

Our Lady of the Prairie
School Advisory Council
Bylaws

Introduction

The School Advisory Council (SAC) of Our Lady of the Prairie is established to assist the pastor and the Principal in the governance of this parish school. The Pastor is the Canonical Representative of the parish, including the school, and the enactor of local policy. The Pastor hires, supervises, and annually evaluates the Principal, using the assessment tools and guidelines provided by the Office of Catholic Schools. In addition, the Pastor is responsible for the supervision of religious education and formation programs and approves the school's annual budget.

The Pastor entrusts to the Principal the daily operation of the school program, as specified in his/her terms of employment and/or job description. This responsibility includes the general administration of the school's operations, management of the school's financial affairs within the limits of ordinary administration, recommendation regarding employment of new staff, other educational programming, and the evaluation and management of student behavior. The Principal shall be responsible to the SAC for carrying out its policies and informing the SAC of the need or the requirements for policies.

The establishment of policy is accomplished through the activity of the SAC. The SAC is composed of the administrative team (Pastor and Principal) and the other SAC members. When the SAC (administrative team and members) meets and agrees on a policy matter, it is effective so long as it does not conflict with Archdiocesan mandates or applicable law. The SAC's responsibility is solely for policy matters; it has no authority for the school's administration or daily operations, including employment-related matter for school administration, faculty, and staff.

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Article I. **Name**

The name of this body shall be Our Lady of the Prairie School Advisory Council (SAC)

Article II. **Nature and Function**

Section1. Nature: The SAC is an advisory council and is consultative to the Pastor and Principal. The members cannot act apart from the Pastor and the Principal and cannot make decisions binding for the parish school without the approval of the Pastor. Consultation means that decisions by the Pastor or the Principal will not be made in major matters affecting the parish school until and unless the SAC has been consulted.

Section2. Function: The SAC has responsibilities in the following areas:

1. Marketing
2. Facilities / Grounds Maintenance
3. Finance / Fundraising
4. Alumni
5. Recruitment & Retention
6. Long Range Planning
7. Personnel and Policy

Additional information regarding the SAC roles and responsibilities can be found on the adendum.

Article III. **Membership**

Section1. General Eligibility: Members of the SAC shall be the Pastor and Principal of Our Lady of the Prairie Parish, ex officio and six (6) Pastor-appointed representatives who are registered parishioners at least 18 years of age.

Section2. Term: Each lay member shall serve a term of three (3) years. The term of office shall run from July 1 to June 30. No member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. Any exception to this rule would require a two thirds (2/3) acceptance vote by the SAC, with this deviation in policy subject to approval by the Pastor.

Section3. Appointment: Every year two (2) voting Council members shall be appointed by the Pastor as follows:

1. In March of each year the SAC will begin the process of recommending candidates to the Council for the Pastor's review.
2. In April of each year the final list of nominations will be formally presented to the Pastor for approval.
3. In May of each year the newly appointed Council members will be invited to join the meeting and be introduced to the current SAC.

Section4. Vacancies: With the exception of ex officio members, any vacancy in membership shall be filled by appointment of the Pastor. The successor member shall serve on the SAC for the unexpired term of the vacating member.

Article IV. **Officers**

Section1. Officers: The SAC officers shall consist of a Chair, a Vice-Chair and the Secretary.

Section2. **Chairperson:** The Chairperson shall:

1. Preside at all meetings of the SAC
2. Plan the SAC meetings with the Principal
3. Make all committee assignments and see that the committees function properly
4. Execute all written documents on behalf of the SAC
5. Ensure that the SAC recommendations are addressed

Section3. **Vice-Chair:** The Vice-Chair, in the absence of the Chair or at his/her request, shall perform the duties and exercise the functions of the Chair and, when so acting, shall have the authority of the Chair and shall perform such other duties as are delegated by the Chair.

Section4. **Secretary:** The Secretary shall maintain minutes of all SAC meetings, provide such minutes to members, notify members of meetings, and, in general, perform all duties pertaining to the office of the Secretary.

Section5. **Election & Term of Office:** The SAC officers shall be elected at the May meeting and shall take office immediately for a term of one (1) year, which shall begin on July 1. A majority vote of those present and voting shall be necessary for election. Nominations of officers shall be presented by any member and the election may be by voice vote or by secret written ballot when two (2) or more nominees are nominated for any office. The Principal will count the ballots in a written ballot. Any office that has only a single nominee may be finalized by a unanimous ballot from the secretary if presented in the form of a motion and passed by the members present. The election of the Chair shall take place first, followed by the election of the Vice-Chair, followed by the secretary. The officers shall hold office until the next May meeting and thereafter, until their successors are duly elected. No member shall hold the same office for more than two (2) consecutive years.

Article V. Meetings

Section1. **Meetings:** Regular monthly meetings shall be held except June, July and August when no meetings are held. Any deviation from this schedule will be decided at the prior month's meeting. Special meetings may be held when requested by the Pastor, the Principal, the Chair or the majority of the members. The Principal must be present for the meeting to take place.

Section2. **Conduct of Meetings:** The SAC shall operate in a spirit of collegiality and shall seek consensus. All meetings of the SAC are open meetings unless designated as being an executive session. Meetings shall follow an agenda and facilitation of the Chair.

Section3. **Quorum:** Two-thirds of the voting members of the SAC shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting, and each such member shall be entitled to one (1) vote, either in person, by proxy, or by remote communication. A majority vote of those present and voting (an abstention is not a vote) shall be sufficient for any recommendation or election. A member not physically present in person or by proxy at a meeting may, by means of remote communication, participate in a meeting.

Section4. **Attendance:** Any member who misses three consecutive meetings without being excused is liable to dismissal, at the discretion of the SAC. Members may be excused by contacting any of the officers prior to the meeting. Issues relating to dismissal shall be decided by secret written ballot during the third consecutive meeting the member has been absent. In the event of a dismissal the Pastor will appoint a replacement to finish out the term of the dismissed member.

Section5. **Written Authorization without a Meeting:** Any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the members may be taken without a meeting by written action signed by all of the members entitled to vote on that action.

Article VI. Committees

Section1. Committee Membership: All SAC members are expected to serve on one (1) or more standing committee. Each standing committee shall have such authority and shall perform such duties as may be assigned to it by the SAC Chair. The Chair shall assign and appoint committee memberships, including committee chairs, after consultation with the Principal. Committee Chairs must be SAC members. Committee members may include persons who are not SAC members, but who are competent or expert in an area of responsibility of the committee to which they are appointed. Teachers and other staff are eligible to serve on committees, but are not eligible to serve as SAC members. The Chair of the SAC's Fundraising/Finance Committee shall also be a non-voting member of the parish's finance council. The Principal and or his/her designee may attend all committee meetings.

Section2. Ad Hoc Committees: The SAC may appoint ad hoc committees as it deems advisable and may discontinue the same at its discretion.

Article VII. **Periodic Review of Bylaws**

At least once every five (5) years, or more often if determined by the SAC, a review of the current Bylaws shall take place.

Article VIII. **Amendments**

Subject to the approval of the parish corporate board, these Bylaws may be amended by four (4) of the voting members present and voting affirmatively at a regular meeting; provided that the amendment was presented in writing by the secretary or proposing member at the preceding regular meeting. Publication of the amendment to the school and parish community prior to approval is encouraged.