



BY-LAWS FOR THE SCHOOL COMMISSION OF ST. MONICA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ARTICLE I NAME AND RELATIONSHIP TO PARISH LEADERSHIP

This organization shall be known as the School Commission of St. Monica Catholic School, Mercer Island, WASHINGTON, and shall hereafter be referred to as "the School Commission."

The School Commission is a standing advisory group to St. Monica Parish leadership (hereafter referred to as "Parish Leadership"), comprised of the Parish Pastor, School Principal, (and whomever the Pastor deems necessary to have on his leadership team with the consultation of the Principal). The School Commission functions under its by-laws and operating guidelines in alignment with the best practices of the Seattle Archdiocese Office of Catholic Schools.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE AND FUNCTION

Section 1 The Pastor or assigned parish administrator (hereinafter referenced as Pastor) shall establish the Parish School Commission as a "consultative/advisory" body to assist the Pastor and 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 an advisory body for St. Monica Catholic School, hereinafter referred to as the School.

The School operates under the authority of the Pastor, the policies of the Archdiocese of Seattle and under the Sole Member (Archbishop of Seattle or designee) as provided in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Parish.

Section 2 The mission: St. Monica Catholic School collaborates with parents in educating and developing the whole child, so they may maximize their human potential, fulfill their God-given purpose, and flourish in a Christ-centered and rigorous academic environment.

The School Commission shall promote and advance the mission of St. Monica Catholic School in conjunction with the Parish for the faith formation, education and instruction of students in the School, and adopt in connection therewith a course of education in Catholic principles as well as following state benchmarks for elementary schools as prescribed by the Archdiocese of Seattle. St. Monica Catholic 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 Seattle.

Section 3 The School Commission of St. Monica Catholic 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 Seattle, shall concern itself with planning and policy issues pertaining to the general excellence of Catholic education at St. Monica School as a ministry of the St. Monica Parish.

Section 4 The Commission shall be responsible to the Pastor and delegates for consultation on transformational aspects of the formal educational program of the School. Working in close consultation with its Principal, 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 School. In consultation with the Pastor and Principal, the Commission shall be responsible for:

a) Establishing and recommending to the Pastor and Principal for 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 Washington 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 and Principal shall be in compliance with the Canon Laws of the Roman Catholic Church, Washington civil law regarding accredited non-public schools and the policies of the Archdiocese of Seattle. 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) Participating in the evaluation of policies and plans and the effectiveness of Commission operations;

d) Reviewing and approving the long-term financial plan, annual operating budget, 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;

e) 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, fundraising, student enrollment management and retention, alumni affairs, etc.;

f) Communicating effectively with the School community, which includes the Pastor, Principal, staff, faculty, parents, students, alumni, parishioners and others;

g) Oversight and evaluation with the Pastor and Principal of the overall mission effectiveness of the School in the context of the Catholic Faith.

ARTICLE III PASTOR AND PRINCIPAL

Section 1 The Pastor and School Principal shall be ex-officio members of the Commission. They have no voting rights and shall not be counted for purposes of determining quorum. The Canon (Church) Law Reserved Powers of a Pastor (Canon = c. #)

a) Provide for the pastoral, sacramental and temporal care of the assigned Parish: The pastor (parochus) is the proper (pastor) of the parish entrusted to him, exercising the pastoral care of the community committed to him under the authority of the diocesan bishop in whose ministry of Christ he has been called to share, so that for that same community he carries out the functions of teaching, sanctifying, and governing, also with the cooperation of other presbyters (priests) or deacons and with the assistance of lay members of the Christian faithful, according to the norm of law (c. 519).

b) Care and administration of the temporal goods of the parish (cc. 1281-1288).

c) The Pastor's (required) interaction (consultation) with the parish finance council (c. 537).

d) Safeguard and manage the parish's property to include insuring the property (c. 1284, sec. 2-1).

e) Provide oversight and management of the collection of the parish's revenue and income (c. 1284, sec. 2-4).

f) Provide oversight and management of the parish's debt obligations (c. 1284, sec. 2-5).

1284, g) Provide oversight and management of the parish's investment and allocation of funds (c. sec. 6).

h) Provide oversight and management of the parish corporation's records (c. 1284 Section 2-7).

i) Provide a written report to the Sole Member (Archbishop), at least annually, with respect to the financial operations of the assigned parish (c. 1284, Sec. 2-8).

j) Provide oversight and management of the annual parish budgets (c. 1284, Section 3).

ARTICLE IV MEMBERS

- Section 1** Nine (9) to twelve (12) persons appointed by the Pastor and Principal shall be decision-recommending (voting) members of the Commission.
- 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 by the end of May.
- Section 4** Each Commission member shall be appointed to a term of three (3) years. No voting members may serve more than two (2) consecutive three-year terms. Terms begin on July 1 and end June 30. The Pastor and Principal serve as long as they continue to be officer of the Parish.
- Section 5** Commission Composition and Recruitment Considerations: When recruiting new members to the School Commission, the current Commission Chairperson shall review the composition of returning members to evaluate the diversity of skill sets, professional experiences, and school class/grade representation. This assessment will inform the selection of new members by identifying complementary attributes that will enhance and balance the overall makeup of the Commission.
- 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. Monica 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 Seattle;
 - 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.

- Section 7** Choosing of Potential School Commission Members: The purpose of choosing is to guarantee the best qualified persons. 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);
 - 1. If married, the marriage is recognized by the Catholic Church;
 - 2. Attend Saturday evening/Sunday Mass weekly;
 - 3. Reflect the teachings and values of the Catholic Church in their lives;
 - b) Non-Catholic members are to support the teachings and values of the Catholic Church in their lives;
 - c) Those persons who intentionally are former or inactive Catholics are not eligible for membership. The Pastor and Principal will select all candidates for membership on School Commission. This helps ensure the quality of candidates, but also prevents embarrassment on the part of the candidate or the Pastor.
- 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.
- Section 9** Members are expected to attend all scheduled meetings and to participate in committee work. A member who has more than two unexcused absences from regularly scheduled meetings may be asked to resign by the Chairperson and Pastor. The Pastor shall have the power to remove a member for any reason, whatsoever, with or without cause.

ARTICLE V OFFICERS

- Section 1** The officers of the Commission shall include a President, Vice-President, Secretary, the Finance Chairperson, and Principal. The officers, except for the Principal, shall be appointed by the Pastor in consultation with the Principal.
- Section 2** Commission officers shall be determined annually and serve from July 1 until June 30 of the following year. All officers may serve two one-year terms, except for the Principal.
- Section 3** The responsibilities of the Commission officers shall be as follows:
- a) **The Commission President** shall preside at all meetings; The President must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church.
 - b) **The Vice President** shall preside in the absence of the President or when the President desires to introduce, second or speak to a motion; The Vice President must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church.

c) **The Finance Chairperson** shall collaborate with the Principal to monitor the school's financial health and evaluate the fiscal impact of planning and policy decisions. While the mission remains primary, financial considerations must inform all decision-making. At the Pastor's discretion, the Finance Chairperson also serves on the Parish Finance Council; The Finance Chairperson must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church and a member of St. Monica Parish.

d) **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.

e. **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 for implementation of policy, 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 President, Vice President, Finance Chairperson, Secretary and 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 Principal.

Section 5 Removal of Officers. Except for the Principal, any officer may be removed by the Pastor in consultation with the Principal, when in their judgment, the best interest of the School will be served thereby.

Section 6 Succession Planning: Commission officer roles are typically filled by members in their second or third year to ensure familiarity with Commission operations. Each year, the Commission will identify potential successors based on interest, skills, and class representation. The next school year's Commission officers should be identified by March of the current year. Current leaders are encouraged to mentor future candidates.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS

Section 1 Regular meetings of the School Commission shall be held monthly, during the school year.

Section 2 All meetings of the Commission are to be open meetings unless designated by the Pastor and Principal as being executive sessions. Motions or initiatives 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 Principal 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 3 Quorum: A simple majority of the appointed members of the Commission constitutes a quorum for each meeting.

Section 4 The Pastor or Principal must be present at all meetings of the Commission.

ARTICLE VII COMMUNICATIONS

Section 1 Meeting agendas and minutes will be posted to the School Commission webpage within three (3) days after the completion of each meeting.

Section 2 The Commission shall prepare quarterly communications for publication in the School Communique to engage the School Community. These updates should include the Commission's current composition, annual mission and goals, progress on key initiatives, and any areas where the school community input is needed. The Commission Secretary shall be responsible for drafting these updates, in collaboration with the Commission President, Principal and other leadership members as needed, to ensure accuracy and alignment with Commission priorities.

Section 3 In addition to written communications, Commission members are expected to participate in key school events such as the State of the School, School Open House/Showcase, and the annual School Auction — in coordination with the Principal and school staff, serving as visible representatives and active contributors to the broader school community.

ARTICLE VIII ADMINISTRATION VS. GOVERNANCE FUNCTION

The Principal of the School reporting to the Pastor of the Parish Corporation, 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 Principal 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 IX SECRETARIAT FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The Secretary for Catholic Schools (aka, Superintendent of Catholic Schools) is appointed by the Sole Member (Archbishop of Seattle) and is delegated authority as his appointed designee to act on his behalf in the area of

Catholic school education for the Archdiocese of Seattle. The Office of Catholic Schools provides services, guidance, training, evaluation/accreditation review and leadership for Catholic schools.

Document Review and Revision Date

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