

CONSTITUTION
SAINT ALPHONSUS SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

MISSION STATEMENT

To promote the merits of Catholic Education and to insure that Saint Alphonsus Parish provides the community with quality Catholic Education today and into the future.

ARTICLE I

TITLE AND OFFICE

The name of this body shall be the "SAINT ALPHONSUS SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL". Its office shall be located at 411 North Wheeling Road, Prospect Heights, Illinois 60070.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE, FUNCTION AND RESPONSIBILITY

Section A – Purpose

The purpose of the St. Alphonsus School Advisory Council is to act as a leadership group which serves as an advisory group to the Parish Pastor and school Principal, while modeling a faith community in a spirit of cooperation. The Council's focus shall be on the key area of school vitality.

Section B – Function

To assist the pastor and the principal in the operation of the education facilities of the parish, maintaining and improving the level of education at the grade school level, and to create better understanding and support of Catholic education, all as consistent with and subject to the policies of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Section C – Areas of Council Responsibility

St. Alphonsus School is a school controlled and operated by the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago. The school is under the jurisdiction of the Archdiocesan Cardinal and the Superintendent of the Office of Catholic Schools. The purpose of this Council is to serve as a consultative and active body that assists the school's Principal in fulfilling the school's mission. The members of this Council cannot act apart from the Principal and cannot make decision binding the school without the Principal.

The Council may consult in the following areas:

- ❖ Long Term Strategic Planning
- ❖ Assisting the Pastor in the search and selection of the Principal when a vacancy occurs
- ❖ Assisting in preparing, reviewing and advising the school budget, tuition rates, fees and other sources of financing
- ❖ Developing and periodically reviewing the Council's Bylaws
- ❖ Participating in the school's development, student recruitment efforts and long range plans
- ❖ Acting as the public relations and marketing arm of the school and its programs
- ❖ Evaluating annually the Council's effectiveness, productivity, and internal operations
- ❖ Directing individuals and/or groups to appropriate resources for conflict resolution

- ❖ Participating, upon request, in the School Improvement Process
- ❖ Supporting the efforts of local legislative action
- ❖ Any other area for which the Principal seeks consultation or which the President deems appropriate

The Council shall not be responsible for areas such as, but not limited to, the following:

- ❖ Acting as a grievance committee, or conciliators for any group or party
- ❖ Hiring, evaluating or terminating the Principal, faculty, and/or staff, nor any input to such decisions unless requested by the Pastor
- ❖ Advising the school Principal in personnel matters
- ❖ Administering the school or informing the Principal how to administer the school, including curriculum
- ❖ Implementing policies and procedures

The school Principal is the educational leader of the school under the supervision of the Pastor. The Principal's responsibilities with regard to the Council include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Developing the monthly agenda with the President
- ❖ Setting annual goals with the President
- ❖ Preparing and submitting policy recommendations to the Council
- ❖ Implementing policies and procedures
- ❖ Keeping the Council informed of Archdiocesan processes and procedures, and changes to these
- ❖ Preparing the annual school budget for the Council's review and reporting monthly on year to date finances
- ❖ Initiating the Principal self assessment and evaluation process outlined by the Archdiocese Office of Catholic Schools
- ❖ Participating in the school's development plans, student recruitment efforts, and long range plans
- ❖ Giving frequent reports to the Council regarding the progress of the school and its pupils
- ❖ Creating an environment of cooperation and collaboration
- ❖ Determining the Council's goals for the upcoming school year with the Council President
- ❖ Informing the Council on the school's goals for the upcoming year

The Pastor is the primary spiritual leader of the parish. He is responsible for the educational ministry of the Parish. The Pastor serves as an ex-officio member of the council. The Pastor's responsibilities with regard to the Council include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Participating in Council meetings by sharing his wisdom and expertise
- ❖ Approving all decisions and policies, particularly those that relate to religious education in the school
- ❖ Hiring the Principal according to Archdiocesan Procedures
- ❖ Approving the budget prepared by the Principal and reviewed by the Council
- ❖ Cooperating in the initiation and implementation of the school's development plans, student recruitment efforts, and long range plans

ARTICLE III
COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Section A – Voting Members

This Council shall consist of nine adult members who are registered in Saint Alphonsus Parish and elected by parishioners.

Section B – Ex-Officio Members

This Council shall have three non-voting members: the school principal, the pastor and the PSA representative. This Council may also have other non-voting members. The pastor will have final approval.

Section C – Term of Office of Each Lay Voting Member

The term of each voting member shall commence at the first meeting held for the new school year. Each lay voting member shall hold office for a term of three (3) years.

Section D – Election of Voting Members

Vacancies on the Council by reason of expiration of the term of the elected voting members shall be filled by election each April. The procedure in conducting such an election shall be as follows:

1. Notices will be made to the parish requesting names of interested individuals for filling the vacancies available.
2. A caucus committee of selected Council members and representatives of other parish organizations as invited by the School Advisory Council will select candidates to fill Council positions. The committee will attempt to choose nominees that will best represent the parish in terms of personal interest, geographic area and occupation or profession. The names of these candidates, along with a resume of each candidate's background and interest in being a Council member, will be submitted to the secretary of the Council by March 31.
3. The secretary of the Council will prepare ballots of the candidates by the first week in April and the election shall take place on the third Sunday in April. The secretary and the caucus committee shall tally the vote and publish the results in the parish bulletin the following week. The new Council members will take office at the first meeting of the new school year, normally in August. The secretary and the caucus committee will call the candidates; pastor and the principal to inform them of the results after the votes are tallied.

Section E – Vacancies

Vacancies of elected voting members on the Council, which occur by reason of death, resignation or for any other reason other than by reason of regular expiration of term of office, shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term. The person who received the next highest number of votes in the most recent election will be asked to fill the term. If the vacancy is declined, it will be at the discretion of the pastor to appoint a new member.

Section F- Resignation/Removal

A Council member may resign at any time by delivering written notification to the Council President and the Principal of St. Alphonsus School. When a member is unable to promote the purpose of the Council, unable to abide by the established roles and responsibilities as a member, or accept the Council's agenda, it may be necessary for the member to resign. In addition, for the common good of the Council, its members and the school community, it may be necessary to remove a member from the Council. The reasons for removing a member from the Council shall include but not limited to:

- ❖ Violating the confidentiality of executive sessions
- ❖ Acting contrary to parish/school mission goals
- ❖ Impeding the Council's defined responsibilities
- ❖ Being excessively absent from meetings
- ❖ Refusal or inability of a member to perform duties in an efficient, responsible or professional manner
- ❖ A conflict of interest, unethical behavior, or conduct that may be deemed detrimental to the school

This determination would be made by the President and the school Principal, with the approval of the Pastor.

ARTICLE IV

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

Section A – Time/Day

The Council shall meet regularly at 7:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month except for the summer months of June and July. The time of the meeting will be as previously stated unless another starting time is determined at the first meeting of the year. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the pastor, the chairman, or by three elected voting members by giving written notice of the time, place and reason for such special meeting by communicating to each member of the Council at least one week prior to such meeting. All special meetings shall be held at the parish plant. The secretary shall make arrangements to have notices of all Council meetings published in the Sunday Parish Bulletin, provided, however, that if it is not possible for such publication with respect to a special meeting, such publication shall not be required. All Council members shall be notified of all meetings, regular or special.

The regular meetings shall have a time limit of two (2) hours. The meeting can be extended by a majority vote of Council members.

Section B – Quorum

Two-thirds (2/3) of existing elected/appointed voting members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of the Council.

Section C – Manners of Action

The act of at least 2/3 (67%) of the elected/appointed voting members of the Council present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Council.

Section D – Proxy Votes

Voting members of the Council who are unable to be present at a meeting shall be permitted to vote by proxy in writing at their request.

Section E – Council Members Attendance

Failure to attend two consecutive meetings without notification and three meetings over the entire school year may classify a Council member as inactive and may be considered for replacement by vote of the remaining members. If a Council member is deemed inactive by the preceding guidelines the chairman will perform the following: Solicit input from the pastor and the principal and then contact the Council member to assess interest and ability to continue as a Council member.

ARTICLE V

CONDUCT OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Section A – Procedural Rules

The rules of parliamentary procedure as contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern meetings of the Council.

Section B – Order

The ordinary order of meetings shall be:

1. Prayer
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of minutes
4. Pastor's Report
5. Principal's Report
6. Old Business
7. Committee Reports
8. New Business
9. Adjournment

Section C – Petitions to the Council

Any member of the parish or a school parent may petition the Council. This written petition must be presented at least two (2) weeks before the scheduled School Advisory Council Meeting, to the principal, pastor or the chairman of the School Advisory Council. The principal, pastor and chairman will review the petition for its appropriateness for presentation to the Council. If it is not appropriate, it will be directed through the proper channels for resolution.

Section D – Non-Member Participation at Meetings

Pre-approved petitioners will be assigned a time to discuss the petition.
Non-approved petitioners will not be permitted to speak at meetings.

Section E – Minutes

The secretary shall keep minutes of the meetings setting forth all action taken by the Council. The minutes book shall be retained as a permanent record of the Council.

ARTICLE VI

OFFICERS

Section A – Number

The officers of the Council shall consist of a chairman, vice-chairman and secretary and such other officers, as the Council shall deem necessary or desirable from time to time.

Section B – Election and Term

Officers shall be elected annually by the Council at the June Council meeting, and shall hold office until the following June. Vacancies may be filled or new offices filled at any meeting of the Council. Any officer elected to any such vacancy or new office shall hold office until the following June.

Section C – Eligibility

Any voting member of the Council is eligible for any office.

Section D – Duties

The duties of the officers shall be as follows:

1. The chairman with the principal shall prepare the agenda for and preside at all regular and special meetings of the Council. Copies of the agenda shall be communicated to all Council members at least three days prior to the meeting.
2. The vice-chairman shall perform all the duties of the chairman when he or she is absent or unable to act.
3. The secretary shall maintain a written record of all acts of the Council, conduct, receive and dispose of all correspondence as directed, prepare the regular meeting agenda and preserve all reports and documents committed to his or her care. He or she shall be responsible for preparing the agenda: for sending copies of the minutes of each meeting to the principal for inclusion in the School Advisory Council packet which is sent to members before the meeting.
4. In addition to the foregoing, the officers shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Council from time to time.

ARTICLE VII

BY-LAWS

The Council shall adopt by-laws to the extent required or necessary for the conduct of its business. Such by-laws may be amended by at least a 2/3 vote of the members present at any meeting of the Council at which a quorum is present.

ARTICLE VIII

AMENDMENTS

Section A – Vote Required

This constitution may be amended by a vote of at least 2/3 of the total voting membership of the Council subject to the elementary school policies of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Section B – Notice of Amendments

Amendments to the constitution must be presented in writing to each member of the Council at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which action on such amendment is proposed to be taken.