DIOCESE OF SALE
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS’ BOARD

The Role, Mandate and Responsibilities

Faith... Learning... Growth
1. THE ROLE OF THE DIOCESE OF SALE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS’ BOARD

The Diocese of Sale Catholic Schools’ Board (the Board) is advisory to the Director of Catholic Education (the Director) and thus to the Bishop. Its role is to:

- provide an avenue through which the Bishop of Sale (the Bishop) can consult on matters of educational relevance;
- discern broad education policies and priorities which pertain to Catholic schools, and the system of schools, in the Diocese of Sale, and provide advice to the Bishop through the Director of Catholic Education;
- provide a forum for discussion of current issues impacting on Catholic schools in the diocese, thus giving confidence to the Director that the Catholic Education Office speaks with the voice of the diocesan community in such matters.

In undertaking these tasks, the Board will aspire to visionary leadership and seek to make recommendations that will enhance the Catholic schools system in its provision of educational opportunities for students within the Catholic tradition.

2. FOUNDATIONS OF THE MANDATE OF THE DIOCESE OF SALE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS’ BOARD

Through the office given to him by the Church (Can 375 §2), the Bishop holds ultimate authority and responsibility for Catholic education in the Diocese of Sale. His is a wide-ranging office. Indeed, the Decree on the Bishops’ Pastoral Office in the Church (Christus Dominus), refers to the duty of teaching as “conspicuous among the principal duties of bishops.” (#12). The Decree continues to exhort the Bishop to “announce the gospel of Christ to men (sic) . . . . calling them to a faith in the power of the Spirit or confirming them in a living faith.” The Bishop is also charged with teaching the great value of “the human person with his (sic) freedom and bodily life, the family and its unity and stability, the procreation and education of children, civil society with its laws and professions, labor and leisure, the arts and technical inventions, poverty and affluence. Finally, (the Bishop) should set forth the ways by which are to be answered the most serious questions concerning the ownership, increase, and just distribution of material goods, peace and war, and brotherly relations among all countries.” (#12).

The Bishop is not alone in this work. Parents, after all “must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children” (Gravissimum Educationis, # 3) and, flowing from that, “schools (are) of great importance as they are the principal means of helping parents to fulfil their role in education.” (Can 796 §1).

Thus, bishop, priests, parents and schools share the one mission of Catholic education. Indeed, the Catholic school “stands within the organic pastoral work of the Christian community” (Catholic Schools on the Threshold of the Third...
Millennium, para 12). As such it shares with all Church agencies the mission of building the Kingdom of God as proclaimed by Jesus Christ and authentically communicated by His Church.

The exercise of governance through the Board is a true expression of our Christian belief in the Church as the body of Christ. It provides opportunity for each one - clerical, religious and lay - to bring his or her unique gifts to the table (1 Cor 12). It becomes a work of the People of God, each member supporting and enhancing the other by the sharing of Wisdom, remembering that “When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church” (1Cor 14:26).

The Board embraces the privilege of supporting the Bishop – and thus parents and teachers, in this work. It welcomes the Church’s expressed desire to have outstanding schools (Canon 806 §2), centres of learning that provide every student with the best possible opportunity to grow as human persons in the image of God, to be life-long learners and thus maximise their life chances and to contribute to the building of a healthier, happier world.

Thus, within limits set by the Bishop himself, and within this competency as defined by Canon Law and within any other specifications determined by Civil Law, the Board shall provide advice to the Bishop, through the Director of Catholic Education, that will ensure the existence of “an effective system of education at all levels which contributes to the total educational needs of young people in Catholic schools.” (The Catholic School, 1977, # 9).

The Board shall observe all policies determined by the Bishop and shall make other policy recommendations necessary to carry out its responsibilities to the Bishop through the Director of Catholic Education.

3. FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the Board include the following:

3.1 Leadership and Direction
- Developing a strategic plan for Catholic education in the diocese.
- Planning and recommending broad educational policies and priorities that encompass each school’s mission to enhance the knowledge and love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ through His Church in every student, to foster academic excellence and to provide an environment that enhances the health and well-being of all students.
- Communicating these educational policies and priorities to the people of the diocese.
- Providing a forum for discussion of current significant issues that impact on Catholic schools in the Diocese of Sale that will give confidence to the Director of Catholic Education that the Catholic Education Office speaks with the voice of the diocese in such matters.

3.2 Stewardship of Financial Resources
- Advising on the immediate and long term priorities of the diocesan school system.
• Liaising with the Finance and Audit Committee to ascertain financial viability of such priorities.

3.3 System Development and Consolidation
• Liaising with the Bishop’s advisory bodies on development matters in making recommendations to the Bishop on the establishment of new schools or campuses.
• Liaising with the Bishop’s advisory bodies on development matters to make recommendations to the Bishop on the closure or amalgamation of schools.

3.4 Accountability
• Monitoring the implementation of Diocesan policy decisions through reports provided by the Director of Catholic Education at times determined by the Board
• Monitoring the implementation of the Board’s strategic plan through reports provided by the Director of Catholic Education
• Providing the Bishop and the Catholic community with regular reports on its work.

4. MEMBERSHIP

The members of the Board are appointed by the Bishop. They will bring a broad spectrum of interests and involvement in various areas of Catholic schooling in the diocese.

Members are not elected by various constituencies but are appointed by the Bishop. They do not report to any constituency.

Membership of the Board will be comprised of:
• Two priests of the diocese nominated by the Bishop
• A primary principal from among those proposed to the Bishop by the diocesan association of Catholic primary principals
• A secondary principal from among those proposed to the Bishop by the diocesan association of Catholic secondary principals
• Three who are parents of children attending a Catholic school in the diocese and who are, or have been, members of their own Catholic School Board.
• One or more external educational consultants or experts who may be invited to membership by the Bishop on the recommendation of the Director
• The Assistant Directors of the Catholic Education Office, Sale as ex-officio members
• The Director of Catholic Education is the executive officer of the Board and is an ex-officio member of the Board
• Unless included in the above, the chair of the committee advising the Director on finance and audit matters.

The Catholic Education Office will provide an executive secretary to the Board who will not have voting rights.

The chairperson of the Board is appointed by the Bishop from among members of the Board, other than from among members of Catholic Education Office staff.

1Currently the Gippsland Catholic Primary Principals’ Association (GCPPA)
2Currently the Diocese of Sale Secondary Principals’ Association (DOSSPA)
With the exception of ex-officio members, Board members are appointed for a term of four years with a maximum of two consecutive terms. In the initial years of the existence of the Board, half the appointed members will cease membership after two years.

5. OPERATION

The Board will meet a minimum of six times per year.

A quorum for meetings will be a simple majority of currently appointed members.

The Board will work towards consensus. Every effort will be made to come to a conclusion with which every member can live gracefully. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Chair call for a vote.

Any member may, with due notice, bring to the Board a position paper on any topic considered by the Board to be relevant to the Board’s stated purposes. Such a position paper will propose policy, should include background material and a clear recommendation that will be the focus of debate and discussion. The paper should be submitted to the executive secretary no later than two weeks before the meeting at which it is to be presented.

Other persons involved in or interested in the educational ministry of Catholic schools in the diocese may from time to time be invited to bring their knowledge and experience to Board meetings to assist in the deliberations of the Board.

The matters discussed by the Board and minutes of the meetings remain confidential, though items and outcomes of discussion may be posted on the website of the Catholic Education Office, as agreed by the Board.

The Board may develop such sub-committees as it deems appropriate to assist in its work.

The Bishop retains the right to dissolve the Board, to appoint members and to dismiss members.

6. CHANGES TO TERMS OF REFERENCE

The terms of reference shall be reviewed annually by the Board and any suggestions for amendment shall be presented to the Bishop for consideration.