

Parish Education Advisory Board Guidelines

Mission

The role of the Parish Education Advisory Board (PEAB) is to advise the Parish Priest and Principal. The PEAB aims to work in the best interests of the St. Mary's Community and to assist and foster the growth and development of Catholic Education. Members are also responsible for communicating new developments and progress reports to the school community.

Mandate of the Education Board

The Parish Priest is the administrator of the Parish, with the Principal as his delegate in matters concerning the Parish School. The Board acts as an advisory body to them, in matters concerning education within the Parish. The Board has authority as a unit, which derives from its relationship to the Parish Priest. Individual members can exercise authority only if the whole Council including the Parish Priest delegates it. The Board will ensure that work it undertakes is complementary to directions and goals within the Parish.

Child Safety

The PEAB is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children enrolled in our school. All students enrolled at St Mary's have the right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we do not and will not tolerate child abuse. We aim to create a child-safe and child-friendly environment where children are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety. There is particular attention paid to the most vulnerable children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability. All board members are required to be briefed on the Child Safety Standards annually, and sign the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Functions of the Education Board

- Supporting the enacting of the vision of the school and the implementation of the school's School Improvement Plan and Annual Action Plans
- Advising on policies for the growth and wellbeing of the school and its community
- Reviewing and ratifying policies of the school
- Supporting the parish school in practical ways, ensuring that the school facilities and equipment are maintained.
- Planning for the future and ensuring that the parish school can accommodate future enrolments
- Working in collaboration with the school Parents & Friends Association (P&F)
- Developing school/community relationships and encouraging home/school interaction
- Developing strategies for the local promotion of Catholic education
- Keeping abreast of school finances and fees and providing advice as required
- Communicating with the school community
- Fostering adult education in the Faith

- Assisting in the selection of a principal when such an appointment is being made and in accordance with Diocesan guidelines
- The Council may from time to time, contribute to educational debate in the Archdiocese, at the State or at the National level
- The board does not deal with operational matters, including issues regarding students, staff or the Principal.

Membership

Through membership on the board, each member assumes a leadership role in the Education Ministry in the parish and are committed to the values and principles noted in the Mission and Mandate statements for the group. Members contribute equally to all discussions and in the final analysis decisions are taken to build community through consensus.

Members of the Board:

- Ex Officio members are the Parish Priest, School Principal and Deputy Principal
- A representative from the Parish, as nominated by the Parish Priest
- Four parent representatives from the parish school (3-year term)
- The Executive can appoint/co-opt additional members as required
- Members can be reappointed to the board for a further term

Office Bearers

- A Chairperson will be appointed for a period of three years.
- The board will appoint a Secretary at the first meeting of the year, who will be responsible for the minutes of each meeting and for other administrative tasks as may be necessary from time to time.

The Executive Committee

The Executive of the Council will comprise the Chairperson, the Principal and the Parish Priest. The Executive will meet/communicate prior to each meeting to draw up the agenda and to generally monitor the work of each meeting. The Chairperson will then distribute the agenda and any related papers to board members at least seven days prior to the following meeting.

Appointment Of Board Members

New members for the board will be appointed by the Parish Priest and Principal, in consultation with current board members. Appointed nominees must be seconded by a member of the Education Board.

Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy occurring during the year, the Parish Priest or the Principal shall have the power to appoint a person to fill that position.

Resignation/Removal from The Board

Members may resign from the board by notice in writing. The board may remove a Representative who fails to attend three consecutive meetings, without reasonable excuse. Representatives may be removed for conduct unbecoming to the board or for failure to uphold the boards mission statement. A parent member shall resign if his/her children cease to attend the Parish School.

Meetings of the Board

Meeting dates will usually be set at the beginning of each year, unless the board decides to call a special meeting in which case reasonable notice should be given having regard to urgency. A quorum shall consist of five board members and must include either the Parish Priest or School Principal or nominee. The board shall form sub-committees or working groups, as it deems appropriate. Upon agreement to become a member of the board, board members acknowledge the need to exercise discretion in the discussion of sensitive matters that are raised at the meetings. Discretion is required by members at all times. The Principal or Chairperson will advise on matters that are appropriate for community discussion.

Decision Making

A formation consensus model should guide discussion and decision-making. The group should attempt to reach a position, which is mutually agreed upon. Members of the board do not have to agree with a decision but all members must agree to abide by the decision and not to undermine it in the School and Parish community.

In doing so members are asked to:

- Reflect on the vision statement for the community
- Act on behalf of the school and parish community rather than sectional or personal interests
- Listen and respect each others' wisdom and experience and allow each member to contribute
- Ensure each is informed about the issue at hand
- Generate a variety of options and consider implications before deciding what to do
- Ensure any decision taken is consistent with the values espoused by the group and the community it serves.

Open General Meetings

The board may, at its discretion, hold an Open General Meeting. Such a meeting could be called to discuss a specific issue or policy etc. All members will be advised of an Open General Meeting at least three weeks prior to such a meeting being held. The Chairperson of the board or nominee of the board shall chair any Open Meeting. All parents at the school, current board members and staff who are currently employed at St. Mary's are entitled to attend.

Protocol Guidelines raising an Issue to be dealt with by the Parish Education Board

Parish and school community members wishing to raise an issue for discussion by the board are required to follow this Protocol:

1. The issue must be put in writing and signed by the person or people raising it.
2. It is given to board member in person, via email or in an envelope addressed to the board member via the School Office
3. No issues will be discussed unless this protocol is followed.
4. The Agenda Committee will meet before the Education Board Meeting.
5. Dates will be notified through the School Newsletter
6. The board does not discuss operational issues or issues regarding students, staff or the Principal. Such grievances need to be made in accordance with the school's grievances policy

Reviewed and Ratified By: Education Board

Date: February 2018

Next Review Date: February 2021