



**DIOCESE OF**  
**Jefferson City**

# SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL INSERVICE 2019-20

## LEADERSHIP OF OUR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

### SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL PRAYER

God, the source of every good gift. You have called us together as servants to do your will. Grant us the light of your Spirit to guide us in our responsibilities as a school council.

May we work together in harmony for the common good.

May we listen to one another in a spirit of genuine respect.

May we encourage and reverence one another's unique talents.

May we approach our decision making through discernment and prayer.

May we respond effectively to the needs of the children in our care.

We ask this through the Light of the World, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Our Catholic schools are established under the expressed authority of the Bishop of the Diocese of Jefferson City. Bishop McKnight's vision for our Catholic schools is to be guided by these three areas:

1. Contributing to the evangelizing mission of the Church
2. Being distinguished by excellence
3. Becoming affordable and accessible to our families

Ultimately, the school has been entrusted to the pastor by the bishop. The pastor is responsible for realizing the bishop's vision for Catholic education in his school.

So why have a diocesan Catholic Schools Office, a principal, and a school advisory council?

The Catholic Schools Office supports the daily ministry of each school to ensure our schools are living witnesses for Catholic Education. The leadership of the Catholic Schools Office

supports Bishop McKnight's vision and helps principals to realize that vision.

The principal is the daily leader of their school community and is appointed by the pastor in consultation with the Catholic Schools Office. Principals make decisions on a daily basis to ensure that students and families of our schools are being best served.

The school advisory council is charged with advising the pastor and the principal. Basic responsibilities include formulating and recommending policy, pursuing long-range planning goals and reviewing/recommending the annual school budget for presentation to the parish finance council.

Ultimately the success of our Catholic schools lies in our commitment to community and collaboration.

Without a firm commitment to the bishop's vision for Catholic education in our diocese, schools will fail to meet the growing demands of evangelization in a secular world.

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

### *Public School Board*

Makes regulations  
Majority Vote  
Hiring/Firing  
Elected by constituents  
Has the final say

### *Catholic School Advisory Council*

Provides guidance and advice  
Consultative  
Not involved in personnel matters  
Works to build consensus  
Elected or appointed by the pastor

## SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL DUTIES DO NOT INCLUDE:

Regulation and administration  
Issues dealing with individual students  
Issues dealing with individual staff members

## BEWARE OF THESE CONCERNS

Defamation of character  
Confidentiality — HIPPA/FERPA  
Conflict of interest

# DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

1. Membership includes a variety of stakeholders that are representative of the entire parish community: parents, alumni, business leaders, parishioners, and others with a stake in the school.
2. Members systematize the policies of the school's operations to ensure commitment to the mission of the school for continuity and sustainability.
3. Members are focused on issues to enhance the school through a focus on mission, planning, policy, and budget.
4. The School Advisory Council sets goals for annual review and update to guide their long-term planning efforts. These goals are developed in collaboration with the pastor and the principal.
5. The School Advisory Council maintains in collaboration with the school leadership a relationship with the pastor marked by mutual trust, close cooperation and continuing dialogue.

“Fight all error, but do it with good humor, patience, kindness, and love. Harshness will damage your own soul and spoil the best cause.”

ST. JOHN CANTIUS

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## POLICY OR REGULATION?

**POLICY** – a general guide for discretionary action

Example: All students in the school shall receive instruction in the Catholic faith, whether they are Catholic or non-Catholic

**REGULATION** – a specific rule which mandates certain procedures or behaviors

Example: The \_\_\_\_\_ series of religion textbooks will be used in all religion classes

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## CHALLENGES FOR SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

What is your function on the School Advisory Council and how you use your God-given abilities to help the group be most effective?

No matter what you think you “know” about a situation, there is likely more to the story from a variety of perspectives. Maintain neutrality in decision making.

Learning how to publicly respond to complaints and concerns in a positive manner.

Recognizing the difference between formulating policy (the School Advisory Council's job) and administering the policy (the principal's job).

Maintaining appropriate boundaries for conflicts of interest as well as maintaining confidentiality in difficult situations.

Representing ALL constituents.

Keeping meetings efficient. Effective meetings should take place in under 90 minutes.

Discover  
what's  
happening  
in our schools:  
**WEEKLY  
WRAP BLOG**