
Policy for Catholic School Advisory Councils

Diocese of Marquette

Department of Evangelization & Education



Effective March 15, 2025

IOANNES FRANCISCUS

Divina Miseratione et



Apostolicae Sedis Gratia

EPISCOPUS MARQUETTENSIS

PROMULGATION OF THE POLICY FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS

In order to foster and support the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Marquette;

Having heard the Presbyteral Council on November 19, 2024, after their review of the proposed policy and receiving a positive recommendation; it is my decision to establish this policy;

Therefore, I hereby,

DECREE AND PROMULGATE

in accord with canons 8 §2, 29, 391 §1, and 806 §1, as particular law for the Diocese of Marquette, the *Policy for Catholic School Advisory Councils*.

All former Policy for Catholic school advisory councils of the Diocese of Marquette are hereby repealed and abrogated in accord with canon 20 §1. Any policies or particular laws of the Diocese of Marquette that are not in conformity with *Policy for Catholic School Advisory Councils* are hereby repealed and abrogated.

The provisions of this decree shall become effective March 15, 2025

Given at the chancery in Marquette, Michigan this 10th day of February in the year 2025.

Most Reverend John F. Doerfler, STD, JCL
Bishop of Marquette

Terry Bailey
Vice-Chancellor

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Policy for Catholic School Advisory Councils

Purpose of School Advisory Council

The Catholic School Advisory Council is formed by the supporting parish(es) as a consultative body to assist the Principal and the Pastor(s) in overseeing the operation of the school. The Advisory Council shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Pastor(s) and the Principal to provide leadership and direction for the Catholic school through the development of a set of strategic priorities. The Principal is responsible for the accomplishment of the strategic priorities of the school.

Definitions

- i. Single-parish school: A Catholic School that is supported by one parish.
- ii. Multi-parish school: A Catholic School that is supported by more than one parish.
- iii. Pastor Designate: The Pastor appointed by the Bishop to represent all the Pastors of the supporting parishes in the governance of a multi-parish school.

Membership

- i. The Advisory Council will have at least 5 but no more than 12 members.
- ii. The Pastor/Pastor Designate appoints the initial slate of members of the Advisory Council. Subsequently he appoints members to fill vacancies upon hearing the advice of the Council.
- iii. At least two-thirds of the membership on the Advisory Council will be drawn from Catholics who have children attending the school or Catholic parishioners of local parish(es) who support Catholic Education. It is recommended that the chair of the home-school association be appointed to the Advisory Council. Other members may be drawn from other Catholics who support Catholic education and from non-Catholic parents who have children attending the school.

- iv. School or parish employees, or immediate family members of school or parish employees, may not serve as members of the Advisory Council.
- v. In the case of multi-parish schools, membership will be drawn from all of the supporting parishes.
- vi. Advisory Council members are appointed for three-year terms. In the appointment of the initial slate of members, terms are to be staggered so that approximately one third of the terms expire each year. There is no limit to the number of terms that a member may serve.
- vii. The Pastor/Pastor Designate accepts the resignation of an Advisory Council member if he or she is unable to fulfill the term.
- viii. The Pastor/Pastor Designate may remove a member of the Advisory Council.
- ix. In the case of a vacancy caused by the resignation or removal of an Advisory Council member, the Pastor/Pastor Designate appoints a member to fulfill the remainder of the term.

Officers

- a. The officers of the Advisory Council are the Chairperson and Vice-chairperson. The Principal shall serve as the executive secretary. A recording secretary may be chosen from the Advisory Council members or school administrative staff.
- b. The officers are elected by the members of the Advisory Council for a one-year term.
- c. The Chairperson will:
 - i. Preside over all meetings and supervise the affairs of the Advisory Council.
 - ii. Serve as the Pastor's delegated spokesperson for the Advisory Council.
 - iii. Serve as a member of the school Finance Council.
 - iv. Serve as an ex-officio member of all other committees.
 - v. With the Principal and in consultation with the Executive Committee, prepare annual Advisory Council priorities and objectives and meeting agendas and recommend standing and ad hoc committee members and chairs for approval of the Advisory Council.
 - vi. Ensure that lines of communication are open between the School Advisory Council and the parish(es).
- d. The Assistant Chairperson will:
 - i. Assume the duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence.

- ii. Perform such duties as the Chairperson directs.
- e. The Executive Secretary (Principal) will:
 - i. Serve as an ex-officio member of all standing and ad hoc committees
 - ii. In consultation with the Chairperson, prepare annual Advisory Council goals and objectives and meeting agendas
 - iii. Prepare and distribute financial reports to Advisory Council members, Finance Committee members, and Diocesan officials.
 - iv. Keep permanent files of all regular and special meetings.
 - v. Keep a permanent record of all financial reports and records.
- f. The Recording Secretary will
 - i. Record minutes of all regular and special meetings, providing them to the Executive Secretary/Principal for distribution.
 - ii. Maintain roll call of members and visitors.

Meetings

- i. The School Advisory Council shall meet at least six times a year. Additional meetings may be scheduled by the Principal and Pastor/Pastor Designate if necessary.
- ii. Meeting agendas are to be prepared by the Principal, in consultation with the chairperson and Pastor/Pastor Designate, and distributed to each Advisory Council member, normally one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
- iii. Advisory Council meetings are generally open meetings, except during times when the Advisory Council decides to go into closed session. The Chairperson, in consultation with and approval of the Pastor/Pastor Designate, or in his absence, his delegate, will determine who may remain in attendance at closed meetings.
- iv. Advisory Council recommendations can only be made with a quorum of the regular members present. For single-parish schools, a quorum is defined as a majority of the members plus the pastor or his delegate. For multi-parish schools, a quorum is defined as a majority of the members plus the pastor designate or, in his absence, another person designated by him.
- v. The recommendations of the Advisory Council will be presented to the Pastor/Pastor Designate for his implementation. The Pastor/Pastor Designate is not in any way bound to implement the recommendations; nevertheless, the Pastor/Pastor Designate should usually accept the recommendations of the Advisory Council, unless he has an overriding reason to act in a contrary manner.

- vi. In the case of multi-parish schools, all supporting pastors have the right to attend school council meetings, and they are encouraged to attend as often as possible.
- vii. Rules of Order: As much as possible, the Advisory Council shall reach consensus on all actions. A consensus is defined as the willingness of all attending members to support a decision being made. If consensus cannot be reached, the Advisory Council will utilize the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

Duties of the Advisory Council

1. To work with the Pastor(s), Principal, and Diocesan Director of Catholic Schools to develop an annual set of priorities which encompasses all areas of the school operation.
2. To evaluate and update the strategic priorities on an annual basis.
3. To work cooperatively with the Pastor(s) and Principal to provide leadership and direction for living the Catholic mission of the school.
4. To ensure the school is committed to integration of our faith and values into all facets of the learner's life.
5. To foster the active participation of school families in the life of parish.
6. With the principal, to ensure that a rigorous program of student formation in virtue is in place at every school.
7. To assist in the development and implementation of a school marketing plan.
8. To evaluate the image of the school in the parish, press, radio, social media and public. Provide advice and counsel regarding communicating to these various constituencies through a communications plan.
9. The Advisory Council does not formulate policies as all Catholic schools operate in accord with the diocesan policies for Catholic schools. The Advisory Council does not have the responsibility for determining the amount of parish funds in support of the school and has no responsibility with regard to school staff/personnel, students, or curriculum.
10. The Advisory Council advises regarding the formulation of the local school handbook and the regulations therein.

Finance Council

- a. Every school is to have a Finance Council.
- b. In consultation with the Principal and the chair, the Pastor/Pastor Designate appoints members of the Finance Council. Membership is not restricted to members of the Advisory Council.
- c. All supporting pastors have the right to attend meetings of the school Finance Council and should be regularly informed about its work.
- d. Officers
 - i. The officers of the Finance Council are the chairperson and a vice-chairperson. The Principal shall serve as the executive secretary.
 - ii. The officers are elected by the members of the Finance Council for a one-year term.
- e. Duties of the Finance Council
 - i. To assist the Principal and the Pastor/Pastor Designate in preparing a draft of the annual budget
 - ii. To expand, plan, and monitor third source fundraising and development activities.
 - iii. To evaluate the effectiveness of the third source fundraising of the school annually.
 - iv. To assist the Principal and Pastor(s) in an on-going evaluation of the condition and upkeep of the school facilities.
 - v. To develop a short and long-term plan for school facility maintenance.
 - vi. To assist the Principal and Pastor(s) in the oversight of repair/construction projects.
 - vii. To provide advice on personnel matters when sought by the Principal or Pastor(s).

Standing Committees and Ad Hoc Committees

1. The School Advisory Council may form additional standing committees as necessary, such as Catholic Identity, Executive, and Marketing/Development.
2. Ad hoc Committees may be established by the Advisory Council as necessary, or upon the recommendation of the Chairperson and Principal. These committees will dissolve upon completion of their designated task.
3. The Pastor/Pastor Designate, after consultation with the Chairperson and the Principal, appoints members to either the standing or ad hoc committees.

Membership is not restricted to members of the Advisory Council. Committee members and chairpersons established by the Advisory Council will be appointed/reappointed by the Pastor annually at the August meeting.

Budgeting Process

All schools are required to develop a budget following the annual school budgeting process packet, which is to be approved by the Pastor(s) of all of the supporting Parish(s) and reviewed by the School Finance Council, the School Advisory Council, and Parish Finance Council(s) of all the supporting parishes. The School Finance Council and School Advisory Council shall act in an advisory role to the Pastor/Designate and Principal in monitoring budget expenditures and revenue throughout the year. The Diocesan Director of Catholic Schools shall serve in an advisory role to the Pastor and Bishop during the budgeting process. Locally approved school budgets must be submitted to the Diocesan offices each year for review.

Relationships with Other Organizations

- a. In order to appropriately carry out its educational mission, the Advisory Council will establish close working relationships with the Diocesan Director of Catholic Schools and the respective Parish Pastoral and Parish Finance Councils. The Advisory Council will also establish close working relationships with the Home and School, and Booster Organizations in order to provide educational assistance to parents/guardians in fulfilling their role as primary educators.
- b. All groups, institutions, and organizations associated with Catholic Schools that receive, hold and administer funds under the auspices of the Catholic Schools religious and tax-exempt status shall comply with one of the following options:
 - i. Option A: If the organization is under the direct jurisdiction and control of the school and if their funds are received and held by the educational institution (i.e., sixth grade outing fund, Home and School fund, etc.), then the connected organization shall comply with the following:
 - 1. Conform to diocesan policies and local educational rules.
 - 2. If applicable, conform to the Diocese of Marquette policy regarding trusts and foundations.
 - 3. Create and follow a budget. Report annual fund balance on the school annual financial report to the diocese.
 - 4. All school Capital Campaigns must be approved by the Bishop.

- ii. Option B: If the organization segregates and manages their funds independently of the local school, then the connected organization shall comply with the following:
 - 1. Conform to diocesan policies and local educational rules.
 - 2. Establish a trust, foundation, or seek approval as an association of the faithful in conformity with the Diocese of Marquette policy.
 - 3. Create and follow a budget. Submit an annual financial report to the local School Advisory Council and the Department of Evangelization, Catechesis and Youth Ministry.
 - 4. All school Capital Campaigns must be approved by the Bishop.

Recommendations and Constructive Criticism

- a. Recommendations and Constructive Criticism are welcomed by the Advisory Council whenever they are motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program or to equip the school to carry out its mission more effectively.
- b. Recommendations made to the Advisory Council as a whole or to any individual member will be referred to the school for study and recommendations. A response to this concern will be communicated to whomever brings the concern forward.
- c. Complaints concerning individual employees or volunteers of the school should be made to the supervisor of the employee or volunteer with specific documentation. The responsibilities of the Advisory Council do not involve personnel matters.
- d. Complaints from individuals concerning instruction, discipline, or learning materials are to be directed to the appropriate level for response according to the following sequences:
 - i. Classroom Teacher
 - ii. Principal
 - iii. Pastor/Pastor Designate
 - iv. Diocesan Director of Catholic Schools



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