

St Joseph Hessen Cassel School Board Bylaws

Revision: 2022
Adopted: 01-26-2022



BY-LAWS OF SAINT JOSEPH HESSEN CASSEL PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

This is a Parish School Board and is a consultative School Board located in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

The Catholic School is an expression of the education mission of the Parish with which it is associated as well as the Diocese. Therefore, the Pastor is responsible to the Bishop for the administration of the total Parish, including the Parish School. The Principal of the Parish School functions as the chief administrator of the school and is a member of the Parish staff. Regular and open communication between the Pastor and Principal is essential.

Just as the Parish Council serves with the Pastor on behalf of the total Parish community, the Parish School Board serves with the Pastor and Principal for the good of the School community. With the many demands and responsibilities put on the Principal, he or she needs assistance from a group of people who are committed to the Catholic School and are willing to work for the good of the School and Parish.

ARTICLE I NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION

The name of this body shall be Saint Joseph Hessen Cassel School Board. It may also be abbreviated in the following ways:

- St. Joseph Hessen Cassel School Board
- St. Joe Hessen Cassel School Board
- SJHC School Board

In this document, places where “School Board” is used refers to the Saint Joseph Hessen Cassel School Board.

ARTICLE II PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS

The School Board is established by the Pastor, in accordance with Diocesan policy, to assist him and the Principal in the governance of the Parish School. When the board meets (as Pastor, Principal, and members) and agrees on a policy matter, the decision is effective and binding on all. The School Board is consultative in the following sense: the members cannot act apart from the Pastor and Principal and cannot make decisions binding on the Parish School without the approval of the Pastor and Principal.

Consultation also means that decisions will not be made in major matters until and unless the School Board has been consulted. The areas in which the School Board has responsibility and will be consulted are:

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- A. Planning
- B. Policy Development and Formulation
- C. Financing (including budgeting and policies for financial management)
- D. Public Relations
- E. Selection of the Principal
- F. Evaluation of the Principal's Relationship with the Board

The Principal is responsible for all day-to-day operations of the Parish School and he or she must handle all concerns and complaints expressed by parents and faculty (see ARTICLE X).

ARTICLE III RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER GROUPS

- A. Parish Pastoral Council

The School Board and the Parish Council are both consultative to the Pastor. Therefore, it is essential that good communication exists between the groups. The relationship which exists is one of information sharing and common planning for the benefit of the total Parish community.

- B. Parish Finance Committee/Council

The School Board should have, at minimum, one representative member that is part of the Parish Finance Committee/Council, even if that membership be from a liaison level. The representative is responsible to prepare and share budgetary reports with the School Board along with the plan for the financial contribution / subsidy from the Parish to the School.

- C. Parent Organization(s)

The President of, or an elected representative of, the Home and School Association (HASA) should be a member of the School Board. If this is not possible, then a School Board member may act as a liaison and attend HASA meetings. This representative is also responsible to ensure all HASA related activities meet the intent of the parent organization.

- D. Athletic Committee

The Director of, or an elected representative of, the Athletic Committee should be a member of the School Board. If this is not possible, then a School Board member may act as a liaison and attend Athletic Committee meetings. This representative is

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also responsible to ensure all related activities meet the athletic policies adopted by the school and that good sportsmanship is demonstrated in all athletic facets.

E. Diocese

The relationship between the Parish School Board and the Diocese is stated in Diocesan Education Policies which are available to School Board members.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Parish School Board will consist of seven (7) to thirteen (13) members in addition to the Pastor and Principal. Members are elected for a three-year term where each year runs congruent with the school year. School Board members are permitted to succeed themselves in terms of re-election. Members are eligible to serve three (3) consecutive three-year terms before having to take at least one (1) year off before being eligible for membership again. If a suitable replacement cannot be found, the School Board may allow for continued membership on a 1-year at a time basis through board action.

School Board positions are open to parishioners and school parents. The majority of voting members of the School Board should be parents who have children currently enrolled in the school. If possible, the School Board looks for balance in membership (i.e. male-female, occupation, geographic location, skills, knowledge, etc.)

All School Board members are required to review and sign (annually) the Commitment Form located in the Diocesan School Board Handbook Appendix B4-6b.

ARTICLE V NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS-ELIGIBILITY

The Pastor, Principal, or any School Board member should seek out and nominate prospective School Board members. Nominees should meet the following criteria:

- Are members of the Parish and/or parents/guardians of students of Saint Joseph Hessen Cassel School;
- Have interest in and a commitment to Catholic education and to Saint Joseph Hessen Cassel School's philosophy and mission;
- Are available to attend meetings and periodic in-service programs and to participate in committee work;
- Maintain high levels of integrity and confidentiality;
- Deal with situations as they relate to the good of the entire School community;

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- Be a credible witness of the Catholic faith (or to one's own religion) to the School community and beyond;
- Must be at least 18 years of age.

If a nominee meets any of the following criteria, they will be deemed **ineligible** for School Board membership:

- Paid employee of the School or Parish;
- A spouse of a School or Parish employee;
- A person whose personal philosophy differs from the philosophy of a Catholic School education;
- A person having served more than three (3) consecutive three-year terms on the School Board without taking at least one (1) year off. (Unless a suitable replacement cannot be found and the School Board has taken board action to approve continued membership on a 1-year at a time basis).

NOMINATIONS / ELECTIONS

Prospective School Board members should be nominated by a current School Board member, the Pastor, or the Principal. The nominator should work with the prospective member to create a short document that covers the following items which will be reviewed by the School Board:

- Picture/headshot (does not need to be professional, just needs to be school appropriate);
- Full name, address, phone number, and email address;
- A paragraph or two about any work experience;
- A paragraph or two of why they want to be on the School Board.

The School Board will review all prospective School Board members and will vote on the nomination. Unless a School Board member has resigned or been removed mid-year, all new School Board members will begin serving their term in August when the new school year begins. If needed, there may be a School Board orientation meeting held in June or July (before the first official School Board meeting in August). If necessary, this meeting will be scheduled by the President or Vice President.

School Board members are expected to attend **all** meetings. Members are also required to serve on at least one committee.

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School Board members that miss three (3) School Board meetings in a 12-month period and are unexcused may lose membership by action of the School Board. The following procedure will apply:

1. The School Board member will be notified by the School Board President or Principal;
2. The School Board member shall be given opportunity to respond;
3. The School Board may then vote to remove membership;
4. If membership is removed, the School Board member can be replaced with a prospective School Board member through School Board action.

School Board members are only a School Board member when the full board is in session. The School Board is not responsible for the discipline of teachers or Principal evaluation (outside of the Principal Evaluation process). See ARTILCE X.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS

Before the first School Board meeting of a new school year, the School Board will elect its officers. The election is to a one-year renewable term.

- A. The officers of the School Board shall be as follows:
 1. President
 2. Vice President
 3. Secretary
- B. The President shall: preside at all meetings of the School Board; conduct internal elections; call all regular and special meetings; assist in preparing the budget; direct the functions and goals of the School Board; enforce the bylaws; ensure quorum is met during School Board meetings; and perform any and all duties incident to the office of President.
- C. The Vice President shall: perform all duties of the President in his/her absence; be willing to serve as President when/if the President steps down or is no longer a School Board member; and perform all duties incident to the office of the Vice President.
- D. The Secretary shall: record and maintain minutes of all regular and special meetings; be the custodian of the bylaws; present the minutes and other material at the meetings as required; answer correspondence; and perform all duties incident to the office of the Secretary.

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Neither the Principal nor Pastor are eligible to hold any office.

ARTICLE VII MEETINGS

MEETING SCHEDULE

The School Board meets every month with the following exceptions: December can be skipped due the shortened holiday schedule unless pressing matters need discussed, and June and July are not required unless specific planning or new member orientation is required. Special School Board meetings can be called by the Pastor or Principal. The School Board never meets without the Pastor or the Principal. No individual School Board member has the authority to call a School Board meeting nor does any other group of parents or staff without expressed approval of the Pastor and Principal.

School Board meetings are scheduled monthly on a specific day of the week at a specified time and place. Each new board establishes the time and dates that School Board meetings will occur for that school year.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

All School Board meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcome. Visitors will be seated at a separate table but will be able to see and hear the activities at the meeting. Expression of opinion on School Board matters (e.g. policies, finance, recruitment, marketing, planning, etc.) under consideration by the School Board is **encouraged** and **welcomed**. However, visitors cannot address the School Board unless given permission ahead of time (see procedure below).

The School Board shall conduct the business of the school in an orderly and efficient manner, and will, therefore, require reasonable controls to regulate public presentations to the board. A person wishing to address the school board shall:

1. Submit a written request to the Principal or School Board President at minimum five (5) days prior to the School Board meeting. This request shall include a written copy of the statement to be read at the meeting.

The statement must relate the issue to a local School Board policy or other direct responsibility of the School Board.

2. The Principal, Pastor, and School Board President shall make the decision concerning the appropriateness of the request based on the following criteria:
 - a. The concern is directly related to policy, finances, marketing, development, or the strategic plan;

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- b. The concern is NOT related to an individual student discipline issue or an individual teacher/staff personnel issue or evaluation.
3. If approved, the statement is added as an agenda item for the upcoming School Board meeting. All attempts will be made to add the statement near the beginning of the meeting.
4. At the conclusion of the visitor's remarks, the President or Vice President shall delegate the issue to the Pastor, Principal, or board committee, as appropriate. If the President or Vice President so chooses, a short discussion among the School Board members is permitted. School Board members are also allowed to ask questions for clarification. No promises of resolution can be made during the School Board meeting.

In some cases, the President or Vice President may ask for visitor input during the "Open Floor" portion at the end of the meeting.

PROCEDURE FOR VOTING / QUORUM

1. **QUORUM:** Before a motion to vote on a topic is allowed, the School Board must be at quorum (the minimum number of members of an assembly or society that must be present at any of its meetings to make the proceedings of that meeting valid). "Present" is defined as in person, online via virtual application, or on the phone with identity confirmed by the School Board. Voting is allowed remotely via virtual application or phone provided the member's identity can be confirmed.

Quorum is stated as 2/3rds of the voting members (does not include Pastor or Principal). This means that 2/3rds of the voting members must be present in order to motion or vote. Ensuring quorum is reached at the beginning of each meeting is the responsibility of the President or Vice President.

2. **CONSENSUS:** The goal of the School Board is to come to decision making through consensus. Consensus permits informal discussion allowing all sides to be heard before a motion to vote is cast, seconded, and voted upon. Through this process, information from all points of view can be heard before each individual member is ready to cast his/her vote.

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3. VOTING PROCEDURE:

- a. If quorum is achieved, once consensus appears to be attained, the President or Vice President will call for a motion to vote.
- b. Any School Board member eligible to vote may verbally make a motion to vote by stating something similar to "I make a motion to approve."
- c. Any School Board member eligible to vote may verbally second that motion to vote by stating something similar to "I second that motion." The second must come from someone other than the School Board member that made the initial motion.
- d. **SPECIAL NOTE:** During the first and second motion (or any time before the vote), any board member may request that the vote be completed by Secret Ballot. This is useful when specific issues arise that may be divisive in nature. If this is requested, skip to the section below that details the Secret Ballot procedure (4.).
- e. Once a motion has been presented and seconded, the President or Vice President will ask that all in favor of the decision say "aye" and will allow an appropriate time to respond. He or she will then ask for all opposed to the decision say "nay" and will allow appropriate time to respond.
- f. As long as 2/3rds of the eligible and present votes are "aye", the motion to approve passes and is specifically stated so by the President or Vice President and also noted in the minutes.
- g. If a vote does NOT pass, the item is tabled and cannot be motioned for approval again until a future meeting. If a vote does NOT pass a second time, the item is dismissed and shall NOT be motioned for approval again.

4. SECRET BALLOT PROCEDURE:

- a. A non-identifiable piece of paper will be given to each voting member. Voting members that are not physically present are unable to cast a secret ballot but can request that the vote be postponed to a special meeting or future planned meeting.
- b. The voting member will mark the ballot as "APPROVE" or "DISAPPROVE" clearly and legibly.
- c. The paper ballot will be folded in half to conceal the vote.
- d. The President or Vice President will collect all paper ballots into an open container that clearly shows no paper ballots exist in it before collecting.
- e. The President or Vice President, having ensured the paper ballots are mixed up sufficiently such that no ballot author is identifiable, will read the votes aloud. During this, the Secretary will tally the votes.

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- f. Once the votes are tallied, the President or Vice President, along with the Secretary, will verify the number of votes cast is identical to the number of voting members present. Once verified, the President or Vice President will state whether the motion to approved passed based on the 2/3rds requirement.

MEETING PREPARATION

School Board members need to do some advance preparation if they are to contribute their share. During the meetings, they need to keep the group's task clearly in mind. After the meeting, members should feel that something worthwhile was accomplished.

ARTICLE VIII STANDING COMMITTEES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – The members of the Executive Committee are the Pastor, Principal, and the School Board President. The Executive Committee communicates regularly to plan the agenda for the School Board meetings and prepare for any special topics that may need discussed.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE – The functions of this committee are to assist in developing and monitoring a maintenance and improvement plan for the building and grounds. Membership may consist of people that are not School Board members.

FINANCE/BUDGET COMMITTEE – This committee is responsible to work with the Parish Finance Committee/Council on budgeting and prepare monthly reports that track the actual financial standing versus the budget.

MARKETING/FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE – This committee is responsible for recruitment of new students through marketing and also fundraising to help cover costs of running the school each year. This committee reports on the actual fundraising dollars raised compared to the budget.

HEALTH/WELLNESS COMMITTEE – This committee focuses on health and wellness of the students and staff. The committee may also include the athletic director or athletic council.

AD-HOC COMMITTEES – These committees are temporary in nature and are formed as needed. Examples include: Principal Search Committee, Bylaws Review Committee, Technology Committee, Strategic Plan Committee, etc.

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ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended by consensus of the board and/or by vote via the voting procedure listed in Article VII, section "PROCEDURE FOR VOTING / QUORUM".

ARTICLE X CONCERN REPORTING PROCEDURE

The School Board members are not the administration of the Parish School and should ensure all community members with concerns are directed to this procedure.

Appendix A.7-13a of the Diocesan School Board Handbook

To facilitate and promote the orderly and efficient resolution of concerns, parents/legal guardians wishing to address and/or question an academic area or situation regarding a specific teacher or classroom procedure must follow the grievance procedure below:

- Step 1: Address the issues with the classroom teacher (or the person with whom he/she has the problem).

- Step 2: Address the issue with the Principal.

- Step 3: Address the issue with the Pastor.

- Step 4: If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, then the parent/guardian should place his/her concerns in writing to the person involved and his/her supervisors (e.g., Pastor and Principal).

Parents/legal guardians should follow the steps set forth in this policy, except where a situation is specifically covered under another School or Diocesan policy which provides for a different reporting procedure (e.g. harassment).

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APPENDIX B.4 COMMITMENTS – SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

To put our beliefs into practice, I, as a School Board member, make these commitments:

I will serve as an exemplary role model and leader to our school community by living Catholic doctrine and Gospel values. I will place Christ-like behavior in all my actions as a priority, striving to exhibit a Christian attitude in all matters.

I will recognize the advisory and consultative role of the School Board by recommending policy, marketing, finances, and development actions to the Pastor for his approval.

I will place high priority on the Catholic identity of the school and the general good of all students in keeping with our school mission statement.

I will provide spiritual, physical, and emotional support to the Pastor, Principal, faculty, staff, parents, and students of the school community.

I will listen with an open mind, regularly attend and prepare well for each meeting, respectfully communicate my opinions, base my decisions on all available facts in each situation, and abide by and uphold the final decisions of the board regardless of how I have voted.

I will commit myself to ensuring the long-term financial stability of our parish and school by assisting in the developing and implementing a strategic plan.

I will always present a positive image of the Catholic school to all members of our community.

I will keep all confidences shared during board meetings.

I will focus my best effort to ensure the long-term welfare of our school by focusing on its mission and vision, policies, marketing and development, and strategic plan.

I will commit myself to working with the Pastor, Principal, and all other board members in a spirit of mutual trust and support.

I hereby agree to strive to meet the commitments of a School Board member as stated above.

Sincerely,

Signature

Date