

# St. Stephen Catholic School Advisory Board Constitution and By-Laws

## *SSCS Mission Statement*

*St. Stephen Catholic School is devoted to inspiring students to achieve their full academic potential while demonstrating a desire to continue Jesus' mission by applying Catholic morals, beliefs, values, and practices in their everyday lives. We are committed to motivating students to sustain a lifelong love of learning.*

The name of this organization shall be the “**School Advisory Board of St. Stephen Catholic School**” which will be referred to as the “**Advisory Board**” hereafter.

## **ARTICLE I -- PURPOSE AND FUNCTION**

The Advisory Board is consultative in nature and functions in that it formulates, initiates, and administers certain projects that are essential to the success of Saint Stephen Catholic School (SSCS). The members assist the Pastor and school Principal in the areas of

- A. Long-range planning and Strategic Planning
- B. Advising on Policy Development and Formation
- C. Financing (including budgeting and policies for financial management)
- D. Public Relations/Marketing
- E. Development (Fund Raising, etc.)
- F. Facilities (Plant Maintenance and updating)
- G. Recommend Nomination of New Advisors
- H. Other activities as directed by the Pastor/Principal

Recommendations may be formulated by this Advisory Board and presented to the Pastor and Principal for consideration and approval as local policies. The Principal is responsible for implementing local and diocesan policies. The Advisory Board will ensure that such recommendations follow the intent and spirit of policies at the diocesan level.

The Advisory Board shall function under the authority delegated to it by the Pastor. The Pastor shall establish the Advisory Board and has the power to appoint and the power to remove members and officers of the Advisory Board with or without cause. The Pastor has final veto authority and is ultimately responsible for approving all recommendations. All school policies must align with Diocese of St. Petersburg Office of Catholic Schools and Centers policies.

## **ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP**

The Advisory Board shall consist of seven members. At least two of the seven members should be parents with children enrolled in St. Stephen Catholic School. Other members may be school parents or members of the parish. The new members shall be appointed in April or May of each year. The first month of serving as a voting member on board will commence in September. The last month to serve when length of service is completed is June. The length of service for each member shall be one three-year term, with the option of a second three-year term. No member may serve more than two and one-half consecutive terms (in the case a member was appointed to fill the remainder of another's term). Terms will be staggered so that two to three members rotate off each year. A vacancy arising during the term shall be filled by appointment from the Pastor and the new member shall serve the remainder of the vacant term. Advisory Board members may not be employed by the Parish or be a spouse of a Parish employee. An exception to this rule may be made by the Pastor in special circumstances. Any member who fails to fulfill required duties, such as attendance at meetings and assigned committee work, may be asked to resign by the Pastor. The principal, business manager, and school bookkeeper shall serve as resources.

### **ARTICLE III – PROCESS OF SELECTION OF ADVISORS**

The School Advisory Board and Principal have the responsibility of seeking and recommending to the Advisory Board eligible candidates for participation on the Advisory Board. The following criteria in the nomination of Advisory Board Candidates includes:

1. A strong adherence to mission statement of St. Stephen Catholic School
2. A genuine interest in Catholic education and a willingness to support diocesan philosophy and mission
3. A high level of integrity and the ability to maintain confidentiality
4. A sense of future vision for the school
5. An ability to work effectively with others in achieving consensus in decisions for the good of the entire school community
6. An ability and willingness to make the necessary and substantial time commitment to fulfill their obligations including thought and study, Advisory Board meetings, committee leadership, development and periodic In-Service programs
7. 21 years of age or older.

Upon receipt of recommendations from the Nominating Committee or Principal, the Advisory Board shall create a list of potential new Advisors to be recommended to the Pastor for consideration.

### **ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS**

The officers of the Advisory Board shall be the Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, and Secretary. Only members with at least one year of service on the Advisory Board are eligible to be elected Chairperson.

Officers shall be elected for a one-year term, by and from the Advisory Board members. Elections shall be held at the first meeting of the school year and will take effect in September. The term for an officer is from September to June

. No officer may hold the same office for more than two consecutive terms unless expressly approved by a majority vote of the Advisory Board on a year-by-year/case-by-case basis. Reasons for exceptions can include, but are not limited to, continuity in committee leadership or existing Advisory Board members running unopposed.

Chairperson:

- Shall preside at all meetings of the Advisory Board
- Shall prepare the meeting agenda in consultation with the Principal, Pastor, and the Advisory Board members
- Shall conduct internal elections
- Call all regular and special meetings
- Shall direct the functions and goals of the Advisory Board
- Shall enforce the By-Laws
- Shall perform any and all duties incident to the Office of the Chairperson.

Vice-Chairperson:

- Shall assume duties and responsibilities of chairperson in his/her absence
- Shall serve as Chair for the Nominating, Policy and By-Laws Committees

Secretary:

- Shall maintain a written record of all actions of the Advisory Board
- Shall receive and attend to all correspondence
- Shall preserve all reports and documents entrusted to his/her care including the Constitution and By-Laws
- Shall distribute copies of the minutes to all Advisory Board members
- Shall write a brief summary of School Advisory Board activities for communication to school parents and the Parish as approved by the Pastor and/or Principal; as requested.

## **ARTICLE V – MEETINGS**

The Advisory Board shall meet at least 5 times each year. The first meeting of the new school year will be held in September. The last meeting of the school year shall be held in May. People with business for the Advisory Board to consider must present it in writing to the Chairperson or Principal at least two weeks prior to the meeting and will be informed one week prior whether their item has been added to the agenda. People wishing to address the Advisory Board about a topic on the agenda must inform the Chairperson prior to the beginning of the meeting, and will be recognized by the Chairperson at the appropriate time. Additional meetings shall be held whenever deemed necessary by the Chairperson in consultation with the Pastor and Principal. The Chairperson in consultation with the school principal may call closed meetings to deal with sensitive and/or confidential matters.

The minutes of previous meetings and the agenda for the next scheduled meeting will be submitted to all members of the Advisory Board at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. Said agenda shall be prepared by the Chairperson and approved by the Principal prior to sending it to the members.

The ordinary order of business shall be:

- Call to order
- Opening Prayer
- Approval of Minutes
- Reports from Pastor and Principal
- Reports from committees
- Actionable items (Old Business)
- Discussible items (New Business)
- Evaluation of meeting (optional)
- Closing Prayer

The Chairperson, the Pastor, or the Principal, may modify the order of business as necessary. A minimum of five members must be participating to conduct Advisory Board business at any meeting. A consensus of members shall be sufficient for any decision or election, except for an amendment to the Constitution and By-Laws as hereafter provided.

## **ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES**

Standing committees will be formed as needed and may include: (1) Constitution and By-Laws, (2) Finance, (3) Public Relations, Marketing and Communications, (4) Long Range and Strategic Planning, (5) Development and Fundraising and (6) Facilities Maintenance and Management committees. Descriptions for each committee are listed in **Appendix A**. The Advisory Board may

establish other standing committees or Task Forces (ad-hoc committees) to address specific issues. A School Advisory Board member will chair each standing committee and recruit members for the committee as needed, however the Constitution and By-Laws and Policy committees shall be chaired by Vice-chairperson. At least one Advisory Board member will sit on, or chair, each ad-hoc committee. Membership of the Advisory Board committees is open to individuals who are not members of the Advisory Board. The Pastor and Principal are ex-officio members of all committees and task forces.

## **ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws shall be proposed in writing at a regular meeting of the Advisory Board and agreed to at the following month's meeting. There shall be a minimum of a four-week time frame between the proposal of an amendment and the vote. The Constitution and By-Laws may be amended by an affirmative of a two-thirds majority of the entire membership. All amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws are subject to approval of the Pastor.

## **ARTICLE VIII – RULES OF ORDER**

Ordinarily, decisions regarding policy matters and other major issues are not made at the "first reading" which is for information and clarification. The "second reading" of the policy occurs after additional consultation and clarification. At that time, the Advisory Board begins its decision-making process.

In order to make the best decisions, the consensus method of decision making should be used. When the Advisory Board is unable to reach a consensus, a vote should be taken, and the minutes should reflect the different positions and appropriate reasons. In cases involving voting and business procedures, Roberts Rules of Order, Revision should be used.

In those matters in which the Advisory Board has jurisdiction, the vote of the majority carries, and the decisions should be implemented. In matters subject to the jurisdiction of the Pastor, the Advisory Board shall present its rationale for the decision and its recommendation to the Pastor who will make the final decision.

## **Addendum**

The Pastor may make exceptions to the Constitution as needed.

APPROVED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reverend Dermot Dunne, Pastor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mrs. Linda Umoh, Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mrs. Austin Simon, Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Appendix A: Descriptions for Standing Committees**

### **Constitution and By-laws: Chaired by Vice-Chairperson**

Chaired by Vice-Chairperson, this committee will be formed and meet as necessary to review the by-laws which govern the school Advisory Board.

### **Finance**

The School Advisory Board is charged with reviewing the school revenues and expenses monthly, reviewing proposed tuition and fees, and annual school budget in consultation with the principal. At the request of the principal, a committee will be formed to meet as needed during the school year to develop and review the school's three to five-year financial plan.

### **Public Relations, Marketing and Communications**

This committee will be formed and meet as necessary to review and recommend marketing plans to create a positive image of St. Stephen Catholic School within the community and to encourage enrollment of students in the school.

### **Development and Fundraising**

This committee will be formed and meet as necessary to review and recommend sources of funding and the expenditure of funds to enhance St. Stephen School.

### **Long-range and Strategic Planning**

This committee will assist the principal and pastor in reviewing a long-range plan (10 years) for St. Stephen School in conjunction with parish strategic planning and from this review, deriving short- and mid-range goals. At the request of the principal, a committee will be formed to meet as needed during the school year, to help chart a path to excellence for the school and recommend realistic goals to achieve it.

### **Facilities**

This committee will assist the principal and pastor in reviewing the facilities plan for the school, which includes anticipated additions or repairs to the facility. At the request of the principal, a committee will be formed to meet as needed during the school year. The committee may assist with finding resources, suppliers, items, price quotes, etc., and make recommendations.