



SAINT PATRICK  
CATHOLIC  
CHURCH & SCHOOL

## CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Saint Patrick Catholic School  
Tacoma, Washington

Revised April, 2017

# **School Mission Statement & Philosophy**

## **School Mission**

The mission of St. Patrick Catholic School is to nurture in its students an abiding Catholic faith while pursuing academic excellence and modeling honesty, respect, and service as dynamic members of our world community.

## **School Philosophy**

St. Patrick Catholic School is a dynamic educational community, grounded in the Catholic faith and linked to our Parish family. We are, first and foremost, a school that brings our children to the ever-present love of Jesus Christ. We challenge ourselves to pursue excellence in academics, to build a community of responsible learners, and to develop the personal characteristics of servant leaders. Through aligning curriculum and working collaboratively, our pre-K-8 school builds a learning environment of active, thoughtful and committed students ready to enter preparatory high school.

## **SAINT PATRICK CATHOLIC SCHOOL CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

### **ARTICLE I Name of the Commission**

The name of this body shall be the Saint Patrick School Commission (the "Commission").

### **ARTICLE II Commission Purpose and Scope of Authority**

#### **Section 1 Commission Purpose and Function**

The Commission is established to be the "voice of the St. Patrick School community" and to assist the Pastor, Pastoral Coordinator, and Principal in the development of policies and long range planning for the operation of the school. The Commission shall abide by all applicable guidelines and policies set by the Archbishop, the Archdiocesan Board of Education, and St. Patrick Pastoral Council. The Commission shall be consulted by the Pastor, the Pastoral Coordinator, and Principal before any decisions are made concerning areas within the Commission's scope of authority.

#### **Section 2 Commission Scope of Authority**

##### **A. Long Range Planning**

- i.** Periodically evaluate the St. Patrick School Mission and Philosophy Statements.
- ii.** Annually establish Commission goals for the coming school year in September, consistent with the Long Range Plan and in consultation with the Principal.
- iii.** Annually evaluate the Long Range Plan to monitor achievement of strategic goals and objectives.
- iv.** The Long Range Plan shall be reviewed and revised on a five year cycle with the review to commence in year four and final approval to occur in year five; provided that the Commission may adjust the schedule as necessary to best meet the needs of the school.
- v.** Review proposed major curriculum changes to ensure consistency with goals and objectives of Long Range Plan.

**B. Policy Development**

- i.** Advise the Principal, Pastoral Coordinator, and Pastor as to school and parish policies relevant to school operations.
- ii.** Review and evaluate policy development of non-student academic related policies including tuition, the Scrip Program, and REACH auction.

**C. Finance**

- i.** In consultation with the Parish Finance Council, adopt an annual school budget for the succeeding school year.
- ii.** Provide advice and consultation on school capital improvements and property maintenance. Major capital improvements, regardless of the source of the funding, must be coordinated and approved by the Commission, as well as the Pastor or the Pastoral Coordinator.
- iii.** Annually develop the plans and means to finance the school, including evaluation of the tuition schedule and fundraising needs.
- iv.** Allocate financial resources according to budgetary needs.
- v.** Monitor the budget during the school year.
- vi.** Establish a long-range budget plan (five year Pro Forma), in consultation with the Parish Finance Council.

**D. Development and Public Relations**

- i.** Establish and maintain appropriate forums to communicate regularly with the Pastor, Pastoral Coordinator, parish representatives, parents, and the local community about the school.
- ii.** Promote the school to the parish, parents and the local community.
- iii.** Actively participate in all fundraising efforts.

**E. Evaluation**

- i.** At the February meeting, discuss and approve the Commission's recommendation to the Pastor and/or Pastoral Coordinator regarding the annual renewal of the Principal's contract.
- ii.** At the May meeting, or at a special meeting called by the Commission President, discuss and approve a performance appraisal of the Principal's performance during the current academic year, which shall be prepared by the Commission President or the President's designee, and provided to the Pastor and/or Pastoral Coordinator after Commission approval.
- iii.** At the June meeting, determine if Commission goals were achieved for the past school year and evaluate the Commission's effectiveness in carrying out its scope of authority.

**ARTICLE III Relationships with Other Groups**

**Section 1** Archdiocese of Seattle

The Commission shall assess the school's adherence to Archdiocesan policies and procedures for the religious and spiritual education of the school.

**Section 2** St. Patrick Pastoral Council

In recognition of the Pastoral Council's functions of establishing parish priorities and use of parish resources, the Commission should maintain regular communication with the Pastoral Council about the direction of the school, its budgetary needs and goals, and future planning.

**Section 3** St. Patrick's Parent Association ("SPPA")

SPPA is generally responsible for fundraising events, communication between home and school, the service needs of the school, parent education on current topics, and advocacy for the school. The Commission shall work closely with SPAA to fully understand parents' needs and concerns and, when appropriate, formulate policies to address those needs and concerns. The Commission shall

communicate regularly with SPPA about Commission activities.

#### **Section 4** Principal

In relation to the Commission, the role of the Principal is to:

- i.** Consult with the Commission on the implementation of academic programs and policies and report annually on the effectiveness of such programs and policies based on school data, test scores, and other information.
- ii.** Present monthly reports on school matters, and provide periodic reports on the school's progress regarding achieving strategic goals identified in the school's Long Range Plan.
- iii.** Present a balanced annual budget to the Commission and work on other financial matters in consultation with the Finance Committee.
- iv.** Report on the hiring, supervision and evaluation of school staff.

### **ARTICLE IV** Membership

#### **Section 1** Composition

- i.** The non-voting membership of the Commission shall be the Pastor, the Pastoral Coordinator, the Principal, and the SPAA president or appointed representative.
- ii.** The voting membership shall consist of nine elected members, one school faculty member, and up to three other members appointed by majority vote of the Commission.
- iii.** The faculty member shall be nominated by the Principal in consultation with the Pastor and/or Pastoral Coordinator, and approved by a majority vote of the Commission.

#### **Section 2** General Eligibility

- i.** Demonstrated commitment to Catholic education and to the St. Patrick School Mission and Philosophy.

- ii. Available to attend and actively participate in monthly Commission meetings, actively participate in committee work as required, and represent the Commission at major fundraising and school promotional events.
- iii. Demonstrated ability to maintain a high level of integrity and confidentiality regarding Commission matters. Ability to be courageous, articulate, and open minded in communicating thoughts and convictions, while adhering to the consensus model of decision-making adopted by the Archdiocese.
- iv. Approach decision making with the good of the entire school community in mind.

### **Section 3** Elected Members Eligibility

All nine elected members must be a St. Patrick School parent or guardian of a St. Patrick School student. All qualified parents or guardians are eligible to be elected to the School Commission.

### **Section 4** Length of Terms

- i. Each voting member shall serve a term of three (3) years.
- ii. An individual may be elected and serve for two terms only. Terms shall begin on July 1 and expire on June 30.

### **Section 5** Resignations, Dismissals and Vacancies

- i. Resignations must be submitted in writing to the Commission President. The President shall timely communicate the resignation to the Principal, Commission, Pastoral Coordinator and/or Pastor.
- ii. Dismissals shall be decided by a majority vote of Commission members. Grounds for dismissal include material breach of Commission responsibilities or other behavior negatively impacting the school and/or the Commission's operations. Grounds for a member's dismissal shall be reported directly to the Commission President and Principal for potential disposition, including referral to the Commission for a vote of dismissal or other reprimand.

- iii. Vacancies are filled by appointment by a majority vote of the Commission within four weeks. The new member shall assume the term and status of the replaced member.

### **Section 6 New Member Orientation**

All members shall attend an orientation at the beginning of their term and receive a copy of the Commission Constitution and Bylaws, along with other Commission materials.

## **ARTICLE V Election**

### **Section 1 Nominating Committee**

- i. The Nominating Committee shall convene no later than February 1st and shall consist of the Principal, the Commission President, and two members appointed by the President. The Principal shall serve as chair of the Nominating Committee. The committee shall meet and advise the Commission at the March meeting of its recommendations to carry out its responsibilities.
- ii. The Nominating Committee shall publicize the number of vacancies and qualifications for the coming year to school families. The committee shall solicit and receive candidates' statements of credentials; publish the names and biographies of the candidates; provide for the mechanics of the election; preside over the election; and communicate the results to the Commission President. The President shall announce the results to the candidates, Principal, Commission and the St. Patrick school community.

### **Section 2 Elections**

- i. The election of members shall take place during the month of May through the election procedure approved by the Nominating Committee.
- ii. All parents or guardians of St. Patrick School students are eligible to vote.

## **ARTICLE VI Officers**

### **Section 1 Election**

- i.** The officers of the Commission include the President, Vice-president, and Secretary. The officers shall be elected annually at the June meeting. The President must have served on the Commission for at least one full year. The President shall be elected first, Vice-President, second and Secretary, third. All voting members are eligible for election to any office.
- ii.** The officers shall serve one-year terms and may be renewed for one additional term. The Vice President will serve as President in the year following the President's term. By appointment of the Commission, the President shall remain as a member of the Commission in the role of Past President for one year following service as President.

### **Section 2 Duties of Officers**

- A.** The President shall perform all usual duties attached to the Office of President including:
  - i.** Preside at all Commission meetings with the right to vote on any business transaction and or motion.
  - ii.** Appoint all Commission committees.
  - iii.** Be an ex-officio member of all committees.
  - iv.** Plan an agenda two weeks in advance of each meeting with Principal and committee chairpersons.
  - v.** Hold officers and committees to their respective responsibilities.
  - vi.** Distribute an agenda to the Commission membership one week in advance of each meeting.
  - vii.** Sign all Commission policies and official correspondence.
  - viii.** Serve until a successor has been elected.

- B.** The Vice President shall perform all usual duties attached to the office of Vice President including:
- i.** Assume and perform the duties of President during the President's absence or temporary inability to perform.
- C.** The Secretary shall perform all usual duties of the office of Secretary including:
- i.** Keep a record of the proceedings of the Commission monthly meetings, including attendance record. Prepare and distribute minutes of each meeting to the Commission membership and forward a copy of the minutes to the Pastor and/or Pastoral Coordinator. After approval of the minutes, place in a permanent and easily accessible location and publish a summary of each meeting on the school website.
  - ii.** Receive, file, and distribute reports of the committees.
  - iii.** Serve as the custodian of the Commission Constitution and Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE VII Meetings**

### **Section 1 Procedures**

- i.** The Commission shall meet monthly (except in July and August) at a day, time, and place to be determined in September by the Commission membership. The President shall establish a general meeting format. Robert's Rules of Order shall be generally followed.
- ii.** All business transactions and motions shall require a majority of all voting members with a quorum present.
- iii.** For the purposes of conducting official business, a quorum is defined as a majority (one-half plus one) of the total voting membership.
- iv.** A simple majority of the members present and voting shall carry the motion, decision or election unless otherwise specified in the constitution and bylaws.
- v.** Meetings shall be conducted in an orderly and courteous manner and should include

approval of the minutes of the previous meeting, Principal's report, Pastor's and/or Pastoral Coordinator's report, standing committee reports, and new business.

**Section 2** Open Meetings

- i.** All meetings of the Commission shall be open to parents, guardians, and other members of the school and parish community unless designated as an executive session called by the President. Executive sessions may be called for confidential matters or sensitive issues. The Commission membership shall be advised in advance of any executive sessions whenever feasible.
- ii.** Parents, guardians and other members of the Saint Patrick school and parish community are welcome to attend Commission meetings. In order to participate in the discussion of any issue, an individual shall advise the President of his or her intent at least seven (7) days before the meeting. Discussion of any issue may not exceed 10 minutes unless otherwise approved by the Executive Committee.
- iii.** In the event the President or Vice President determine a vote is required expeditiously due to exigent circumstances or a time-sensitive issue, a motion may be made by electronic mail to all Commission voting members. In such instances the motion may be seconded and voted on by Commission members by electronic mail outside of the regularly scheduled meeting to obtain authorization to resolve the issue. In the event of a motion is conducted by electronic mail, the motion and the outcome shall be reflected in the next month's meeting minutes.

**ARTICLE VIII Committees**

**Section 1** Executive Committee

- A.** The Commission shall have an Executive Committee to oversee the functions of all Standing and Ad Hoc Committees created by the Commission.
- B.** The Commission President shall be the chair of the Executive Committee. Members of the

Executive Committee shall include the Principal, Vice-President, Secretary and one appointed member of the Commission to be determined by the President.

**Section 2** Standing Committees –Purpose and Creation

- A.** Standing committees provide continuity for ongoing Commission operations.
  - i.** The President, Principal, Pastor and/or Pastoral Coordinator may serve as an ex-officio member of each standing committee.
  - ii.** The Commission will establish the scope and objectives of the standing committees.
  - iii.** Standing committees research, present information, and take action on those proposals that have been approved by the Commission.
  - iv.** Standing committees shall provide reports at regular Commission meetings as directed by the President of the Commission.
  
- B.** Standing Committees include the following:
  - i.** Administrative Committee
  - ii.** Development Committee
  - iii.** Facilities Committee
  - iv.** Finance Committee
  - v.** School Excellence Committee

**Section 3** Ad Hoc Committees – Purpose and Creation

- A.** The Commission, to meet a specific objective at a given time, may establish ad hoc committees.
  - i.** Ad hoc committees may be a sub-committee of a standing committee or an independent committee established by the Commission.
  - ii.** The Chair and objectives of the ad hoc committee will be established at the time the committee is created by the Commission.
  - iii.** Ad hoc committees shall provide reports at regular Commission meetings as directed

by the President of the Commission.

- B. Ad hoc committees created by the Commission may have any scope deemed necessary by the Commission to meet specific Commission or school needs.

**ARTICLE IX Constitution/By-Law Amendments**

**Section 1 Proposed Amendments**

- i. Amendments must be presented to the Commission at least two (2) weeks before formal presentation for approval at a regularly scheduled Commission meeting. This requirement may be waived by majority vote.
- ii. The adoption of amendments passed by the Commission shall be effective as soon as they are passed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting membership of the Commission. Following approval, the amendments will be forwarded to the Pastor and/or the Pastoral Coordinator for review.

**Revised, approved, and passed by Saint Patrick School Commission.**

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President, St. Patrick School Commission

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Date

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Pastoral Coordinator, Saint Patrick Parish