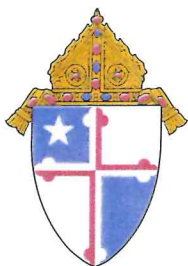


Manual
for
Catholic Elementary
Home and School Associations
Archdiocese of Baltimore

Revised Fall of 2005



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

DEPARTMENT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION MINISTRIES
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

October 2005

Dear Home School Member,

May the Peace of Christ be with you!

One of the pillars of a school's organizational structure is the Home School Association. This association has a long standing tradition of seeking out a partnership with parents/caregivers and the School's Administration. This collaborative effort assists the administration in reaching the objectives and goals associated with the mission of the school.

The Home School Association, aside from its fund raising efforts, must also be mindful that a Catholic school is an integral part of the teaching mission of the Church. This apostolate requires the talents and gifts of many people. We welcome and affirm the role that the Home School Association plays in that mission. It is one bound by a common desire to serve our children and strengthen the network between home and school.

This manual serves as a guide for our Home School Associations on how to operate and function. It is clear in its objective and it provides the necessary information needed for a successful organization.

To all of those who have given so generously of their time and talent to work for the good of the Home School Association, the Superintendent's Office offers its sincere appreciation and welcomes your continued support.

Peace and all good things!

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Ronald J. Valenti
Superintendent of Catholic Schools

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Preface

“Catholic Schools are unique expressions of the Church’s effort to achieve the purposes of Catholic education among the young.” In this statement from paragraph 232 of the 1979 National Catechetical Directory, the Bishops of the United States have clearly affirmed Catholic Schools as an integral element of the Church’s educational mission. Furthermore, the introduction to the Manual of Policies for Christian Formation states that “the Schools of the Archdiocese of Baltimore are called to be communities of faith where

- the Christian message,
- the experience of community, worship and social concern

are all integrated in the life experience of the students, their parents and members of the faculty.”

Within the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Catholic Elementary School operates as either a parish School (under the charter of the parish corporation) or as an incorporated School (under its own charter that specifies governance relations with one or more parishes of the Archdiocese). Each Catholic Elementary School establishes a Home and School Association (“HASA”) as a formal avenue for parents/families to participate in the education of their children. Through multifaceted activities and efforts, the HASA creates supportive systems for communication and service to the Catholic Elementary School.

In the HASA, parents, School administrators, and faculty develop a mutual understanding and appreciation of the School’s Catholic Identity lived uniquely in the School’s faith community. The work of the HASA integrates the essential elements of Catholic Identity in its programs, experiences, and community. These essential elements are the six tasks of Catechesis:

- Word (knowledge of the Faith)
- Worship (liturgical education, experiences, and teaching to pray)
- Service/Christian living (works of mercy and action for social justice)
- Community (building community and understanding the Church as communal life)
- Moral formation (interior choice making and living out the choices)
- Missionary initiation (living as disciples in one’s personal, social, and cultural setting)

Adapted from the General Directory of Catechesis #85

The Archdiocese of Baltimore has a long tradition of parental involvement in Catholic Education. Since Vatican II this involvement has become more formalized through HASAs. This manual recognizes the experience and wisdom developed by HASAs in the past 30 years in the Archdiocese and throughout the United States. It seeks to provide direction, clarity, and support for the work of the HASAs of parish and incorporated Catholic Schools. It is rooted in the belief that Catholic School educators and parents together exercise a unique shared ministry in the formation of the child.

Mission Statement

The Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Baltimore are rooted in the richness of Catholic tradition and teachings.

Impelled by our commitment to advocate for children and youth we affirm that our mission is to provide an education that:

- + Forms all students to be active participants in a living faith community.*
- + Instills in our students the capabilities of applying Gospel values to all aspects of their life experiences: spiritual, educational, social, emotional and physical.*
- + Equips students to be life long learners grounded in academics, the arts and technology.*
- + We pursue our mission on behalf of children, youth, and their families in partnership with:*

- Pastors and parishioners*
- Parents and families*
- Administrators and teachers*
- Archdiocesan departments and divisions*
- Institutions of higher learning*
- Business and civic communities*
- Government*
- Public and other systems*

As One Body... "We celebrate ... We challenge"
Strategic Plan of Division of Catholic Schools, 2001

Definition of a Catholic School

A Catholic School in the Archdiocese of Baltimore is identified as a faith community committed to academic excellence, which infuses the Catholic Christian elements of faith, prayer and Gospel values throughout the entire teaching /learning process.

A Catholic school in the Archdiocese is a place where each student is:

- Enriched by a curriculum that is committed to academic excellence and a profound love of learning
- Provided the foundation to increase their knowledge of faith and sacramental living.
- Encouraged to live the Gospel message through worship, prayer and service.
- Taught the value of a caring community
- Challenged to give witness to moral values.

4/22/05

Catholic Identity

The Division of Catholic Schools realizes that the Catholic Identity of a Catholic school in the 21st century reflects the direction of documents from Vatican II, from the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, from the United States Catholic Conference, and from research of the National Catholic Educational Association. Such documents, as well as other sources, indicate that a school's Catholic Identity must permeate its functions, its relationship to the parish, and its relationship to the broader Church

The essential elements of Catholic Identity are the Six Tasks of Catechesis:

- Word (knowledge of faith)
- Worship (liturgical education, experiences, and teaching to pray)
- Service/Christian living (works of mercy and action for social justice)
- Community (building community and understanding the Church as communal life)
- Moral formation (interior choice; making and living out the choices)
- Missionary initiation (living as disciples in one's personal, social, and cultural setting)

Catholic Identity should be evident in every phase of the school environment particularly through Gospel-based pedagogy and methodologies and social and interpersonal relationships that address students holistically and contribute to their development as whole beings.

The Context for the Catholic Elementary School

The Parish

The parish links an individual's experience of faith with that of the broader community of believers. It is a place where individuals are nurtured into a certain kind of community, one that participates in the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ. A parish does not exist in isolation; it is, in fact, one building block in the universal Church. The parish is connected structurally and institutionally to this larger Church through the Archdiocese.

The School

The Catholic School fulfills its vocation to be a genuine experience of Church only if it is rooted in the mission and community of its parish(es) as well as the larger Church through the Archdiocese. The Catholic School is one of the key ministries of the parish(es) with which it is connected. Each Catholic School reflects the unique gifts and situation of its parish(es) as well as the shared mission of all Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese.

The Family

The Catholic School supports parents as the "first and primary educators of children."

(Declaration on Christian Education: *Gravissimum educationis*: 3).

Parents entrust the education of their children to the Catholic School administration and faculty; in this action they choose to work cooperatively with the School to achieve its mission. Partnership between the Catholic School and the families of the students is continued and strengthened within the context of the mission of the Church and that of the Schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

Purpose of Home And School Associations

HASAs: What are they?

They are an organization that

- help parents, School administration, and faculty develop a mutual understanding and appreciation of the mission of Catholic Education as lived in the local Catholic School within the Archdiocese of Baltimore
- provide a formal avenue for parents/caregivers of current students to participate with the faculty and administration in their children's education
- develop supportive systems for communication and service to the local Catholic School
- works with the Principal to provide programs and processes that engage the School families in spiritual, educational, outreach, social, legislative, public relations, service, and fundraising activities that further the mission of the School
- collaborate with other parish, civic, and School Organizations
- are rooted in prayer, discernment, and the contemporary vision of the Church for Catholic education
- are accountable to the Principal of the School

HASAs: What are they not?

They are not

- the School Board
- the administration of the School
- independent of other appropriate parish and/or School Organizations
- a replacement for direct channels of communication and collaboration between families and the School administration and faculty
- a decision making or a deliberative body

The HASA does not

1. **set policies**
2. **determine appropriation and allocation of funds**
3. **discipline students**
4. **get involved in personnel matters**
5. **develop curriculum**
6. **approve instructional materials**
7. **write regulations**

Roles and Responsibilities

The following general descriptions of role and responsibilities are subject to the provisions of any applicable governing documents of the HASA (e.g. Constitution) and the School (e.g. charter, Bylaws).

Role of Pastor/Pastoral Life Director:

For both parish and incorporated Schools, the Pastor(s)/PLD(s) shares with the HASA his/her vision and hopes for the future of the parish(es), particularly its/their educational mission. The Pastor(s)/PLD(s) helps HASA members understand the educational mission of the Church and their own role in that ministry.

Responsibilities of Pastor/PLD

- a. provides leadership
- b. shows confidence in the HASA
- c. values the HASA members' expertise and experience
- d. works cooperatively with them

Role of the Principal

The Principal is responsible for the operation of the School. The Principal has the spiritual, educational, administrative and fiscal responsibility for the School in accord with Archdiocesan and local policies. The Principal is an ex-officio member of the HASA's Executive Committee. The Principal, in conjunction with the Pastor(s)/PLD(s), helps HASA members understand the educational mission of the Church and their own role in that ministry.

Responsibilities of the Principal

The Principal:

- a. is involved in
 - oversight of HASA's finances
 - agenda preparation for HASA meetings
 - HASA program and activities preparation
 - planning for fundraising by HASA
 - goal development for each HASA committee's work
- b. participates in all HASA meetings

- c. keeps Pastors/PLDs informed of HASA's activities
- d. keeps HASA appropriately informed of school activities
- e. develops trust and right relationships with the HASA

Roles of HASA Officers and Committee Chairs

- offer leadership, time, experience, and expertise that enables the HASA to fulfill its roles and responsibilities
- represent and focus on the interests of all families in the School
- support the programs and processes involved in working with today's families: time constraints, cultural diversity, socio-economics, varied family structures, etc
- maintain confidentiality about discussions, deliberations, and content. Principals and other leaders often share sensitive information and views to enable quality work for the HASA. Failure to keep confidentiality violates this requirement for a HASA officer/chair and is sufficient reason to request one's resignation.
- understand that one does not represent the HASA officially unless explicitly authorized to do so by the Principal
- complete assigned tasks, reports, and coordination responsibilities
- support the Principal in authorized functions and avoid intruding in administrative details.
- are loyal to the direction of the HASA even if personally opposed to the final recommendations and decisions
- disqualify themselves from discussion and vote on any issue where there is a conflict of interest with family or business interests or if the outcome will grant the person any pecuniary or material benefits
- embrace their role as one of sacred trust. They are uniquely involved in the ministry of the School within the local and broader Church. Such leadership requires enthusiasm, discerning hearts, reflective and knowledgeable participation in the mission of the Catholic School
- pray often for other leaders of the HASA and the School/parent community it serves

HASA Officers

President

- presides over Executive Committee, full committee and general membership meetings
- prepares agenda with the Principal for the Executive Committee
- prepares the annual calendar for all meetings
- prepares agenda with the Executive Committee for general meetings
- appoints standing and ad hoc committee chairpersons in consultation with the Principal
- calls special meetings when necessary, in conjunction with the Principal
- may act as liaison between the HASA and other parish and community groups
- works cooperatively with the Principal to insure communication between the HASA and the School administration, faculty, and parish leaders
- coordinates HASA activities with the Principal
- is accountable, with the HASA treasurer, for appropriate financial procedures
- is an ex-officio member of all HASA committees except the nominating committee
- is an ex-officio, non voting School Board member

Vice-president

- acts in the absence of the President and performs other duties as assigned

Secretary (recording and corresponding)

- maintains written records/log of HASA activities
- disseminates in conjunction with the Principal and/ or School administration notices (details, agenda, etc.) for Executive Committee, full committee and general membership meetings

- takes and maintains minutes for the Executive Committee meetings, full committee meetings and general membership meetings
- collects committee reports
- conducts the general correspondence of the HASA as requested by the President
- coordinates notifications needed in conjunction with the Principal and President

Treasurer

- submits regular reports to the Executive Committee, full committee and to the general membership
- is accountable for handling all monies of the HASA in accordance with Archdiocesan policies (see Appendix)
- prepares and maintains all HASA financial records
- develops, with the Principal and other officers, necessary processes for collecting, recording, reporting, and disbursing of HASA monies
- insures, with the Principal, that all HASA monies and financial records are kept in the designated location on School grounds; and instructs committee chairs and event coordinators about appropriate procedures for monies and for financial records necessary for each activity and program

Responsibilities of Committee Chairpersons

Standing Committee Chairperson

- is appointed by the President in consultation with the Principal
- serves for a designated time
- is a voting member of the Executive Committee
- convenes the necessary committee meetings
- coordinates all committee responsibilities
- submits oral and written reports of committee work to the Executive Committee
- is accountable for monies to be handled in accord with local School and Archdiocesan procedures and maintains the required financial records and accounting procedures as outlined by the treasurer in conjunction with the Principal and HASA President

Ad Hoc Committee Chairperson

At times, the President with the approval of the Executive Committee establishes special or ad hoc committees. The chair of such a committee need not be a voting member of the Executive Committee; he/she does fulfill the other aspects of the "standing committee chair" as listed above.

Executive Committee

HASA Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer); chairs of HASA standing committees; and the Principal are ex-officio members of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee

- Plans for the annual direction and calendar of the HASA
- Expedites the transaction of business between general meetings
- Acts on behalf of the HASA in emergencies
- Insures that HASA's work relates to Archdiocesan and parish(es) policies, planning, and processes
- Insures that HASA's work relates to School Board work with special attention to financing, planning/policy, marketing/public relations
- Implements regular self-evaluation and goal setting processes for HASA
- Discusses and clarifies topics for general meetings of the HASA
- Develops ground rules for large group participation at general meetings
- Meets regularly to plan for HASA meetings and activities
- Establishes agenda of HASA meetings
- Insures that agenda and meeting materials are provided to HASA Executive Committee members at least 10 days before the committee meeting
- Approves the appointment of ad hoc committees

Standing Committees

The Principal reserves the right to determine those committees that best serves the organization. The following possible committees reflect the purposes of the HASA and set goals that situate their work within the context of the School's mission and strategic plan. (See the Preface and Appendix.)

Spiritual Development Committee: develops and executes activities such as prayer, retreats, religious celebrations, and spiritual growth opportunities for students' families.

Program Committee: works with the Principal to arrange programs for general meetings that supports parents, help with child development, showcase student talents and achievements, etc.

Social Concerns Committee: develops ways and programs that minister to the families of the School community who are in need (death, emergency, arrival of new baby, etc.).

Membership Committee: helps with orientation and welcome of new member families in the School community; conducts membership drive and collect dues;

Legislative Committee: works with the legislative persons of the Maryland Catholic Conference to establish parental education, support, and participation in state, local, and federal legislative action.

Publicity /Public Relations Committee: gathers reports about activities from the various committees; works with the Principal on press notices, parish announcements, newsletters, etc.; assists the HASA secretary in keeping an album/log of yearly HASA activities; coordinates its work with the marketing/public relations committee of the School Board.

Hospitality Committee: coordinates hospitality and refreshments for regular HASA functions and special functions/ events involving the faculty, students, and HASA membership.

Volunteer Committee: with the Principal coordinates needs and use of volunteers for particular projects or services of the HASA with the students, with parent-aides, with faculty, etc.

Fundraising Committee: with the Principal, plans and coordinates fundraising activities in conjunction with the direction set in School's budget, long-range financial planning, and Institutional Advancement endeavors; coordinates its work with School Board finance and development committees.

Ad Hoc or Special Committees

The President, with the approval of the HASA Executive Committee, may appoint ad hoc committees in keeping with the HASA's purposes. The chairpersons of the special committees are approved by the President in consultation with the Principal, but do not serve on the Executive Committee. The nominating committee is a regularly convened ad hoc committee.

Membership

Composition

- All parents and guardians of current students, faculty, staff, and the Principal are members of the HASA.
- A membership fee may be charged.
- Members attend general meetings and participate in activities sponsored by the HASA.

Ex-officio Member

- The Principal is an ex officio, non-voting member of the HASA.

Process for electing officers

- The President, in consultation with the Principal, appoints an ad hoc nominating committee chair who appoints four additional committee members. The nominating committee members are not members of the Executive Committee.
- Members of the nominating committee are not eligible for office. The Principal is an ex-officio member of the nominating committee.
- The nominating committee:
 1. conducts an active, equitable search for HASA officer candidates from the general membership
 2. develops a slate of two candidates per office (if possible) who fit the criteria given below
 3. reviews the slate with the Principal
 4. contacts the candidates, explains the duties, and determines their willingness to serve
 5. presents the final slate to the general membership one month prior to the election at either a general meeting or in writing.

Changes in Officers

- Newly elected officers assume responsibility at the meeting designated in the local HASA's constitution.

- When an officer resigns, the President, with the input of the Principal, appoints a replacement to complete the unexpired term of the officer. This partial term need not prevent the appointee from being chosen for the same office for another term.

Relationships to Other Structures

Finance Committees

The HASA Executive Committee discusses and clarifies with the Principal the lines of communication and role of the HASA and its treasurer with the School board finance committee. The Principal keeps the HASA Executive Committee and the committee chairs apprised of guidelines from the Division of Catholic Schools, Division of Finance, and other Archdiocesan offices.

School Board (Parish and Incorporated Schools)

The HASA provides the avenue for parents/guardians to participate with the Catholic School in their child's education. With the School administration and staff, it develops supportive systems for communication and service to the Catholic Elementary School.

It is essential that the Catholic School Board and the HASA have a relationship of mutual respect and cooperation.

HASA Methods of Operation

Constitutions

The Constitution of the HASA aligns the operation of the local HASA with the direction outlined in this Manual.

Term of Office

Members of the HASA generally serve for a term of one year with the possibility of a second consecutive term. Members who have served two consecutive terms may be re-elected to the HASA after a lapse of at least one year.

- Officers include a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary (responsibilities for this office may require both a recording and corresponding secretary).
- The Officers, with the Principal and the chairs of standing committees, form the Executive Committee.

Meetings

Executive Committee:

- These are held on a monthly basis unless circumstances suggest that more frequent meetings are indicated. Advance notice for these meetings includes the agenda, written committee reports, and minutes of previous meeting; all are sent at least ten days prior to that meeting. Agenda items for the Executive Committee are submitted through an Executive Committee member or in writing to the President at least two weeks prior to the meeting.
- Special meetings, in addition to the regular meetings, may be called with consent of the President and Principal.

General Membership

- Meetings are held at least three times annually
- Dates for the general meeting are announced on the School's calendar
- Program for the general meeting is publicized at least one month prior to the meeting
- One meeting per year is held for the election of officers for the coming year.

Methods of Decision making

Executive Committee

- The Executive Committee uses the consensus method of decision-making. In general, decision making by consensus involves prayer, reflection, data analysis, open discussion of the positive and negative consequences of particular actions, confirmation of an intended course of action determined by the group, and, in the end, the consent of everyone involved.

In a consensus process, each member is expected to speak to the issue under consideration so that all points of view are expressed and considered. Consensus does not mean that everyone agrees, but that everyone accepts and supports the decision of the group.

- Robert's Rules of Order may be used for procedural actions such as approval of minutes.

General Membership

- Meeting notices include information on items that need action by the members.
- Processes used approximate the following aspects taken from Robert's Rules of Order
 1. A motion is presented either from the chair or from the floor.
 2. The motion is seconded.
 3. A discussion, facilitated by the President, is held.
 4. The President restates the motion.
 5. A call is made to either vote on the issue or table the issue until further discussion takes place.
 6. Action may be taken by majority vote at a meeting at which a quorum is present. One-fourth ($\frac{1}{4}$) of members in good standing constitute a quorum at a general membership meeting.

Agenda

A carefully planned agenda is critical to the effectiveness of all meetings. The Principal and President develop the agendas for the Executive Committee; the Executive Committee develops the agenda for the full committee and the general membership meeting. Members may submit proposed items for the agenda of the general meeting to the Executive Committee.

Recommended Agenda Format:

(List person responsible for each item)

1. Welcome and Prayer
2. Approval of Minutes
3. Program component
4. Reports by:
 - a. Principal
 - b. HASA President
5. Committee reports reviewed; points and questions for clarification
6. Proposals and discussion
 - action items
 - recommendation items – give reflections to committee for its review
7. Announcements of coming events
8. Future agenda items; review of next date and time
9. Adjournment and appreciation

Committee Reports

All committees prepare written reports to be circulated with the agenda. In these reports, the committee chair indicates what action, if any, the committee is requesting from the Executive Committee, full committee or general membership, and cites any budgetary implications regarding the report. In this way, the agenda can be prepared so that committee reports which are simply for information will have less time on the agenda than those reports which require lengthy discussion (see appendix).

APPENDIX

Sample HASA Constitution for the Catholic Elementary School*

The Constitution of the HASA aligns the operation of the local HASA with the direction outlined in this manual.

* The Articles of Incorporation and By-laws for the Incorporated School align the operation of its HASA with the direction outlined in this manual as well the legal and canonical aspects required for a nonprofit corporation in the State of Maryland.

Article I. Name of Organization

The name of this body shall be the Home and School Association
of _____
(name of School)

Article II. Purposes and Functions

In accordance with the provisions of Canon Law and the policies of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, in particular the policies of the Division of Catholic Schools, the Home and School Association of _____ School is established to assist and advise the Principal in furthering the mission of the School.

The Home and School Association of _____ School functions to:

- help parents, School administration, and faculty develop a mutual understanding and appreciation of the mission of Catholic Education as lived in this Catholic School within the Archdiocese of Baltimore.
- provide programs and processes that engage the School families in spiritual, educational, outreach, social, legislative, public relations, service, and fundraising activities that further the mission of the School.
- develop supportive systems for communication and service to the local Catholic School.

Article III. Relationships with other groups

The HASA establishes cooperative relationships with other School structures in these ways.

Article IV Membership

States requirements for membership.

Article V. Nomination

Provides rules for nomination committee and its processes. Clarifies criteria used to determine candidates.

Article VI. Election Process for Officers

Provides rules for election of officers; length of terms, reasons for removal of an officer, provisions for filling vacancies, re-election rules, consecutive terms, and commissioning.

Article VII. Officers

States what officers the HASA has and their duties.

Article VIII. Meetings

Indicates schedule of meetings, quorum needed, presiding person if President is absent, notification of agenda before meeting, minutes (taking, keeping, distributing), expectations of confidentiality.

Article LX. Rules of Order

Indicates rules of procedure and decision-making process, methods used in executive and other committee meetings for consensus development, ground rules used at general meetings, use of Robert's Rules of Order.

Article X. Executive Committee

Explains the composition of Executive Committee, its duties and meeting times.

Article XI. Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

Specifies the purposes and responsibilities of committees, the appointment of chairpersons and members, length of term of chairs, their role in Executive Committee.

Article XI1. Finances

States how membership dues are established and collected. Outlines procedures and processes used by Principal and officers to follow parish and Archdiocesan guidelines for HASA's financial accountability.

Article XIII. Amendments to Constitutions

Indicates procedures governing revision and/or amendments to the constitution, notification time, votes required.

Adapted from A Primer in Educational Governance in the Catholic Church.
NCEA 1987.

Roles of Home and School Association and School Board

<u>The School Board</u>	<u>Home And School Association</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides an avenue of input from parish(es)/ broader community• Provides expertise and experience• Assists with:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– finance– development– planning/policy formation– public relations– facilities• Seeks appointees from broad base	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides an avenue of input from current parents• Consults with the Principal in providing open forums• Offers education for parents, families, etc.• Maintain communication• Organizes legislative action• Conducts fund-raisers• Has all parents as members

Formats for HASA Committee Reports

Each committee of the Home and School Association reports in writing to the HASA Executive Committee using the format selected by the Executive Committee for all committees. Below are two sample formats for consideration.

Format A:

<p>Title of Committee _____</p> <p>Date of HASA Executive Committee meeting: (at which report is presented)</p> <p>Committee members: (list by name)</p> <p>Agenda item number: (corresponds to agenda)</p> <p>Situation: (describe in as much depth as appropriate)</p> <p>Options: (list at least two or three options the committee considered, with advantages and disadvantages of each)</p> <p>Recommendations: (specify which option is being recommended and why)</p> <p>Action required: (define what action is needed by the Executive Committee and/or at general meeting)</p>
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### Format B:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Title of Committee</b> _____</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Committee Members:</p> <p>Tasks:<br/>(summary of committee's actions/accomplishments to date)</p> <p>Actions required at either Executive Committee, full committee or general meeting:</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## A Model For Consensus Decision Making

**Preparation** – Each committee member prepares his/her own position as well as possible through prayer, study, and reflection but recognizes that the task is incomplete and that the other members of the committee will supply the missing pieces.

**Group sharing** – When the committee meets, each member expresses to the full group his/her reasons in favor of or against the proposal under consideration. Other members may ask clarifying questions (no discussion at this time.)

**Group discussion** – After all have spoken, the full committee discusses the proposal in light of the positions expressed by individuals.

**Isolate points of conflict** – The chairperson facilitates a discussion to clarify the points of disagreement and attempts to resolve them through discussion. Alternatives can be suggested which may be agreeable to all.

**Discussion/straw vote** – The chairperson tries to lead the committee or full group to agreement. When points of conflict have been discussed and alternatives have been considered, the chairperson calls for a straw vote. If there is consensus, the decision has been reached. If there is no consensus, the chairperson may choose one of two alternatives:

**Alternative #1** – If 75% of the committee is in agreement, the direction of agreement will be accepted as that of board. The chairperson asks the members not in agreement to accept the decision of the 75% majority. The assumption is the all points of view have been heard and discussed, the majority has agreed upon a course of action. Those not in agreement should be able to state to the assembly, “I am not in favor of this decision. However, I have had the opportunity to speak my objections and I believe that I have been heard. I will support the agreement of the committee.”

**Alternative #2** – If the board, after all the above steps have been completed, still finds itself highly divided, then the proposal and reasons for the proposal must be studied again. A new and different direction may emerge. The assumption is that this proposal is conflictual from the beginning and its adoption, even by a majority vote of the committee, will be problematic and will continue to generate conflict during its implementation.

Adapted from Building One Body in Christ: the Ministry of the Parish Pastoral Council,

Archdiocese of Baltimore, 1995.

### CONSENSUS

- ~The group “rules”, altering the proposal to accommodate varying points of view.
- ~Each member works for a decision all can buy into.
- ~Changes are made by the chairperson’s accommodating to the direction of the discussion.
- ~Chairperson is key listener and negotiator seeking accommodations that will move the group toward agreement.
- ~Chairperson actively involves even the quiet members in contributing to the discussion.

### ROBERT’S RULES

- ~Majority rules. There are winners and losers.
- ~Each member works for his/her own point of view.
- ~Changes are made by amendment (motion, second, discussion, question, vote.)
- ~Chairperson is a police officer monitoring the order of the discussion.
- ~Chairperson “recognizes” persons who wish to speak.



## ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE CONTROL PROCEDURES FOR PARISH & SCHOOL ORGANIZATIONS

Since the Home School Association and other organizations formed on the school's behalf are parish life entities, which benefit from the tax-exempt status of the parish, the supervision of the activities of these organizations falls within the responsibility of the pastor and principal.

Home and School Associations and all other groups who raise funds in the name of the school must be subject to the full range of internal controls required at each parish and school. More specifically the following are required checks and balances for each organization.

### **General**

- All organizations must have written policies and procedures for the conduct of business, i.e. cash collection procedures to be followed by all members of the organization even volunteers.
- All organizations' financial records must be maintained at the parish's or school's office.
- All organizations' address must be the parish and/or school office.
- All organizations must maintain an accounting of the sources of funds received and expended, essentially a general ledger.
- All organizations should prepare and submit for review and approval an annual budget.
- All organizations must report to the pastor and/or principal at least quarterly on their activities to-date and budget versus actual. A year-end report must also be prepared and presented.

### Bank Accounts & Cash Disbursements

- The pastor and/or principal must approve all bank accounts using the parish and/or school's federal ID number. All accounts should be held at the parish/school's main banking institution.
- The pastor and/or principal's name should head the list of persons authorized to sign checks and withdraw funds from all entities' bank accounts.
- All account statements should be sent directly and maintained permanently at the parish and/or school offices.

- All accounts should require dual signatures.
- The individual who prepares the checks should not be authorized to sign the checks.
- The authorized signer should not be allowed to reconcile the bank accounts monthly.
- The bank reconciliation along with the bank statements should be submitted to a member of the Finance Committee or other knowledgeable individual for review on a monthly basis.
- Signature stamps, checks signed in advance and checks to cash should never be used.
- Check stock should be sequentially numbered and maintained at the parish and/or school in a locked cabinet or drawer.
- Proper documentation, specifically approved invoices and receipts must support all checks.

#### Cash Receipts

- ORGANIZATION FUNDS MUST NEVER BE TAKEN HOME BY ANYONE. Funds collected must be stored in the parish and/or school safe until deposit.
- From receipt to deposit, all monies, whether cash or checks, should be handled by two people. No one person should ever be left alone with funds collected.
- All funds received should be logged according to their source. This log should then be totaled and signed by the money handlers to affirm accuracy and to provide accountability. The log should be compared to the validated deposit slip once received by the individual responsible for the general ledger. (Note: the individual responsible for the general ledger should not participate in the counting of funds received.)
- All checks received should be immediately endorsed to the appropriate account.
- Tickets should be used for all cash events. The number of tickets sold should then be reconciled to the amount of cash received.

#### **SCRIP Handling**

Since SCRIP is an alternative form of currency, it should be treated as cash and therefore be subject to the following procedures:

- Scrip should be stored in the parish or school safe, which is to be locked at all times.
- Volunteers should not take Scrip home for delivery. Participants in the program should pick up the Scrip at the parish or school in a centralized location.
- A large inventory of Scrip should not be maintained. Scrip can be received from the National Scrip Center (or other Scrip Clearinghouses) in one day by airmail.
- Adequate bookkeeping that tracks the purchase and distribution of Scrip is required. At least two people should have dual responsibility for the maintenance of Scrip records. When a parish receives an of Scrip, serial numbers should be recorded. In the event that



Scrip is lost or stolen, the recording of the serial numbers would allow the parish to quickly identify which Scrip was missing. Local stores can then be alerted to watch for stolen Scrip.

- Scrip records should be reviewed just as any parish or School Organizations records. Additionally these records should not be stored with the Scrip, but in a separate location.

#### Impact on Parish/School Insurance Coverage

In the past, a number of Archdiocesan locations have suffered loss of funds due to some form of theft, loss, or embezzlement. Because of this situation, in the past the Archdiocese experienced difficulty in renewing the fidelity bond coverage.

As a result of these losses, the increased Archdiocesan fidelity coverage deductible, and to encourage the adoption of better control procedures, the parish and school fidelity deductibles were changed several years ago. If a parish or school suffers a loss and did not follow the required controls, they will be assessed a higher deductible or possible denial of claim.



## SECTION 211 PARISH & SCHOOL ORGANIZATION PROCEDURES

*Since parish and school organizations are parish life entities, which benefit from the tax exempt status of the parish, supervision of activities of these organizations falls within the responsibility of the Parish Board of Corporators and/or principal. These groups such as Sodality, Holy Name Society and Home School Associations must be subjected to the full range of internal controls required at each parish and school.*

*All parish/school operating functions and program such as the religious education program, fund raising groups, the choir, and youth group should be accounted for through the parish's and school's general ledger. Specific income and expense accounts have been included in the Archdiocesan parish and school chart of accounts.*

**211.1 Policy Written:** All parish life entities must have written policies and procedures for the conduct of business, e.g., cash collection procedures to be followed by all members of the organization including volunteers.

**211.2 Policy Organization Address:** All documents, accounts, and/or loans pertaining to the parish or school will use the address of the concerning parish or school.

**211.3 Policy Location of Records:** All records of the parish and/or school should be maintained on the premises of that parish and/or school.

**211.4 Policy Bank Account Regulations:** The following procedures are set in place to prevent misrepresentation of parish and/or school assets.

### **Procedures:**

- Bank accounts using the parish and/or school's federal ID number must be approved by the pastor and/or principal
- Accounts should be held at the parish's main bank institution
- As long as the parish/school's tax-exempt number is used the pastor and/or principal's name should head the list of persons authorized to sign checks and withdrawal funds from all entities' bank accounts
- The individual who prepares the checks should not authorized to sign the checks, in the case that the preparer also signs the checks, a dual signature is required



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE  
CATHOLIC CENTER  
TEMPORAL GOODS POLICY MANUAL

SECTION  
200 Organizational Controls

SUBSECTION  
211 Parish & School Organization Procedures

**211.5 Policy Accounting Internal Control Procedures:** Internal controls are procedures put into place to prevent and detect errors and irregularities.

**Procedures:**

- Financial records must be maintained at the parish or school office
- Must use the address of the school or office
- Must report to the pastor and/or principal at least quarterly on their activities to-date and budget vs. actual. A year end report must also be prepared and presented
- Balances in parish life entities bank accounts should be accounted for on the balance sheet of the parish or school See approved chart of accounts 1130 – Related Organizational Accounts & 2230 – Related Organizational Accounts. LINK 7
- Except when making a deposit, ORGANIZATION FUNDS MUST BE NEVER TAKEN OFF-SITE OR HOME BY ANYONE. Funds collected must be stored in the parish and/or school safe until deposit.
- Tickets should be used for all cash events. The number of tickets sold should then be reconciled to the amount of cash received.

**211.6 Policy Budgeting:** Parishes and schools must prepare and submit for review and approval an annual budget.

**211.7 Policy Insurance:** The assets of parish life entities are protected by the Archdiocesan Fidelity Insurance. In the event of theft these assets recovered through insurance may be impacted if the above policies are not followed.