

SCHOOL BOARD CONSTITUTION

St. Thomas the Apostle Parish – Newton, Illinois

Article One – Name

The name of this body shall be St. Thomas the Apostle School Board.

Article Two – Purpose

The purpose of the Board shall be to promote the continuation and betterment of Catholic Education by developing and defining the policies which govern the parish school. Such policies will follow the intent and spirit of policies established for all schools within the Diocesan system by the Diocesan Board of Education, subject to such regulations that might also proceed from the Pastor of the Parish.

Article Three – Duties and Functions

The duties and functions of the Board are:

1. To interpret Diocesan School policies for parish school administration.
2. To determine Parish School policies in matters not covered by Diocesan School policies.
3. To provide a channel of communication among parishioners, school administrators, and faculty in matters pertaining to parish school.
4. Act as a liaison body:
 - A. With local/state school officials.
 - B. As required between the Pastor and school employees.
5. Create a better understanding and support of Catholic education.
 - A. Specifically within the parish.
 - B. Secondly within the Community.
6. To review a budget for the Book and Materials Fees and Tuition of the Parish School and to assist in fund raising activities.
7. To determine local policies relating to the planning, operation, and maintenance of school facilities and equipment.
8. To recommend salary scales for lay teachers in accordance with Diocesan guidelines.
9. To communicate parish school policies to parents, parishioners, and community.
10. To assist in the development of long range plans for the operation of the school.
11. To evaluate the decisions and the rules made by school administrators in carrying out board policies.
12. To review at least annually the adequacy and effects of its own policies.
13. To seek ways to work in harmony with other schools in the community, deanery, and diocese.

Article Four – Membership

1. The Board will consist of eleven (11) members: nine (9) voting members elected by the Parish, and the Pastor of the Parish and the School Principal who are ex-officio non-voting members.
2. Each member of the Board shall have one (1) vote.
3. Each lay member will serve a term of three years or until replaced by a successor.
4. Nominations for new members shall take place before the May meeting of the Board, and the election shall be held on the first Sunday of May. Any parishioner at least eighteen years of age is eligible to

vote in this election. Terms of members shall begin on the date of the August meeting. In the event of insufficient candidates, the pastor/administration may appoint someone to fill a vacancy.

5. The Board shall have the right to appoint a successor to fill a vacancy until the next general election. At the next general election, a member shall be elected to serve the unexpired term, if there is one.
6. Any registered member of the Parish and/or school who has attained the age of 21, including non-catholic members of interfaith marriages, may be members; however, no teacher, employee or spouse thereof, employed by St. Thomas Parish is eligible for membership.
7. All members of the School Board are to serve on the Board without pay.

Article Five – Officers

1. The officers of the board shall consist of President, Vice President, and Secretary, all of whom shall be elected annually by the Board membership at the regular August meeting.
2. Any lay member of the Board is eligible for any office.
3. The duties of the officers shall be as follows:
 - A. The President shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Board.
 - B. The Vice President, in the event of the absence, disability, resignation, or disqualification of the President to discharge the duties of his office, will perform all duties incumbent upon the President until the disability is removed.
 - C. The Secretary shall maintain a written record of all acts of the Board, conduct, receive, and dispose of all correspondence as directed, and preserve all records and documents committed to the care of the Secretary.

Article Six – Meetings

1. The Board shall meet on the first Thursday of each month except June and July at St. Thomas School. Special meetings may be called by the Pastor or Board president by their own authority, or by the Secretary, at the request of two Board members.
2. For the purpose of transacting official business, it shall be necessary for five (5) voting members to be present for a quorum.
3. A simple majority of those present and voting shall carry the motion unless otherwise specified in the Constitution.
4. All voting at board meetings shall be by voice vote or show of hands. However, any member may request a roll call vote. Voting by secret ballot shall be prohibited, except in the election of Board Officers and in the selection of candidates for the Distinguished Graduate and Service Awards.
5. All meetings shall be open to members of the parish and to parents of children receiving their education under the jurisdiction of the parish. The rights of non-members of the Board to address the Board shall be limited to those whose petitions were presented in writing to the President seven days before the meeting and approved for the agenda. The oral presentation of the matter is to be limited to two minutes unless this rule is suspended by majority vote of the members present.
6. Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern all meetings of the Board. The ruling of the president on points of order shall be final.
7. Order of Business at all regular meetings shall be set by the administrator and the president of the board.
8. The Secretary shall notify each member of the time and place of all special meetings as is done for regular meetings. Only that business for which a special meeting is called may come before the Board.

9. Upon a vote of the majority of Board members present, the Board may recess and go into Executive Session. Only such persons as the Board may invite may be present during the Executive Session. All decisions reached in this session shall be confirmed by a recorded vote when the Board returns to open session.

Article Seven – Amendments

1. This constitution may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the total members of the Board, subject to acceptance and approval by the Pastor.
2. Amendments must be presented to the Board at least two weeks prior to the voting on those amendments.

Article Eight – Bylaws

1. The Board has the power to adopt Bylaws to govern its Own internal operation and also has the power to amend these Bylaws once they are adopted.
2. A majority vote of the Board will be sufficient for this, provided there is a quorum and the amendment or bylaws has been presented at the previous meeting of the Board.

Article Nine – Miscellaneous Provisions

1. The Board has the power to implement all provisions of this Constitution, including, but not limited to, the conduct of general elections.
2. Three excused absences in one year are permissible for a Board member. Exceeding this number of excused absences is sufficient grounds for removal from the Board by the Pastor of the parish.
3. The written minutes are to be presented to the Pastor within seven days of the meeting. No business, as noted in the minutes, is to be accomplished prior to the acceptance and approval of the Pastor of the parish.
4. All confidential information about teachers and pupils received by the Board at its meetings must be held in the strictest of confidence. The giving of this information to anyone except Board members during a meeting may be grounds for removal from the board by the Pastor.

Article Ten – Ratification of Constitution and Bylaws

This Constitution and Bylaws will be declared ratified and operative when approved by a majority vote of the St. Thomas the Apostle School Board.

Adopted: August, 2011