

# **GUIDELINES OF SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**OF**

## **NATIVITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL SCHOOL**

### **PREAMBLE**

NATIVITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL (“School”) is a ministry of NATIVITY CATHOLIC Church, a parish of the Archdiocese of Miami (“Archdiocese”). The School is established to carry out the teaching ministry of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church. As such, the religious and educational mission shall at all times be in accordance with the teachings and laws of the Roman Catholic Church as interpreted by the Archbishop of Miami and the policies of the Archdiocese.

At this time, it is the intention of the Pastor of NATIVITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL to establish a School Advisory Council (“Council”) to advise him and his appointed principal in the governance of the school. This Council shall have as its primary concern the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development of the students of the School.

### **ARTICLE I**

I.1 NAME. The name of this body shall be the School Advisory Council of NATIVITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL.

### **ARTICLE I**

II.1 PURPOSE AND FUNCTION. The purpose of this Council is to advise the Pastor in the governance of NATIVITY CATHOLIC SCHOOL, a ministry of NATIVITY CATHOLIC Church, in its responsibilities related to advancement of the mission, strategic planning, academic excellence, financial stability, and operational vitality.

### **ARTICLE II**

III.1 CANONICAL POWERS AND RESERVED RIGHTS OF PASTOR. Nothing in these Guidelines is intended to limit in any way the rights, powers, control, and authority of the Pastor with respect to the Catholic identity and mission of the School as provided by the Code of Canon Law and the policies of the Archdiocese of Miami. Such authority includes, but is not limited to:

- III.1.1 Articulating the Mission, Vision or Purpose of the Catholic School and approving any changes to the foundational documents;
- III.1.2 Approval of strategic plans expressing the philosophy, mission, values, and goals, of School, as recommended by the Council;
- III.1.3 Review of the School’s effectiveness in providing a high quality Catholic education and in attaining continuous improvement towards stated objectives;
- III.1.4 Appointment of members of the Council, upon recommendation of Council, as hereinafter provided;
- III.1.5 Adoption of the annual operating and capital budgets or tuition rates in consultation with the Council and/or the Parish Finance Council;

- III.1.6 Approval of any indebtedness or loans, in adherence to the standards and practices required by the Archdiocese;
- III.1.7 Approval of the modification or expansion or closure of School facilities, or the acquisition or sale of real property, in adherence to Archdiocesan policy on these matters;
- III.1.8 Appointment of legal and auditing counsel for School, and approval to initiate legal action of any nature, in adherence to Archdiocesan policy on these matters;
- III.1.9 Matters pertaining to the patrimony of the Parish;
- III.1.10 Approval of lease of any real property;
- III.1.11 Hiring, firing, and evaluation of the School Principal in coordination with the Superintendent; and
- III.1.12 Appointment of Council members and approval of the Council Officers, upon recommendation by the Council.

#### **ARTICLE IV**

IV.I DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE COUNCIL. The Council is advisory in nature. Working in collaboration with the Pastor and Principal, the Council shall advise on select areas of the School's policy and administration, with particular focus on the following:

- IV.1.1 Promoting and advancing the mission of the school for the education and instruction of students in assisting them to reach the fullness of the Christian life;
- IV.1.2 Informing and monitoring the annual operating and capital budgets in support of the financial stability and operational vitality of the School;
- IV.1.3 Informing annual fundraising goals for a comprehensive school advancement plan to include such areas as alumni development, annual fund, and any capital campaign;
- IV.1.4 Recommending to the Pastor for his approval a three to five-year comprehensive Strategic Plan that encompasses all aspects of school life. Goals, objectives and an action plan identifying resources are developed to implement, monitor, and annually update the strategic plan for the School; Strategic Plan shall be adopted after obtaining approval of the Pastor;
- IV.1.5 Inform and monitor the school's master plan for facilities and emergency safety and security;
- IV.1.6 Participating in the hiring process of the Principal through a process defined by the Superintendent, and recommend candidates to the Pastor for final hire;
- IV.1.7 Annually assessing the effectiveness of the Council with respect to the school's mission, academic excellence and operational vitality and the Council goal and responsibilities, as outlined by these Guidelines;

IV.1.8 Advisement of policies to guide the School's planning and administration in the areas of:

- a. Academic Affairs;
- b. Student Affairs;
- c. Faith Community Affairs;
- d. Business Affairs; and
- e. Development Affairs.

IV.2 OUTSIDE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COUNCIL. Except as otherwise specified in these Guidelines, the Council is not involved with the following:

- a. review of administrative decisions or policy implementation.
- b. Hiring, termination, or personnel issues involving faculty or staff members.
- c. Human Resources policies and procedures in the school.
- d. Issues related to student life, student behavior, or student disciplinary decisions.
- e. Individual admissions decisions or individual financial aid decisions.
- f. Development of school curriculum.
- g. Communication with the media on archdiocesan or School matters.
- h. Serving as an official spokesperson of the School to the general public.

IV.3 MEMBERSHIP. The Council shall have at least nine (9), but no more than fifteen (15), members ("members"), excluding ex officio members. Members shall be appointed by the Pastor after receiving and considering nomination from the Council.

IV.4 CRITERIA FOR MEMBERSHIP. The Council shall include:

IV.4.1 The Pastor, ex-officio, without vote;

IV.4.2 The Principal, ex-officio, without vote;

IV.4.3 Current School Parents, who shall not exceed more than 49% of the Council membership;

IV.4.4 Alumni or parents of alumni of the School who do not currently have children enrolled as students of the School;

IV.4.5 Leaders within the civic, business and professional community who do not currently have children enrolled as students in the School;

IV.4.6 Members of the Parish who do not already meet the criteria above;

IV.4.7 The majority of the members must be practicing Catholics;

IV.4.8 Excepting those who are ex-officio, the Members nominated shall meet the following criteria:

- a. A member candidate shall be 21 years of age or older;
- b. A member candidate should be representative of the community served by School;
- c. A member candidate should express an interest in and commitment to Catholic education and understand, accept, and support the mission statement of School;
- d. A member candidate should bring wisdom and specific expertise of value to the Council (for example: knowledge or expertise in finance, human resources, marketing, facilities; construction; management or education);
- e. A member candidate must maintain a high level of honesty and personal integrity, and avoid disclosure of confidential matters as well as any conflicts of interest;
- f. A member serves without compensation or remuneration and does not seek to benefit financially from the association with the School;
- g. A member will actively participate in and provide leadership for resource development/institutional advancement programs for the school. It is the expectation that all members will contribute financially to the school in proportion to their ability to give.

IV.5 APPOINTMENT AND TERM LENGTH. Members shall serve a term of three (3) years, which shall begin on July 1<sup>st</sup> and end on June 30<sup>th</sup>. No member may serve more than two (2) consecutive full terms.

The terms of participation shall be so arranged that the terms of approximately one-third (1/3<sup>rd</sup>) of the members expire each year.

In order to provide for staggered terms, the initial Council shall be divided by the Pastor into three groups of as nearly equal membership as possible with the term for one group of members expiring each year during a three-year period. Members may be reappointed, provided, however, that no member shall serve more than two (2) terms consecutively regardless of whether any such term shall be less than three (3) years. Members shall be eligible for reappointment after having not served on the Council for one (1) year.

Newly appointed members are provided a general orientation by the Principal, in collaboration with the Pastor and Council Officers.

Council members may resign by providing written notification to the Pastor.

IV.6 REMOVAL. A member may be relieved of his position on the Council at the sole discretion of the Pastor if he determines such removal to be in the best interest of the School. Issues that constitute grounds for removal may include, but not be limited to:

consistent lack of attendance at Council meetings or lack of participation in Council commitments; moral turpitude such as public conduct unbecoming a member of the Council, public conduct that has a negative impact on or damages the School's reputation, or change of status in affiliation with the school (i.e. a current parent de-enrolls their child from the school).

IV.7 EMPLOYEES – RESTRICTION. Excepting ex-officio members, employees, spouses of employees, and other immediate family members of employees at the School or Parish are not eligible for participation on the Council.

IV.8 NOMINATION. Members of the Council will recommend potential candidates to the Council to the Pastor for approval. The Council may opt to utilize a Nominating Committee for such purposes (see Article VI, below).

IV.9 CONFLICT OF INTEREST. Any member (or his or her immediate family members or relatives) who has an interest in a matter involving a student, contract or other transaction presented to the Council shall make a prompt and full disclosure of such interest to the Council prior to related action. Such member shall not vote on, nor use personal influences on, nor participate in the discussions or deliberations with respect to such contract or transactions. Members shall annually sign a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form, which shall be kept on file in the school.

IV.10 CONFIDENTIALITY. Board proceedings and minutes shall be kept confidential. Voting Council members shall sign and submit a Confidentiality Statement every year in which they serve on the Council, and these statements shall be kept on file in the School.

IV.11 VACANCY. Any vacancy on the Council may be filled upon recommendation of the Council (or Nominating Committee, if utilized) and approval of the Pastor. The selected member shall serve for the unexpired portion of the term in the same manner as provided for in the original appointment. After completing the unexpired portion of the vacant term, the member remains eligible for nomination as defined in these Guidelines for two full terms.

IV.12 ATTENDANCE. Members are strongly encouraged to attend all Council meetings in person. As appropriate, Council members can attend meetings in person, via telephone or video conference call, or by other available technology as long as the method of communication allows all persons present to be able to fully communicate and shall constitute presence in person at the meeting.

## ARTICLE V

V.1 OFFICERS. The officers of the Council shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary. The Chairperson must be a practicing Catholic. The officers shall serve for a term of one (1) year and may serve no more than three (3) consecutive terms in the same office.

V.2 APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS. At the final meeting of the Council's year, the Chairperson shall invite members to nominate Officers for the next year. Officers shall be recommended to the Pastor for appointment by a majority of votes cast by the members present this meeting. If an Officer resigns from their office or the Council mid-term, the Pastor shall appoint a new Officer to serve for the remainder of the term.

V.2.1 In the first year of the Council's operations, the Pastor shall select the Officers. In future years, Officers are selected through the process outlined in Section 5.2.

**V.2 DUTIES OF OFFICERS:**

V.2.1 **Chairperson.** The Chairperson is appointed by the Pastor and presides over all meetings of the Council. The Chairperson must be an actively practicing Catholic and a member of the Parish. The Chairperson assists the Pastor and Principal to construct the agenda for each Council meeting, and ensures this agenda is distributed at least three (3) days in advance of the meeting.

V.2.2 **Vice Chairperson.** The Vice Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Chairperson (as described in 5.3.1) in Chairperson's absence.

V.2.3 **Secretary.** The Secretary maintains a record of the proceedings of meetings of the Council and ensures that the Principal maintains a file of such records at the School. The Secretary shall also keep a register of the name and contact information for each member of the Council.

**ARTICLE VI**

**VI.1 STANDING COMMITTEES.** With the recommendation from the Council, the Pastor may establish committees to support the work of the Council in specific areas. The number and type of committees may vary by school, depending upon its size and needs. However, each Council must have an Executive Committee.

The Pastor shall appoint a chair of each established committee, with recommendation from the Executive Committee. Committee chairs must be voting members of the Council. However, membership of committees is not limited to only voting members; additional persons who are not Council members may be appointed. Each committee must include the Principal or another individual in school/parish leadership designated by the Pastor or Principal. All committee members must be approved by the Pastor.

Committees may be Standing or Ad hoc. Standing Committees meet regularly (at least once per year) and continue indefinitely or over multiple years. Ad hoc Committees are established for a temporary time period to serve a specific purpose or project.

Minutes of committee meetings must be kept and submitted to the Secretary for placement in the Board file in the School.

VI.1.1 **Executive Committee.** The Council must have an Executive Committee. This committee may act on behalf of the Council when actions cannot await the meeting of the Council as a whole. All such actions of the Executive Committee shall be subject to approval of the Council at any regular or special Council meeting. The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the Council Chairperson, who will serve as chair, the Vice Chairperson, the Council Secretary, the Pastor, and the Principal.

VI.1.2 **Optional Committees.** As described in 6.1, additional committees may be established to support the work of the Committee. The establishment of such committees shall be recommended by the Council and approved by the Pastor.

Such Committees may include, but not be limited to:

- a. Finance Committee. The Finance Committee provides advisement on the financial viability of the School, including such areas as reviewing/monitoring the School budget, recommending tuition rates, and providing general financial advice. The Finance Committee, if established, shall work in close collaboration with the Parish Finance Council, and at least one voting member of the Parish Finance Council must be part of the Finance Committee.
- b. Strategic Planning Committee. The Strategic Planning Committee provides input on the school's 3-5 year strategic plan. The committee assists in monitoring the implementation of the plan and recommends changes. The committee also assists in the construction of future strategic plans, and in recommending such plans to the Pastor.
- c. Nominating Committee: The Nominating Committee is responsible for identifying candidates for Council membership, for preparing an annual slate for election of officers and for recommendations regarding re-election of members eligible for an additional term. This committee maintains data on Council demographics and leads the process for Council self-assessment on an annual basis.
- d. Marketing and Enrollment Committee. The Marketing and Enrollment Committee provides strategic guidance to the School's marketing, recruitment, and retention initiatives, in coordination with marketing and enrollment activities implemented by the Office of Catholic Schools.
- e. Advancement Committee: The Advancement Committee provides advice and monitoring for the school's Advancement operations, including such areas as fundraising, alumni relations, annual fund, and any capital campaign.
- f. Mission Effectiveness: The Mission Effectiveness Committee is responsible for working with the Pastor and Principal to support the school's realization of its unique Catholic mission. Such efforts include areas as Catholic traditions, liturgical celebrations, community service, and prayer.
- g. Facilities and Safety: The Facilities and Safety Committee provides advice and monitoring of the School's Master Plan for facilities and security, in consultation with the Archdiocese of Miami. The committee provides advice and recommendations for such areas as capital improvements, security procedures, and coordination with local emergency officials.
- h. School Support Committees: At the discretion of the Pastor or Principal, School Support Organizations such as the Family-School Association (or equivalent) or Athletic Booster Club may be established as committees of the Council. In such cases, these Committees must meet the requirements outlined in 6.1 above.
- i. Additional Committees: Additional committees, not suggested in these Guidelines, may be established by the Pastor as needs arise. Such committees must not contradict the Duties and Powers of the Council, as outlined in Article IV.

## **ARTICLE VII**

VII.1 MEETINGS. The Council shall meet no less than five (5) times a year. The Pastor and Principal must be in attendance at any meeting.

VII.2 NOTICE OF MEETING. Council meetings shall be held at the school and written notice, including agenda items, shall be provided electronically or by mail to each Council member at least three (3) calendar days in advance of said meeting.

VII.3 QUORUM. A majority of the voting members of the Council must be present for the transaction of business. Participation in a meeting of the Council by way of telephone or video conference call, or other available conference technology, in which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time, shall constitute presence in person at the meeting. Unless otherwise provided in this Guidelines, any recommendation or election must pass by a majority vote (50% + 1) of those present.

VII.4 RULES OF PROCEDURE. Council meetings shall generally follow established parliamentary procedures (e.g. Robert's Rules of Order).

VII.5 VISITORS. The opportunity for non-members to attend Council meetings shall be limited to those who receive permission from the Pastor or Principal.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

VIII.1 AMENDMENTS. Recommendations for Amendments to these Guidelines require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Council. Amendments must be approved by the Pastor and Superintendent of Schools. Council members must receive written notice about Amendments at least one month before the vote to amend.

## **ARTICLE IX**

IX.1 MISCELLANEOUS.

IX.1.1 The fiscal year shall be defined by the Archdiocese. The current designated fiscal year for the School shall be July 1 to June 30.

IX.1.2 The articles and other headings contained in these Guidelines are for reference purposes only and shall not affect the meaning and interpretation of the Guidelines.

IX.1.3 Whenever the context requires, the gender of all words used herein shall include the masculine, feminine and neuter, and the number of all words shall include the singular and plural thereof.

Approved by the Pastor on the 22 day of July, 2023, \_\_\_\_\_

By: Rev. Robert Ayala

Printed Name: Rev. Robert Ayala

Cc: Superintendent of Schools  
Principal