



BY-LAWS OF THE ASSUMPTION CATHOLIC SCHOOLS EDUCATION COMMISSION

Article I. Name of the Organization

1. The name of this organization will be the Assumption Catholic Schools Education Commission, hereinafter referred to as the Commission.

Article II. Purpose and Function

1. The Commission is established by the Dean as a consultative body to assist the Dean, the Pastors of the supporting parishes, the System President, and other administrative leaders in the operation and governance of Assumption Catholic Schools (ACS). The Commission derives its authority and responsibility from the Bishop of the Diocese of La Crosse and the Dean (Vicar Forane) of the Wisconsin Rapids Deanery.
2. The Commission is a representative group of supporting parishes and organizations, responsible to the Dean and Pastors, which has delegated authority to identify and articulate Assumption Catholic Schools' educational goals and objectives by being a policy forming and consultative body and an advocate of approved policies. The Commission's responsibility to the Dean is not to stifle the leadership of the members, but to enable their leadership to emerge in a genuinely ecclesial context and manner.
3. The Commission assists the Dean and the President in the operation and governance of Assumption Catholic Schools in the following areas, though it is not limited to these areas:
 - a. Long range planning;
 - b. Policy formation;
 - c. Financing and budgeting;
 - d. Development, fund-raising, and alumni relations;
 - e. Public relations, marketing, recruitment and retention;
 - f. Consultation, evaluation, and information sharing;
 - g. Transportation and busing; and
 - h. Cooperation with other school systems, both private and public.
4. The Commission's collaborative responsibilities will include, but are not limited to, the establishment, maintenance, and management of:
 - a. Strategic planning;
 - b. Long-range plans, goals, objectives, programs, designs, and evaluations;
 - c. Policy formation and recommendations;
 - d. Early childhood through secondary education goals, programs, athletics, and school activities;
 - e. Adjunct programs which support the mission of Assumption Catholic Schools;
 - f. Financing and budgeting;

- g. Remuneration programs and schedules for administrative, instructional, and support personnel;
 - h. Facility/building usage, improvements, and maintenance;
 - i. Effective student recruitment;
 - j. Advancement, fundraising, and alumni relations;
 - k. Public relations, marketing, and recruitment and retention of students and staff;
 - l. Communication and collaboration with other school systems;
 - m. Personnel practices and procedures; and
 - n. Any other duties and responsibilities as directed by the Dean.
5. All policies formulated by the Commission and approved by the Dean and Pastors of the supporting parishes will be binding upon all member parishes and schools. Certain formulated policies will be submitted for diocesan review and approval to ensure they comply with the directives of the Diocese of La Crosse. Such policies subject to review are the prerogative of the Diocese of La Crosse.
 6. The Commission will help implement the policies and procedures of the Diocese of La Crosse relative to educational programs and goals and will be an advocate of approved diocesan policies and regulations relative to educational programs, personnel, and school system governance and administration.

Article III. Relationship with Other Groups

1. In its consultative role, the Commission is guided by 1) the recognition that the responsibility of pastoral authority rests with the Diocesan Bishop, the Dean, and the Pastors, 2) that the Commission has collaborative responsibilities for planning and policy formation, and 3) that the President has the responsibility and authority to administrate and carry out the policies of the Commission, the Wisconsin Rapids Deanery, and the Diocese of La Crosse. See Bishop John J. Paul's *Pastoral Letter On Consultation in the Parish and Deanery* of August 15, 1985.
2. The clear distinction between policy formation, the proper work of the Commission and its committees, and administration, the proper work of the President and his/her staff, should be maintained. At the same time, school system administrators, faculty, and staff should offer to the Commission and its committees their knowledge and judgment regarding questions under discussion.
3. In order to properly carry out its educational mission, the Commission will establish close working relationships with its respective parish Pastoral Councils (and any Education Committees that exist) and parish Finance Councils. The Commission will also foster close working relationships with the Royal Parents, the Athletic Association, and other school-related associations in order to provide open communication, school system transparency, and accountability.
4. The Commission will collaborate with local businesses, local government, other private and/or parochial schools, public school districts, and institutions of higher learning to enhance and broaden the educational and extracurricular programs of Assumption Catholic Schools.

Article IV. Membership

1. Regular members of the Commission are one (1) representative from each of the supporting parishes:
 - a. Sacred Heart, Nekoosa
 - b. St. Joachim, Pittsville
 - c. St. Alexander, Port Edwards
 - d. St. Philip, Rudolph
 - e. Holy Rosary, Sigel
 - f. St. James, Vesper
 - g. Our Lady Queen of Heaven, Wisconsin Rapids
 - h. SS. Peter and Paul, Wisconsin Rapids
 - i. St. Lawrence, Wisconsin Rapids
 - j. St. Vincent de Paul, Wisconsin Rapids
2. St. Joseph Parish in Adams/Friendship, as a non-supporting parish, is welcome to send an observer to Commission meetings. If the parish becomes a supporting parish, the observer status would be changed to that of a regular member.
3. *Ex officio* members of the Commission include the following:
 - a. Dean;
 - b. Pastors or Parochial Administrators of the supporting parishes listed above;
 - c. Assumption Chaplain;
 - d. ACS President;
 - e. All Administrators: Building Principals and Director of Early Childhood Program;
 - f. ACS Controller;
 - g. Diocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools;
 - h. Chairpersons of the various parent organizations;
 - i. Representative from the Assumption Foundation, Inc.; and
 - j. Two (2) faculty representatives: one (1) representing the elementary grades and one (1) representing middle/secondary grades (appointed by principals).
4. The role of the Pastors is important and their active and regular participation in the affairs of the Commission is strongly encouraged.

Article V. Membership Selection

1. The Pastors shall appoint respective lay parish representatives in consultation with the Dean. Lay representatives are to be introduced at the June Commission meeting and seated at the next regularly scheduled Commission meeting.
 - a. School system employees, or the spouse, parent, or child of system employees, may not serve as parish representatives on the Commission.
 - b. Representatives serve the Commission without remuneration for their time.
 - c. The Dean, in consultation with the respective pastor and with the consensus of the Commission, may remove a representative from the Commission if that representative has engaged in actions that are detrimental to the function of the Commission or school system.

2. Lay representatives from the parishes should also serve their respective Pastoral Councils and/or parish Education Committees by personal presentation or report in order to foster communication of issues coming before the Commission.
3. Lay representatives from each parish shall serve a three (3) year term and may be reappointed to one (1) additional three (3) year term. Membership will be staggered over a three (3) year period to ensure that no more than one third (1/3) of the membership leaves the Commission in a given year. Appointment terms begin with the August meeting. Special circumstances may require a member to stay until a further appointment can be secured.
4. Lay representatives are expected to participate fully in regular meetings of the Commission and to actively serve on Commission committees, to promote communication of Commission deliberations to the parishes, and to faithfully support and promote the goals of Assumption Catholic Schools.
5. Lay representatives, but not *ex officio* members, who are absent and unexcused from two (2) consecutive meetings without notice and sufficient cause, or who no longer support the mission of Assumption Catholic Schools, or who are unable to fulfil their term length, with the approval of the Dean, and consensus of the Commission, may be removed by their respective Pastor.
6. Interim appointments are to be made through a similar process as regular appointments. An individual serving an interim appointment would still be eligible for two (2) additional three (3) year terms.
7. The representative of the Assumption Foundation, Inc. will be appointed by the Foundation in consultation with the Dean, unless the Foundation adopts by-laws to make the commission representative a position elected by the Foundation membership. The Foundation representative shall serve a one-year term and may be reappointed for up to five additional terms. Special circumstances may require a member to stay until a further appointment can be secured.
8. All Commission members must be practicing Catholics in union with Holy See. This means that members must accept the teaching authority of the Catholic Church on matters of faith and morals, aspire to live in accord with the precepts of the Catholic Church, and are in good standing in the Catholic Church. Lay representatives should be known for their prudent judgment and engagement within their parish.
9. The names of the members of the Commission and of all Standing and Ad hoc Committees are not confidential and may be made known to all who inquire.

Article VI. Officers and Executive Committee

1. The officers of the Commission will be Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. The term of office shall be one (1) year beginning with the August meeting. The current Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Chairperson for the subsequent year. Each year a new Vice-Chairperson will be chosen through election by, and from, the regular members

of the Commission. Nominations for Vice-Chairperson shall be accepted at the April meeting and the election shall be held at the May meeting. The new officers are to be introduced at the June meeting and seated at the August meeting.

- a. The recording secretary will be the executive assistant to the President or another person nominated by the President.
2. The Commission Chairperson will 1) preside at all meetings and supervise the affairs of the Commission, 2) serve as the Dean's delegated spokesperson for the Commission, 3) with the Dean and the President, prepare annual Commission objectives and meeting agendas, and 4) recommend Standing and Ad Doc Committee members and chairs for review by the Commission and appointment by the Dean.
3. The Vice-Chairperson will 1) assume the duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence, 2) perform such duties as the Chairperson and/or Commission directs, and 3) be willing to serve as the next Chairperson.
4. The President will 1) serve as an *ex officio* member of all Standing and Ad hoc Committees, 2) keep permanent files of all regular and special meetings, 3) distribute agendas and minutes of all regular and special meetings, 4) with the Chairperson, prepare annual Commission objectives and meeting agendas and recommend Standing and Ad hoc Committee members and chairs for review by Commission and appointment by the Dean.
5. The Recording Secretary will 1) record minutes of all regular and special meetings and provide them to the President for distribution, 2) maintain attendance of members, visitors, and guests, and 3) post approved minutes for distribution (electronic or otherwise).
6. The Dean, in consultation with the President, may appoint a replacement to fulfill the remainder of an officer's term in the event of a vacancy or after removal by the Dean.
7. The Executive Committee of the Commission will be comprised of the Dean, the President, the Controller, the Chairperson, and the Vice-Chairperson.
 - a. The committee may meet as required between meetings of the Commission to discuss or act on Commission business.
 - b. The committee will be responsible for preparing recommendations for the Commission on matters which do not fall under the guidelines of any other Standing Committee.
 - c. The committee has the authority to act on emergency matters between meetings.
 - d. The committee will also provide orientation for new Commission members. This requirement is not intended to be a formality. It addresses the need to renew often one's understanding of consultation in the Church.
 - e. Since the Commission best fulfills its advisory functions only with sufficient knowledge, the committee and ACS administrative staff shall regularly provide information concerning the educational programs, major activities, and other related matters to the Commission in a timely fashion.

Article VII. Standing and Ad hoc Committees

1. The Standing Committees of the Commission will be: the Executive Committee (see Article VI, section 7), the Finance Committee, the Building and Grounds Committee, and the Advancement Committee. The primary purpose of the committees is to make recommendations for action to the Commission. They do so in cooperation with the Dean and President.
 - a. The Finance Committee exclusively directs itself to sound policies of management of the school system funds and plant. Receiving from the Dean, Pastors, and system administration the program of school life, it organizes the temporal goods of the system for the implementation of the program of school life. At the same time, it frees the Commission from the time consuming and often technical concerns of developing sound financial policies. The work of the finance council, however, remains spiritual. It is accomplished by members of the Church for the sake of the Church's mission.
 - i. The Finance Committee will address financial issues and assist the President in preparing an annual budget to be presented to the Commission. It shall review financial statements and budgets, provide solutions to financial challenges and facility needs, and capitalize on opportunities available to ACS.
 - ii. *Ex officio* members of the Finance Committee are the Dean, supporting Pastors, President, and Controller. A recording secretary will be appointed by the President.
 - iii. Appointed members of the Finance Committee are one (1) representative from each of the supporting parishes and one (1) representative from the Assumption Foundation, Inc., who should be different from the members of the Commission, unless particular circumstances demand otherwise.
 - iv. Other members dedicated to the Church's mission and skilled in dealing with financial matters may be appointed by the Dean in consultation with the Executive Committee.
 - v. All appointed members should be known for their ability and integrity in the administration of temporal goods; however, all close relatives of the Dean, President, and Controller are excluded from appointment to the Finance Committee, as are system employees, or the spouse, parent, or child of system employees.
 - vi. Because of the particular qualities required of the members of the Finance Committee, the appointed members are to be appointed by the Dean after careful inquiry regarding who among the faithful are best qualified for appointment. The names of candidates for appointment, however, should be kept in confidence lest, if they are not appointed, any questions be raised publicly regarding their good character or competence in temporal matters.
 - vii. All appointed members of the Finance Committee serve a two-year term that may be renewed indefinitely (following, nonetheless, the requirements of Article VII, section 5).
 - b. The Buildings and Grounds Committee consists of an expanded group of individual volunteers charged with providing recommendations and information regarding prioritizing capital improvements and maintenance of all system physical property.

- c. The Advancement Committee will address internal communications, public relations, marketing strategies, enrollment management, alumni relations, special events, major gifts, capital campaigns, planned giving, and stewardship. It will also address coordination with the Assumption Foundation, Inc.
2. Ad hoc committees may be established by the Commission as necessary or upon the recommendation of the Chairperson and/or President. Members and chairpersons are appointed by the Executive Committee. These committees will dissolve upon completion of their designated task or purpose.
3. All Standing and Ad hoc Committees will submit regular reports to the Commission. Consensus and feedback from the Commission must be sought on any proposals which would substantially alter a line item in the annual budget prior to the implementation of any action items under such projects or proposals.
4. Membership and committee chairs for both Standing and Ad hoc committees are not restricted to members of the Commission. Committee members are appointed by the Dean, with consultation from the Executive Committee. Committee chairpersons are also appointed by the Dean, after consultation with the Chairperson and the President. Each committee must include at least one Commission member to act as a liaison between the Commission and committee and to ensure that the committee is acting within the intent of the Commission and in compliance with these By-laws. Committee members and chairs serve without remuneration for their time.
5. All committee members and chairpersons will be presented annually at the August meeting for review by the Commission and (re-)appointment by the Dean.

Article VIII. Meetings

1. The Commission will meet monthly, except for the months of July and December. Additional meetings may be called by the Executive Committee or the Dean, at his discretion.
2. Quorum is necessary to hold a meeting. Quorum is three (3) of the regular members plus the Dean (or his delegate) and the President.
3. Meeting agendas and supporting documentation are to be prepared by the President, in consultation with the Chairperson and the Dean, two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled meeting and distributed to each Commission member one (1) week prior to the scheduled meeting.
4. All meetings should begin and end in prayer. The awareness of God's presence, the fruit of prayer, should continue throughout the meeting. If the discussion which takes place is not done in prayer, is not inspired by the Holy Spirit, it will not lead to the building-up of Christ's Body.

5. Generally, Commission meetings are open meetings. However, the Executive Committee reserves the right to hold a closed session of the Commission. The Executive Committee will determine who may remain in attendance at closed meetings. By its very nature there is a presumption of confidentiality regarding matters discussed in a closed session.
6. Any person may request the privilege of addressing the Commission. The topic is to be known and the request approved in advance by the Chairperson. Such addresses may be limited by the chairperson to a predetermined period of time.
7. Policies or revisions of policies are to be formulated or introduced at one meeting and recommended to the Dean for approval at a future meeting. Diocesan policy always supersedes local policy. The President will seek the counsel of the Diocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools, the Vicar General, and/or the Diocesan Attorney on matters involving legality or proper legal or canonical procedure.
8. The meetings and recommendations of the Commission will be conducted on the principles of consensus rather than on parliamentary procedures. Commission recommendations are made by the consensus of the members present. Consensus does not require unanimity: it is the mutual agreement that all legitimate concerns have been addressed and members agree to support the recommendation. A formal vote is an option under two conditions: 1) the vote is understood only as a recommendation which is offered to the Dean, Pastors, and/or President for consideration and 2) only regular (parish) members and the representative of the Assumption Foundation, Inc. have a vote.

Article IX. Annual Budget Process

1. The Commission has the responsibility to approve an annual budget to be prepared and submitted by the President. Normally, the following process is to be followed, in order:
 - a. The draft budget will be developed by ACS administration;
 - b. The draft budget will be presented to the Dean and Pastors for approval at a deanery clergy meeting;
 - c. The draft budget will be submitted to the Finance Committee for review, revision, and then recommendation to the Commission;
 - d. The draft budget will be submitted to the Commission for its recommendation for final budget approval and submission to the Diocese;
 - e. The final budget will be submitted to the Diocese for review and approval.

Article X. Amendments

1. The By-laws of the Assumption Catholic Schools Education Commission should be formally reviewed for continuing relevance at least every five (5) years.
2. Any part of the By-laws can be altered or amended by consensus of the Commission at any regular meeting, provided that:
 - a. The proposed amendment was presented to members at a prior meeting.
 - b. The proposed amendment is consistent with the Code of Canon Law, the civil law in force, and the policies, directives, and regulations of the Diocese of La Crosse as they pertain to Catholic schools.
 - c. The amendments are approved by the Dean.

Approved August 16, 2022

Addendum 1: Responsibilities of Regular Education Commission Members

As a Person

- Is faithful in witnessing to Jesus Christ and is willing to spread the Good News.
- Is a practicing Catholic.
- Is committed to Catholic school education.
- Is an active member of the parish.
- Desires to give Christian ministry and service.
- In Christian humility, subordinates personal interests for the good of the Commission and Catholic education.

As an Official Participant in Meetings

- Studies materials sent prior to meetings.
- Presents materials, agenda items, and lengthy discussion points prior to meetings to ensure full and fair consideration of such items without undue surprise.
- Attends all official meetings unless excused.
- Tries to be objective, ask questions, seek facts, and contribute to discussion without dominating it.
- Expresses dissent prior to the decision of the Commission.
- Understands and subscribes to the distinction between Commission membership and administration.
- Understands the need for teamwork among the Commission and the administration.
- Respects the confidentiality of confidential materials which may be presented from time-to-time.
- Accepts and supports majority recommendations of the Commission.

Addendum 2: Sample Agenda

Finance Committee August 15, 20xx **Time: 6:15 PM – ACHS Library**

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| 1. Call to Order and Prayer | Committee Chair/President |
| 2. Financial and Budgetary Report | Controller |
| 3. Buildings and Grounds Report | President/Controller |
| 4. Old Business | Committee Chair/President/Others |
| 5. New Business | Committee Chair/President/Others |
| 6. Announcement of Next Meeting Date | Committee Chair/President |
| 7. Prayer and Adjournment | Committee Chair/President |

Education Commission August 15, 20xx **Time: 7:00 PM – ACHS Library**

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| 1. Call to Order and Prayer | Chairperson/President | (2 min) |
| 2. Calendar Highlights | Chairperson/President | (2 min) |
| 3. Reports | Chairperson/Others | (10 min) |
| a. Schools | | |
| b. President, Dean, Diocese | | |
| c. Athletics | | |
| d. Advancement | | |
| e. Enrollment | | |
| f. Royal Parents | | |
| g. Other | | |
| 4. Old Business | Chairperson/President/Others | (x min) |
| 5. New Business | Chairperson/President/Others | (x min) |
| 6. Business from the Floor | Chairperson/Others | (x min) |
| 7. Announcement of Next Meeting Date | Chairperson/President | (1 min) |
| 8. Prayer and Adjournment | Chairperson/President | (2 min) |