shall be held at the call of the President or any three members of the Executive Board.

Section 4. The Executive Board shall have the right to fill any and all vacancies among the officers of the association, subject to subsequent approval of the membership.

Section 5. The Executive Board shall have the right to add or delete permanent committees, and shall have the power to appoint temporary chairpersons.

Article VII. Elections

Section 1. Nominations for officers shall be made by nominating at least three members who are selected by the Executive Board at least two months previous to the May/June election meeting. The nominating committee shall report at this meeting the names of candidates for each office to be filled. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the nominating meeting. The consent of all nominees must have been obtained.

Section 2. Voting shall be by secret ballot by members (dues paying) attending the election meeting.

Suggested questions to have responded to when accepting nominations for the various officers on the Home/School Association Board. The responses to these questions should be submitted to the pastor and administrator for final approval before placement on the ballot

**Article VIII. General membership meetings**

- Section 1. The election meeting shall take place at the last business meeting of the school year (May or June).
- Section 2. There shall also be meetings during the school year at such times as the President of the Executive Board shall decide (suggested total of four).
- Section 3. At a regularly scheduled meeting of the membership, those present shall constitute a quorum.

**Article IX. Parliamentary Procedure**

The rules contained in “Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised” shall govern this association in all cases not otherwise covered by this Constitution and Bylaws or Standing Rules.

**Article X. Amendments**

Amendments to these Bylaws shall be proposed at one membership meeting and voted on at the next. A two-thirds vote of the membership attending is necessary to amend.

**IV. Standing Rules**

1. Home and School Associations are strongly encouraged to play a vital part in the marketing of our schools. By their annual dues they provide support for identified marketing programs such as: T.V. and radio commercials, advertisements in newspapers, display of promotional posters on the transit system, and distribution of poster to each parish. These programs are expanding yearly.
2. As a means of continuing our marketing efforts and maintaining service to the Home and School Associations, an annual contribution of dues will be asked from each school.

a. Home and School Association dues provide:

- ◇ an up-to-date list of the Speaker's Bureau
  - ◇ posters for your school, parish building, and local businesses
  - ◇ multiple copies of the Catholic Schools' Directory
  - ◇ support and training for your local Marketing Team
  - ◇ marketing in-service for Home and School Board Members
  - ◇ advertising efforts on the radio and transit system to continue to promote Catholic education in each vicariate.
2. Expenditures may be approved by the Executive Board without the vote of the membership. Any expenditure voted by the membership must have had prior approval by the Executive Board.
  3. Copies of the treasurer's report shall be given to Pastor, Pastoral Council, Administrator, and the membership annually.
  4. Fund-raising activities shall be undertaken only with the consent and approval of the Pastor and/or Administrator. These monies shall be expended only with the approval of the Pastor and Administrator.
    - ◇ membership dues and in-school funds acquired through Home and School activities make up the Home and School Treasury.
    - ◇ members of the Home and School Association may be asked to assist with general parish fund-raising projects. The return from such activities would go into the parish treasury.
  5. There shall be at least four regular meetings called each year.

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**Parish Elementary Schools  
and Public Schools**

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Parish elementary and public schools are unique in their character and philosophy and should be mutually respected. Both institutions serve the same general community and are an important force for good within that community. It is desirable that a spirit of cooperation exist and be evident to the community. As a matter of professional responsibility, each administrator should be acquainted with their public school colleagues and collaborate with their public school colleagues regarding community concerns.

The purpose of public relations in its best sense is to inform and to keep minds open. The parish elementary school should strive for good public relations and communication to develop greater community support and understanding for Catholic education. It is important that the parish elementary school establish good public relations with key community organizations for the purpose of promoting the parish elementary school and enabling the organizations to understand the role of the school in the community and its purpose as a parish elementary school.

The local school should bring its achievements to the attention of the public as a Catholic educational institution. Some of the most important organizations to be contacted in promoting good public relations are:

- Home and School Organizations
- CYO and other local youth-serving agencies
- Local business and industrial groups
- Local newspaper and other media
- Local civic groups
- Local parish groups

The basis of establishing good public relations for the school should begin with the internal audiences, for example, the faculty, staff, and parent(s)/guardian(s). Attention should be given to the responsibility of assisting students and parent(s)/guardian(s) to understand the school and its policies and procedures. Then students and parent(s)/guardian(s) should be encouraged to take pride in and to participate in the culture, purpose, and achievements of the school. The entire faculty and staff, as well as the administrator, are vital to the establishing of good relations. They must be aware of their role and responsibilities in promoting good public relations, which are the key to marketing the good news about the local parish elementary school. The school administration should do all that is necessary to augment constructive, harmonious relations between the faculty and the community-at-large. To that effort, it is important that some effective means of promoting good public relations be employed, such as:

- exhibits of student achievements in public places
- programs before non-school groups
- musical performances
- published calendars

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- musical activities for parent(s)/guardian(s) and students
- student publications
- Catholic Schools Week activities
- radio and television
- newspapers, community newspapers, “Catholic Standard and Times”
- parish bulletins

A marketing team should be established to help plan and manage the marketing efforts of the school. To assemble the team, look to the parish community and identify and contact the individuals who have the interest, energy, and enthusiasm to devote to the marketing program. If they possess these qualities, they will make the time to participate. The more people who get involved with this effort, the more people will be prepared to talk about the benefits and educational values of the school. Refer to: Sample Letter Policy No.: 1104.1

The team should consist of:

- administrator
- interested parents
- teachers
- business community members
- interested parishioners
- other community stakeholders

Charitable organizations and foundations can offer significant support to the marketing efforts. These organizations can offer the school administrative, promotional, and financial support for its activities and events. In addition, the school can gain visibility and credibility by working with an organization that has already established a strong reputation and a bank of goodwill within the community.

Parents will be the best “salespeople.” Parents have made a conscious decision to enroll their children in the school and to keep them there. They will be in the best position to recommend the school to other parents.

The following is a sample letter that may be sent to marketing team recruits:

Dear (Insert Name):

Catholic Schools have a tradition of excellence in education. The value of a Catholic school education, however, remains one of the best kept secrets.

(Paragraph specific to individual school)

Our mission is to enlighten the public about the value of a Catholic school education and to inform parents in this community about the quality education (School's Name) has to offer.

You are being contacted to ask if you would consider volunteering your time to become a member of (School's Name) marketing team. In an effort to better inform the community about (School's Name) and all that the school has to offer, the school has decided to create a marketing strategy for the school. As a member of the team you would be responsible for planning, implementing, and overseeing the marketing efforts of the school. It would require a few hours of your time each week.

The school needs your help in spreading the word about the quality Catholic education that can be attained at (School's Name). If you would like to join the team, please contact the school at (phone number).

Sincerely,

Administrator's Name



**Guidelines of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Governing the Use of  
Archdiocesan and Parish Facilities**

1. Every pastor or administrator, guided by the Church's moral teaching and mindful of relevant federal requirements, has the duty to determine the manner, time, and extent of use of archdiocesan or parish facilities by groups or organizations of any kind. A "certificate of insurance" applies in all cases.
2. Always guided by the Church's moral doctrine, pastors, and administrators will permit the use of archdiocesan or parish facilities for charitable purposes whenever possible.
3. As the occasion permits, archdiocesan and parish facilities may be used for the effective promotion of closer bonds of faith and charity between the Catholic Church and other Christian denominations as well as harmony with members of other world religions.
4. No group or organization shall use archdiocesan or parish facilities for purposes which contradict the teaching and practices of the Catholic Church.
5. No archdiocesan or parish facilities shall be used by groups or organizations for the purpose of planning or committing any violation of the law.
6. No archdiocesan or parish facilities shall be used for partisan political activity or to support or to oppose any candidate for public office. However, non-partisan political activities, such as voter registration drives, are to be encouraged.
7. Discussions on particular issues are helpful tools to educate the faithful. All candidates for a specific office are to be afforded an equal opportunity to participate. At such an event, there shall be no expression of preference for the candidates/candidates' designees.
8. Elected officials and other public figures may be invited by the pastor or administrator to speak at an archdiocesan or parish facility as experts or consultants on a particular issue. This assumes, however, that the speaker is not strongly identified with a subject or an expert in, nor speaking about, a subject that is inconsistent with church teaching. They shall not be invited if the primary purpose of their visit is to advance the official's/candidate's election. In general, candidates for office should not be invited to speak on any issue during the final weeks of a political campaign (i.e., usually sixty days prior to a primary or general election).

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9. Elected officials and other public figures whose previous personal conduct, voting record, or public statements are contrary to the teachings of the Church shall not be given an award or honor from a parish or archdiocesan entity.
10. Questions regarding these guidelines may be directed to the Archdiocesan Office for Public Affairs.

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**Requirements for Certificates  
of Insurance**

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Refer to Policies and Procedures: Business-Finance 1202.1