



Bylaws of the Epiphany School Advisory Council *of the Church of the Epiphany* in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

In a Partnership of Faith with our families, Epiphany Catholic School educates children through truth, goodness, and beauty. We provide a Catholic environment that forms students in knowledge and virtue to become saints and citizens who love Christ and His Church.

INTRODUCTION

The School Advisory Council of Epiphany Catholic School is established to support the Pastor and Principal in advancing the mission of the Catholic school in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church and the Archdiocesan Framework for Excellence in Catholic Education. The School is a ministry of the parish founded for the purpose of partnering with parents in the Catholic education of their children.

The School Advisory Council serves in a consultative and advisory capacity to the Pastor and Principal. Its purpose is to provide informed advice, encouragement, and expertise in designated areas as set forth in these bylaws.

The Council has no role in policy development, governance, or personnel decisions. Rather, animated by a spirit of cooperation and collaboration, the Council offers counsel and support to ensure that the parish school continues to thrive spiritually, academically, and operationally in alignment with Archdiocesan standards and the mission of Catholic education.

ARTICLE 1 NAME

The name of this body shall be the Epiphany School Advisory Council of the Church of the Epiphany (“School Advisory Council,” “SAC” or “Council”).

ARTICLE II NATURE AND FUNCTION

Section 1. Nature. The School Advisory Council serves in a consultative and collaborative capacity to the Pastor and Principal. Its purpose is to offer thoughtful advice, support, and expertise in the areas outlined in these bylaws to advance the mission of the parish school.

The Council does not act independently of the Pastor or Principal, nor does it make decisions binding on the parish school. Rather, the Pastor and Principal will collaborate regularly with the School Advisory Council in the areas of responsibility defined within these bylaws, fostering open communication and shared commitment to the school's mission and goals.

Section 2. Function: The School Advisory Council's primary areas of responsibility are:

1. Feedback and Support to the Pastor and Principal

When requested, the Council provides feedback and counsel to the Pastor and Principal on matters related to the school's operation, such as tuition, budget planning, or other operational needs. Typical activities include:

- a. Offering insight, perspective, or expertise to inform decision-making;
- b. Assisting in evaluating trends or data that impact financial or operational planning;
- c. Providing constructive feedback in the spirit of collaboration and mission alignment;
- d. Providing insight into tuition rates and student fees, as requested.

2. Strategic Planning Support (Aligned to the Archdiocesan Catholic School Study)

The Council contributes to the development, implementation, and monitoring of the school's strategic priorities in ways that align with the Archdiocesan Catholic School Study and the Archdiocesan Framework for Excellence. Typical activities include:

- a. Serving as a sounding board and resource for multi-year strategic planning, ensuring alignment with Archdiocesan recommendations and parish vision;
- b. Assisting with data review, goal setting, community engagement during planning, and progress monitoring;
- c. Helping identify external expertise, partnerships, or resources needed to achieve strategic goals;
- d. Advising on strategies for sustainability, programmatic growth, and mission advancement, recognizing that implementation and final decisions remain the responsibility of the Pastor and Principal

3. Membership Nomination and Council Assessment

Each year, the Council facilitates the identification and vetting of potential new members and evaluates the overall performance of the Council. This function includes:

- a. Supporting the Pastor and Principal in appointing new members, as needed, that meet established council member eligibility criteria;
- b. Promoting a balanced Council by assessing member skills, experience, and representation needs in alignment with the school's mission and strategic priorities;

- c. Conducting an annual review of Council composition, engagement, and effectiveness to identify areas for improvement or additional expertise needed.

ARTICLE III ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Section 1. Parish: A parish is a stable community of the Christian faithful entrusted to a pastor under the authority of the Archbishop (c. 515). Its purpose is the salvation of souls. All the ministries of the parish, including the Catholic school, exist and are sustained by the parish in order to support its primary mission of evangelization. For schools that are sponsored formally or informally by a single parish the Catholic school is a core ministry that sits at the heart of the parish’s educational and evangelical mission.

Section 2. Pastor: The term “Pastor” is used to designate the priest who is appointed by the Archbishop to carry out the functions of teaching, sanctifying and governing within a parish. As such, he governs a parish and all its associated ministries, including a parish school. In the absence of a Pastor, the rights and responsibilities of a Pastor may be entrusted to a team of priests acting in solidum or to a priest named Parish Administrator.

Pastors work in close collaboration with the Principal. In governing a Parish, the responsibilities of the Pastor include:

- a. Overseeing all aspects of the school;
- b. Cultivating an intentional Catholic culture and high-quality Catholic education;
- c. Ensuring that families have access to a Catholic education;
- d. Working cooperatively with the Principal and consultative bodies;
- e. Fostering a responsible approach to school finances;
- f. Giving final approval to hiring and terminating Catholic school faculty and staff;
- g. Ensuring that the policies of the Archdiocese are observed in the school;
- h. Serving as the primary contact for the Archdiocese for governance and institutional questions.

Section 3. Principal: Each Catholic school designates a single leader (for example: principal, president, or headmaster) as the Head of School. At Epiphany Catholic school the Head of School, or “Principal” is the point of communication between the Office for the Mission of Catholic Education and the Catholic school community. The Pastor entrusts to the Principal the leadership and daily management of the school.

The Principal’s responsibilities include:

- a. Living a credible witness of the Catholic faith;
- b. Fulfilling the day-to-day leadership and operations of the school;
- c. Supervising the Catholic school faculty and staff;
- d. Collaborating with Pastor and SAC to cultivate a robust Catholic school culture;
- e. Reporting directly to the Pastor or Parish Administrator;
- f. Ensuring quality and excellence for the Catholic school consistent with the Archdiocesan Manual for Catholic schools;

- g. Working with the Pastor and Parish Administrator to ensure the operational vitality of the school;
- h. Serving as a key member of the parish leadership team.

Section 4. Other Consultative Bodies: Any consultative body established at the parish should work in meaningful collaboration in appropriate ways with the School Advisory Council deemed necessary by the Pastor and Principal.

Section 5: Archdiocese: As a ministry of the Catholic Church, Catholic schools share tangible institutional bonds of communion with the local Church (the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis and its parishes). Catholic schools provide a credible witness to the teachings of Jesus Christ and His Church and intentionally integrate the Gospel into the entire life of the school. All activity of the School Advisory Council shall be in accordance with the Archdiocesan Manual for Catholic Schools and Archdiocesan policies as a manifestation of these tangible bonds.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. General Eligibility: Each member of the School Advisory Council shall:

- Be at least 18 years of age;
- Be a registered and active parishioner at The Church of the Epiphany parish;
- Be capable of signing the Archdiocesan Code of Conduct for Church Personnel;
- Be committed to the mission of Catholic education;
- Be competent in specific areas needed by the Advisory Council;
- Not engage in public conduct that causes scandal or confusion regarding the Church’s teaching;
- Be able to give time and energy to the work of the School Advisory Council, including attending State of the School meetings and attendance at Council meetings. In addition, members are encouraged to volunteer for at least one school fundraising event;
- Be able to maintain high levels of integrity and confidentiality and to work effectively with others in achieving consensus and advancing the mission of the school.

Except as may be set forth in these Bylaws, parish or school employees or their spouses, or anyone currently holding elected or appointed parish office, are ineligible to be a member of the Council.

Section 2. Number of Members and Representation: Members of the School Advisory Council shall consist of:

- The Pastor;
- The Principal;
- Nine Pastor-appointed members, chosen by a process of discernment.

Section 3. Term: Each member shall serve a term of three (3) years and may serve one additional term. The term of office shall run from July 1 to June 30. The members’ terms shall be staggered equally over a period of three (3) years to provide for continuity of a majority of the membership from year to year.

Section 4. Appointment: Each spring the members of SAC should nominate members that fit the criteria for eligibility and submit the names to the Principal and Pastor. The Pastor and Principal will then select and appoint no more than three new Council members, ensuring a balance of talent, perspective, and commitment to the mission of the school.

Section 5. Council Training: Each Catholic school will ensure that its council members receive initial and ongoing training in the following areas:

- the Church’s vision for Catholic education;
- the strategic goals of the Catholic school;
- orientation to the bylaws;
- the Council’s areas of competence and authority; and
- duties of and expectations for individual council members.

Section 6. Vacancies: With the exception of ex-officio members, any vacancy in membership shall be filled by appointment of the current Council. The Nominating Committee shall provide the Council with a list of recommended candidates from which the appointment shall be made. All appointees must meet the eligibility requirements set forth in Article IV, Section 1. The successor member shall serve on the Council for the unexpired term of the vacating member.

Section 7. Resignation: Any member may resign at any time by written notice to the Chair, Pastor, or Principal.

Section 8. Removal: A member may be removed by the Pastor after consultation with the parish trustees.

ARTICLE V OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers: The Council’s officers shall be the Chair and the Secretary.

Section 2. Chairperson: The Chair shall:

- Preside at all meetings of the School Advisory Council;
- Plan Council meetings with the Principal;
- Execute all written documents on behalf of the School Advisory Council; and
- Ensure that Council recommendations are addressed

The Pastor, in consultation with the Principal, should appoint the chair.

Section 4. Secretary: The Secretary shall maintain minutes of all School Advisory Council meetings and put meeting minutes in SAC binder to keep on file.

Section 5. Appointment and Term of Office for Officers: The Council's officers shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Council for a term of one (1) year, which shall begin on July 1. All Council members are eligible to serve as an officer.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS

Section 1. Meetings: Regular meetings shall be held once per month except in June and July 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 a meeting to take place.

Section 2. Notice: Written notice stating the date, time, location, and purpose of the meeting shall be given to members at least seven (7) days before the meeting. Such notice shall be sent by a form of electronic communication.

Section 3. Conduct of Meetings: The School Advisory Council shall operate in a spirit of collegiality and shall seek consensus. All meetings of the Council are closed meetings unless designated otherwise.

Section 4. Quorum: Two-thirds of the members of the School Advisory Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting. With the approval of the Pastor, a member not physically present in person may participate in a meeting by remote communication.

Section 5. Annual Meeting: An annual meeting of the School Advisory Council shall be held each year. The meeting shall constitute a planning meeting and shall include on its agenda the appointment of officers for the ensuing year, the recognition of those members whose terms have expired, and a review of the results of the Council's self-evaluation and plans for the following year.

ARTICLE VII PERIODIC REVIEW OF BYLAWS

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

ARTICLE VII AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Subject to the written approval of the parish corporate board and approval of the Office for the Mission of Catholic Education, these Bylaws may be amended by seven (7) of the members present and voting affirmatively at a regular meeting, provided that the amendment was presented in writing at the preceding regular meeting. Amendments must be consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church, the policies set forth in the Archdiocesan Manual for Catholic Schools and other policies from the Archdiocese.

These bylaws were last revised by the Council, Pastor and Principal in May 2026.

APPROVED FOR USE BY THE OFFICE FOR THE MISSION OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN ALL PARISH AND REGIONAL SCHOOLS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS, EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2025.

