

*Missoula Catholic Schools
Advisory Council*



STATUTES

Revised January 2013

Missoula, Montana

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INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

St. Joseph Catholic Grade School & Early Education Program and Loyola Sacred Heart Catholic High School are established and maintained as The Missoula Catholic School system, a regional school system in the Diocese of Helena to promote the Catholic education of the children of Western Montana. In the Diocese of Helena, schools that are not exclusive to one parish are designated as “regional” to indicate that they serve more than one parish.

The Bishop, as the chief catechist of the diocese, has final authority over these schools. He relies on the Vicar/Superintendent of Schools to exercise the administrative jurisdiction in accord with the diocesan policies, state accreditation standards (where applicable) and the laws of the State of Montana.

The local regional school administrators and the Vicar/Superintendent, together with the School Council, are responsible for the operation of the regional schools. Administrators and the Council are expected to function within the policies of the Diocese of Helena and under the administrative jurisdiction of the Helena Diocesan Schools Office.

Article I -Name of the Organization

The name of the body shall be the Missoula Catholic Schools Advisory Council, hereafter called the Advisory Council.

Article II -Purpose and Responsibilities

Section A - Nature and Function

The Advisory Council is a consultative body to the school administration and to the Bishop, subject to the regulations promulgated by the Bishop or the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools acting on behalf of the Bishop.

The Advisory Council is a body that utilizes a process of consensus in decision making. In reaching consensus Advisory Council decisions are made after consideration of the opinions of all members present. All members shall have the opportunity to articulate his/her thoughts in discussion before a decision is made. Upon reaching consensus, each member understands the decision, recognizes it as the best possible, given the group and the situation, and is willing to accept and support the decision of the Advisory Council.

Section B - Areas of Responsibility

In the exercise of its consultative functions, incident to the operation and perpetuation of the Schools as Roman Catholic educational institutions, the Advisory Council shall have the following areas of responsibility:

Planning

Establish a mission statement and a strategic plan, which includes as necessary, short and long-term goals, planning, development and public relations.

Policy Formulation, Enactment and Compliance

Give general direction for administrative action. Policy-making includes initiating, developing and stating policies. Policy categories include:

1. Advisory Council governance and operation
2. School administration
3. Financial management
4. Student conduct and affairs

5. Community relations
6. Student and employee health and safety
7. The operation, acquisition, replacement and maintenance of facilities and equipment

The Advisory Council is responsible for establishing, organizing, and maintaining an MCS Advisory Council Policy Manual.

All policies shall be in accordance with the policies of the Diocese of Helena and, as appropriate, the Montana Office of Public Instruction. Enactment of policies shall be effective upon receipt of written approval from the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools or the Bishop.

Finance

Monitor all financial matters in a fiscally prudent manner; develop plans to finance educational programs including establishing tuition levels and payment programs, and developing the annual budget for approval by the Bishop.

School administrators must consult with the School Advisory Council Finance Committee and receive permission from the Diocesan Superintendent before expending funds not in the approved annual budget.

Administrative Personnel

Develop job descriptions for the school administrators and participate in the filling of any vacancy in these offices by conducting searches and recommending to the Bishop a person to fill such vacancies.

At least annually, the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools, in consultation with the Advisory Council shall evaluate the performances of the school administrators under the applicable job description and make appropriate recommendations to the Bishop concerning retention of each person.

Public Relations

Develop public relations and marketing efforts consistent with the Advisory Council planning and policy functions. The Advisory Council shall coordinate its plans and efforts with the Loyola Sacred Heart Foundation and any other foundation or organization established or maintained for the purposes of raising and receiving money, holding and investing this money, and disbursing its principal and earnings, as appropriate, for the long range development as well as the annual operating costs of the Schools.

Evaluation

Determine whether goals and plans are being met and policies are being observed. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Advisory Council.

Section C –School Administration / School Advisory Council – Non-Consensus

If the Advisory Council has a recommendation and/or reaches consensus with any matter that is contrary to that of the School Administration, the School Administration and School Advisory Council Chair will consult with the Diocesan Superintendent.

ARTICLE III - Membership

Section A - Number of Members

The Advisory Council shall consist of members appointed by the Bishop. The appointed members shall consist of not less than five (5) nor more than nine (9) members.

The ex-officio members shall consist of:

1. The Bishop of the Diocese of Helena
2. The Diocesan Superintendent of Schools or the Diocesan liaison for education;
3. Administration Group:
 - The President of Missoula Catholic Schools
 - The Principal of St. Joseph Elementary School
 - The Principal of Loyola Sacred Heart High School
 - The MCS Activity Director
 - The MCS Marketing Coordinator
 - The MCS Controller
4. The Executive Director/President of the Loyola Sacred Heart High School Foundation
5. The board chairman of the Loyola Sacred Heart High School Foundation
6. Pastors of the Missoula Deanery

In matters where a parliamentary vote must be taken, ex-officio members shall not submit a vote.

Section B - Membership and Vacancies

It is preferred that members of the Advisory Council live in the Missoula Deanery and are active practicing Catholics. Membership of the voting members should be balanced among the parishes of Missoula as much as possible, with foremost consideration given to the needs of the Advisory Council and qualifications of prospective members.

1. There shall be no more than two (2) non-Catholics at a time serving as members of the Advisory Council unless authorized by the Diocese of Helena Superintendent
2. At least half of the Advisory Council shall consist of members that are parents of Missoula Catholic Schools' students or alumni of a Catholic school.
3. An Advisory Council member may not be a school employee or the spouse of a school employee unless authorized by the Diocese of Helena Superintendent. These members must not be full-time employees with direct ties to the operations of the school or in a supervisory roll or educational operations.
4. Advisory Council membership shall include at least one priest chosen cooperatively by the Bishop and Diocesan Superintendent, from among the priests assigned to the Missoula deanery. The designated priest will be an ex-officio member of the council. All other deanery priests will be invited to attend regularly scheduled Advisory Council meetings.
5. The Bishop, based on recommendations from the Advisory Council and school administration, shall fill vacancies in Advisory Council positions held by lay members.
6. Persons appointed to fill premature vacancies shall serve out the unexpired term of the member being replaced. Time served in an unexpired term created by a vacancy shall be considered a membership term.

Section C - Membership Terms

The term of appointed members is three academic years (July 1 to June 30). Members having served two consecutive terms may again be a candidate for membership after a lapse of at least one year.

In the event a member misses three consecutive regular meetings of the Advisory Council without being excused by the Advisory Council Chairperson, the involved member shall be deemed to have resigned his/her membership and the premature vacancy shall be filled as set forth above.

The Advisory Council may recommend to the Bishop the removal of a member at any time by consensus or a two-thirds vote of the entire Advisory Council. Such a vote may take place after a one-month prior notice to Advisory Council members.

Section D - Qualifications

Advisory Council members shall be persons with broad interests and backgrounds, as well as expertise, experience, and/or education in areas that will benefit the operation of Missoula Catholic Schools.

ARTICLE IV - Officers

The officers of the Advisory Council shall be the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer (which may be occupied by the controller), and Executive Secretary. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Treasurer shall be members of the School Advisory Council. The President of Missoula Catholic Schools shall serve as Executive Secretary to the Advisory Council.

Section A - Selection of Officers

At the August meeting, the President of Missoula Catholic Schools in consultation with the MCS building administrators and the Advisory Council members, shall select those persons who shall serve as officers of the Advisory Council. An officer will be allowed to maintain the same office for a maximum of two (2) consecutive years.

Section B - Responsibilities

The Chairperson

The Chairperson shall preside at the meetings of the Advisory Council, appoint committees and act as spokesperson for the Advisory Council or appear on its behalf before other organizations. The Chairperson shall sign all documents on behalf of the Advisory Council, and be an ex-officio member of the committees.

The Vice Chairperson

The Vice Chairperson shall perform all duties of the chairperson when the chairperson is absent or unable to act.

The Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring accuracy of financial statements and for providing a copy of the financial statements to all Advisory Council members at regular Advisory Council meetings.

The Treasurer shall be the Finance Committee Chairperson. This person shall also be responsible to work with the administration in the development and presentation of the annual school budget. This position will usually be filled by the MCS Controller

Each year, the Treasurer shall complete the following responsibilities:

1. The Treasurer will, in consultation with the President, prepare and present the annual school budget to the Diocesan Finance Office and Superintendent by September 15.
2. The Treasurer, in consultation with the President, will annually prepare and present a financial report of the previous fiscal year by the August Advisory Council meeting. This report will be submitted to the Advisory Council, school community, diocesan finance office, and Superintendent. This report will include a summary of all school general operation and special fund accounts.
3. The Treasurer will work with the President and Finance Committee members when a request is made for audit, or whenever there is a change in a school administration or business office employee.

The Executive Secretary

The President of Missoula Catholic Schools will serve as the Executive Secretary. In the event that a majority vote is necessary in an Advisory Council meeting, the Executive Secretary is not a voting member.

The Executive Secretary shall:

1. Appoint a person to conduct the secretarial functions for the Advisory Council.
2. Be responsible for the official minutes of all Advisory Council meetings.
3. Formulate the Advisory Council agenda with the Advisory Council Chairperson.
4. Facilitate the distribution of minutes, agenda, and other materials to the Advisory Council.
5. Assist the Advisory Council Chairperson as needed to facilitate meetings.
6. Provide any other school information required for the Advisory Council to perform its duties under these By-laws.

In the event there is not a Chief Administrator of Missoula Catholic Schools, the school principals will determine which principal will serve as the Executive Secretary.

ARTICLE V - Meetings

Section A - Frequency

Regular meetings shall be held once a month on an agreed upon date at a designated place.

Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson of the Advisory Council, the Executive Secretary, by three (3) voting members of the Advisory Council, or by the Bishop, provided that either the Executive Secretary or Diocesan Superintendent and at least a quorum of the Advisory Council is present. Notification of all special meetings shall be given personally or by electronic mail at least 48 hours in advance.

Section B - Minutes

The Executive Secretary shall appoint a Recording Secretary to serve at the discretion of the Advisory Council. The Recording Secretary shall not be a member of the Advisory Council. The Recording Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings and prepare copies for distribution to all appointed and ex-officio members of the Advisory Council. Extra copies may be distributed at the discretion of the Advisory Council.

Section C - Quorum

In rare instances, usually at the request of the Bishop or DOH Superintendent, for transacting official business, a majority of the voting members of the Advisory Council (a quorum) must be present at the beginning of a meeting. If a rare vote is necessary, a simple majority of the quorum present shall be sufficient to decide any question or elect a candidate. The Chairperson shall vote only in the election of the Chairperson Elect and to break a tie. If the Advisory Council must be polled for consensus or a vote between meetings, this poll may be conducted in person or by electronic mail, telephone or fax.

Section D - Meeting Procedures-Agenda

Meetings of the Advisory Council normally shall be conducted in consultative manner, seeking consensus. Whenever possible, decisions of the Advisory Council will be reached by consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, the Chairperson shall determine whether to continue the discussion at another meeting, reschedule the matter to another meeting, or to consult with the Superintendent. .

The Advisory Council has the right to go into a closed (executive) session at any time to discuss personnel matters or matters of confidentiality. These sessions demand complete confidentiality of Advisory Council members and other authorized individuals present for the executive session.

At the discretion of the Chairperson, meetings may be conducted in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order. (Following Roberts Rules don't seem to be in line with the consensus model)

Section E - Visitors

All regular Advisory Council meetings are open to school and Catholic community. Visitors are invited to participate in the Advisory Council meetings.

The right of non-members to address the Advisory Council shall be limited to those whose petition has been approved for the agenda in advance of the meeting.

ARTICLE VI - Committees

Section A - Standing Committees

The Advisory Council shall have the following standing committees:

Secondary Education Committee

The Secondary Education Committee meets as needed. The Chairperson of this committee is an appointed Advisory Council member. The purpose of this committee is

1. To foster direct participation by parents in identifying educational needs in the operation of the high school.
2. To provide a forum for parents to express concerns to the high school administration and the Advisory Council.
3. To make recommendations, either orally or in writing, to the high school administration and the Advisory Council.
4. To act generally as liaison for parents with the high school administration and the Advisory Council.
5. To initiate policy development for consideration by the Advisory Council.
6. To consider and make recommendations regarding curriculum matters.
7. To consider other tasks as requested by the high school administration and the Advisory Council.

Elementary Education Committee

The Elementary Education Committee meets as needed. The Chairperson of this committee is an appointed Advisory Council member. The purpose of this committee is

1. To foster direct participation by parents in identifying educational needs in the operation of the elementary school.
2. To provide a forum for parents to express concerns to the elementary school administration and the Advisory Council.
3. To make recommendations, either orally or in writing, to the elementary school administration and the Advisory Council.
4. To act generally as liaison for parents with the elementary school administration and the Advisory Council.
5. To initiate policy development for consideration by the Advisory Council.
6. To consider and make recommendations regarding curriculum matters.
7. To consider other tasks as requested by the elementary school administration and the Advisory Council.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee meets monthly or more frequently, or as needed. The Advisory Council Treasurer shall represent the Advisory Council on the Finance Committee and shall co-chair the Finance Committee with the appointed Foundation co-chair. The purpose of this committee for the schools is

1. To undertake the functions of the canonical finance Advisory Council.
2. To advise the Advisory Council, the Business Manager, the Chief Administrator, and the Building Principals on accounting operations, budget preparation, capital improvements, salaries, rates of tuition, and other matters relevant to finances.
3. To work with the appropriate school personnel for the preparation and presentation of the Schools' Financial Reports and fiscal management.

Long Range Planning Committee

The Long Range Planning Committee meets as needed. The Chairperson of this committee is an appointed Advisory Council member. The President of the Loyola Sacred Heart Foundation, or his/her designated representative, will be invited to be a member but not the Chairperson of this committee. The purpose of this committee is

1. To advise the Advisory Council on the progress of the objectives of the Long Range Plan.
2. To recommend future goals to ensure that planning continues to look to future needs.
3. To annually update the Long Range Plan and communicate progress to the Advisory Council and school community.
4. To prepare and publish a Five Year Long Range Plan, every four years.

Public Relations Committee

The Public Relations Committee meets as needed. The Chairperson of this committee is an appointed Advisory Council member. The Executive Director of the Loyola Sacred Heart Foundation or his/her designee is invited to be a member of this committee. The purpose of this committee is

1. To implement school public relations and marketing efforts consistent with Advisory Council planning and policy functions.
2. To coordinate with the Loyola Sacred Heart Foundation all efforts toward marketing the schools.
3. To coordinate with the Loyola Sacred Heart Foundation in the acquisition of funds necessary to bring a marketing plan to fruition.
4. To communicate school information and activities with the local parishes.
5. To assist the schools in the celebration of major public relations events, e.g. National Catholic Schools Week, BASH, Valentine Carnival, etc.

Policy Committee

The Policy Committee meets only as needed. This committee is responsible for organizing, formulating, editing, recommending, and communicating all school policies to the Advisory Council. Other committees may formulate and draft policies but will present them to the Policy Committee to be completed for recommendation to the Advisory Council. The Chairperson of this committee is an appointed Advisory Council member. The purpose of this committee is:

1. To organize and communicate all policies regarding school operations to the Advisory Council.
2. To annually review and edit as needed, all policies for school operations.
3. To write and recommend to the Advisory Council, new policies for school operations.
4. To work with all Advisory Council Committees regarding policy formation, organization, writing, and editing.

Section B - Ad Hoc Committees

After consultation with the Chief Administrator and/or the Diocesan Superintendent, the Advisory Council Chairperson may appoint special committees, for a term sufficient to achieve its objective. The function of each ad hoc committee shall be to advise and make recommendations to the Advisory Council on matters within each committee's respective scope of activity. Chairpersons of ad hoc committees shall be current voting Advisory Council members.

Once the objective is achieved the committee will disband.

Section C - Eligibility and Membership for Committees

At the August meeting, the Advisory Council Chairperson will appoint representatives of the Advisory Council to chair standing committees.

Individuals with appropriate expertise, experience, or education are eligible to be members of standing committees and ad hoc committees. Efforts will be made to ensure a broad representation of parishes for committee membership selection.

Advisory Council members will serve as the chairpersons of standing Advisory Council committees. The term of the Committee Chairperson shall not exceed two (2) consecutive years. The Committee Chairperson selects committee members, following approval of the Advisory Council Officers. Committee membership for non-Advisory Council members shall not exceed two (2) consecutive years.

Missoula Catholic Schools Administrators, by virtue of their respective offices, shall be members of all Advisory Council committees.

ARTICLE VII- POLICY

Section A - Definition

Policies are general guidelines for the discretionary action of those involved with the Missoula Catholic Schools on a day-to-day basis. Policies are formulated for the Missoula Catholic Schools by the Advisory Council, in consultation with the School Administration, and recommended to the Bishop. When the Bishop approves the policy, it shall be enacted by the Diocesan Superintendent, and implemented by the local administrators and staff.

Section B - Formulating Policy

Policy Determination

Any member of the school community may suggest the need for a policy. The Advisory Council will determine if a policy is needed.

Policy Data Collection and Draft

The Advisory Council Chairperson will assign a person(s) or committee to gather data and draft a policy based on data gathered and issues involved. The draft of the policy shall be submitted to the Advisory Council for understanding and clarification. The appropriate school administrator will be involved in the gathering of data and drafting of the policy.

Policy Consultation

Upon receiving the draft of the policy, the Advisory Council will determine if additional input is needed. If necessary, the Advisory Council Chairperson will arrange for further consultation to take place.

Policy Adoption / Rejection

After formal discussion of a proposed policy, the Advisory Council may recommend the policy adoption, amend the policy and recommend the policy for adoption, return the proposal for re-working, or reject the proposal. If the policy is recommended for adoption, it will be sent to the Diocese for approval.

Policy Enactment

If the policy is recommended to the Bishop for adoption, the Bishop may accept, edit and accept, or reject the recommendation. If the recommendation is accepted, he will return the policy to the Diocesan Superintendent for enactment.

Policy Implementation

Once the Diocesan Superintendent receives the policy, he/she will communicate with the local administration to implement the policy. The administration will communicate the policy implementation progress to the Advisory Council.

Section C - Maintaining Files of Policies

All new policies adopted by the Bishop will be included in the Advisory Council minutes. The Policy Committee, in consultation with the Executive Secretary shall maintain a set of Advisory Council policies in the Missoula Catholic Schools Advisory Council Policy file. Policies are to be included in the appropriate handbook; e.g. The Diocesan Personnel Policy book, Missoula Catholic Schools' Employee Handbook, Coaches' Handbook, Support Staff Personnel Handbook, or the Child Care Personnel Handbook.

Section D - Regular Review of Policies

The effectiveness and scope of new policies will be reviewed by the Policy Committee at the end of the first school year of implementation and thereafter, as needed. The Policy Committee may recommend to the Advisory Council minor changes to the policy by the consensus process. Policies that require major change will follow the procedure for formulating policy.

The Advisory Council will review established policies at least once every five (5) years. The Advisory Council Chairperson may delegate the periodic review to an appropriate committee of the Advisory Council.

ARTICLE VIII - ADMINISTRATOR SELECTION

Section A - Chief Administrator (President)

The hiring of the Chief Administrator of Missoula Catholic Schools is the responsibility of the Bishop in consultation with the Diocesan Superintendent and the Advisory Council.

The Advisory Council Chairperson will establish a search committee at the time a vacancy in the position occurs.

The Diocesan Superintendent is a member of the committee.

The search committee will submit to the Diocesan Superintendent the name(s) of the individual(s) recommended for the position. The Diocesan Superintendent will submit these name(s) along with his/her recommendation to the Bishop.

After approval by the Bishop, the Diocesan Superintendent will offer a contract to the candidate.

Section B - Principals and Other Administrative Personnel

The hiring of Principals, Vice-Principals, and any school leadership positions are the responsibility of the President who will coordinate the selection process with the Advisory Council and the hiring process with the Diocesan Superintendent.

In the event that there is not a Chief Administrator of Missoula Catholic Schools, the Advisory Council will follow the steps as outlined in Article VII Section A, when hiring a Principal and other administrative personnel.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

Any proposed amendments must be given to the Advisory Council in writing, seven (7) days in advance of any vote. These Statutes may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the voting members of the Advisory Council subject to the approval of the Bishop. Upon approval by the Bishop, amendments become effective on the date designated.

APPROVAL

Following discussion by the members of the Missoula Catholic Schools and the Diocese of Helena, the foregoing statutes were approved and are recommended to the Bishop of Helena for approval.

Missoula Catholic Schools Board Chair

Date

I have reviewed the foregoing statutes and recommend their approval.

Diocesan Superintendent of Schools

Date

Following the recommendations above, these statutes are hereby approved and effective July 1, 2002.

Bishop of the Diocese of Helena

Date