

# SCHOOL BOARD CONSTITUTION

*St*  
**Joseph's School**





# St Joseph's School Board Constitution

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## Preface

Boards of Catholic education in Queensland have grown in number and quality since their inception in the late 1970s.<sup>1</sup> They were established primarily as a response to requests by parents to be more active participants in Catholic schooling. Today they are available to each Catholic education community in Queensland and provide a structure and process for genuine partnership in planning and decision making involving the key members of these communities.

*The existence of boards as components of the governance of Catholic schools is a good and desirable phenomenon, reflective of (among other things) the basic value of participation embedded in any real understanding of governance, and certainly in any Catholic comprehension of that concept.*

*In particular, the development and proliferation of school boards in Catholic schools in recent years is not to be understood as a necessity resulting from the inevitable decline in the numbers of teaching religious, but as an opportunity to engage more and more sectors of the Church (and especially the laity) in the evangelising work of Catholic education. The governance of Catholic schools should reflect the reality of Catholic education as a partnership between parishes and parish priests, dioceses and diocesan authorities, religious institutes, Catholic education authorities (Catholic Education Commissions, Catholic Education Offices / Catholic Schools Offices), schools and - crucially - parents and children.<sup>2</sup>*

Recent developments in education at state and national level in Australia have challenged Catholic schools to ensure that they develop and maintain forms of leadership which will support the educational mission of the Church well into the future. Within the Church the changing face of Catholic parishes and schools calls for courageous and visionary leadership.

Boards of Catholic education are communities of leaders who share in the educational and pastoral leadership responsibilities of pastors and principals of schools in ways that are clearly described in this Constitution. Thus, board members are called to a particular ministry in Catholic education which is both a privilege and an opportunity to serve the children, young people and adults who seek a Catholic education. The experience of board members over the last twenty years reveals that, far from being an onerous task, service on a Catholic education board has been an occasion for personal and community growth in faith, spirituality and understanding of the vision and mission of Jesus and of Catholic education.

<sup>1</sup>.  
*Project Catholic School, 1978*

<sup>2</sup>  
*Catholic School Governance, NCEC, 2002*



# Introduction

Catholic education Boards, where they exist, are part of the Governance Structure of schools and other Catholic education agencies. This Model Constitution and Commentary draws heavily upon the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) document "Catholic School Governance", for its terminology and understanding of governance for Catholic schools and parish education agencies. The Queensland Catholic Education Commission gratefully acknowledges that this material is used with the permission of NCEC.

The term 'governance' as used here has its usual English meaning in referring to the various authority structures, decision-making processes and lines of accountability and responsibility that pertain to any organization or enterprise: in this case a Catholic school. Of course, in speaking of "Catholic governance", the document assumes and implies that there are certain principles of Catholic teaching and practice that should infuse the governance of any Catholic institution.<sup>2</sup>

This document is designed to be viewed as a framework within which a Board is able to function authentically and effectively. It is more than a book of rules. It is a resource which transmits a vision for Christ's faithful to be empowered and to participate in a collaborative ministry. Thus it gives expression to the message of the Second Vatican Council We Are The Church and can be life-giving for a Board and its members.

Catholic education Boards in parishes and Catholic systemic schools in Queensland have their origins in the 1980 School Board Pilot Program where a number of volunteer Catholic schools and parishes established pilot Boards to explore what was then uncharted territory. The project concluded in 1983 and the first 'Interim Constitution and Commentary' emerged in 1984.

Later this document was further revised and the 'Approved Constitution and Commentary for Catholic Education Boards in Queensland' published in April 1990 has guided Boards until the introduction of this current Constitution. This document, like its predecessors, is grounded in the experience of Board members as they seek to contribute to the leadership of Catholic education through participation in Boards.

In that period Boards operating under these Constitutions developed a unique character, which led to their being described as Pastoral Model Boards of Catholic Education in Queensland. The philosophy and practice of Collaborative Ministry<sup>3</sup> and Sharing Wisdom<sup>4</sup> are the essence of decision making and ministry of these Boards.

Collaborative Ministry regards participation as a member of a Board as a ministry of decision making and action arising out of the identification and application of the complementary gifts of the members.

The Philosophy and Practice of Sharing Wisdom can be summarised as follows:

*"To each the Lord gives a piece of the wisdom.  
To no one does He give all the wisdom of God.  
We all get different pieces"*



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*and, as a consequence,  
"We must share our wisdom  
We must hear, respect, and treasure one another's wisdom.  
We must work for a climate that is  
open and respectful."<sup>5</sup>*

The Constitution and Commentary is one of the four key factors by which a Board effects its ministry. Generally known as the 'Four Tools of Board Ministry', these factors are:

- The Constitution and Commentary
- Members' Formation
- Collaboration in Vision and Mission
- The Policy Process

Following widespread consultation and discussion, the NCEC has published a set of General and binding principles which are fundamental for the governance of Catholic schools.<sup>6</sup> These principles are of such importance that they have been included in full as part of the Responsibilities of the Board in Article III of this Constitution. Briefly summarised they are:

- The Love of Christ
- The Role of Parents
- Faithfulness to the Mission of the Church
- Church Solidarity
- Support for the common good
- Embracing the poor
- Educational Quality
- Participation
- Inclusiveness
- Unity in Diversity
- Stewardship of resources
- Rule of Canon Law

It is clear that the success of Catholic education Boards in Queensland can be attributed to their thorough initial formation programme for intending members and subsequent emphasis on ongoing education and formation of continuing members. This Constitution, like its predecessor, will be critical for the preparation and ongoing education and formation of Board members.

<sup>1</sup> *Catholic School Governance, NCEC 2002.*

<sup>2</sup> *Catholic School Governance, NCEC 2002 p.4*

<sup>3</sup> *Sofield L. and Juliano C. Collaborative Ministry – Skills and Guideline, Ave Maria Press, Indiana, 1987.*

<sup>4</sup> *McKinney Mary Benet Sharing Wisdom, Tabor Publishing, Valencia CA, 1987.*

<sup>5</sup> *McKinney Mary Benet Sharing Wisdom, Tabor Publishing, Valencia CA, 1987, p 152*

<sup>6</sup> *Catholic School Governance, NCEC, 2002 pp. 10 – 11.*



# Article I: Authority, Aims and Service of the Board

### SECTION I: NAME OF THE BOARD

The **St Joseph's School Board** is a body with consultative responsibilities and functions limited to those set out in following sections of this Constitution.

### SECTION 2: AUTHORITY FOR AND APPROVAL OF THIS CONSTITUTION

2.1 Ultimate authority for this Constitution is derived from Canon Law (Church Law) and relevant State Legislation (Civil Law).

This Constitution is made under the authority of the Corporation of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba which is the jurisdictional authority from whom the Board derives its powers.

2.2 This Constitution was approved in writing by the Bishop of the Diocese of Toowoomba on **2 September 2015**.

2.3 This Constitution will be interpreted in accordance with the general and binding principles of governance of Catholic schools as set out in Article III Section 6.1 of this Constitution.

### SECTION 3: AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

3.1 A Board may prepare and recommend an amendment to its Constitution.

3.2 An amendment to the Constitution may be made within designated areas.

3.3 An amendment has no effect until it is approved in writing by the Director of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Toowoomba

3.4 A formal review of the Model Constitution will be conducted every six years or as determined by the jurisdictional authorities.

### SECTION 4: AIMS OF THE BOARD

The Board will collaborate with the **St Joseph's School** community to:

4.1 Identify, enunciate, nurture and celebrate the Special Religious Character of the school with major and particular emphasis on the Special Spirituality of the school.

4.2 Support processes developed by the school staff aimed at improving student learning outcomes in accordance with the educational vision and mission.

4.3 Promote Catholic education that



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4.3.1 lives out the local Church's education mission;

4.3.2 strives for educational excellence; and

4.3.3 contributes to society.

### **SECTION 5: STATEMENT OF THE SPECIAL RELIGIOUS CHARACTER OF THE SCHOOL**

St Joseph's School had its beginning with the arrival in Stanthorpe by four Sisters of Mercy on the 9<sup>th</sup> February 1875. The four Sisters were Sisters M Agnes, Emilian, Muredach and Malachy. This small group of dedicated Sisters pioneered Christian education enduring great hardships in the fulfilment of their apostolic mission.

The foundation stone for the Convent building now on the Secondary campus was laid on 11 October 1931. The building cost the grand sum of 12,258 pounds and was solemnly blessed and opened by his Lordship DR J Byrne, Bishop of Toowoomba on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 1932.

The original school was formerly the Globe Hotel. The school occupied the position more or less where the current Presbytery now stands. It was thought that its initial roll call was in excess of 120 students, some of whom had travelled considerable distances by foot from the outlying tin mines. The original 'school' consisted of one large room with the barest of necessities.

In 1884, St Joseph's School had its first inspection by an Officer of the State Department who reported very favourably on the school, teaching and results generally. However the building was in a bad state of repair and the winter winds whistled through the floor, ceiling and walls. But for all of this the old Globe Hotel was to remain the school until 1907 and the arrival of Fr Matthew Ryan as Parish Priest.

A new school was built on the site that is now the secondary campus of St Joseph's. The original church build by Fr Davadi was also pressed into service as an Infants' school and was joined to the wooden building built by Fr Ryan. In 1955 the old school was sold for removal and the primary students moved to the site of the current St Joseph's preschool. The present preschool was part of the Moiaminda Guest House, which was occupied by Somerville House Girls from Brisbane during World War Two. In 1987 the school's last Sister of Mercy staff member retired.

Today St Joseph's is a Catholic co-educational school that caters for students from all faith denominations. The Primary campus offers a learning environment that enables students to grow and develop in a flexible and supportive atmosphere. The Secondary campus offers a broad curriculum that caters for multiple pathways and supports the individual learning needs of each student.



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St Joseph's offers a unique character with a strong sense of community for students from Prep to Year 12.

## SECTION 6: CONDUCT OF THE BOARD

6.1 The Board and all its related operations will be conducted as a Consultative Board in accordance with:

6.1.1 The general and binding principles for the governance of Catholic schools.

6.1.2 The Code of Ethics for Board Members.

6.2 The Board will provide written annual reports of its conduct and related operations to its community.

## SECTION 7: BOARD DYSFUNCTION AND DISSOLUTION OF THE BOARD

Where a Board fails to function satisfactorily within the provisions of this Constitution, the principal and/or the Chair of the Board will take action in accordance with Appendix V of this Constitution.

## Article II: Definition of Terms Used in this Constitution

### SECTION I: DEFINITIONS

Additional definitions may be added but the existing definitions in this article may not be altered or removed from the Constitution.

Unless a contrary intention applies, the words and expressions used in this Constitution have the following meanings given to them:

The term Board refers to the **St Joseph's School Board**.

*Archdiocese* refers to a Diocese which is under the care and authority of an Archbishop.

Wherever the term *Catholic education authorities* is used in this Constitution, it refers to the National [NCEC], State and Territory Catholic Education Commissions including the Queensland Catholic Education Commission [QCEC] together with the relevant diocesan Catholic school authorities unless otherwise specified.





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The term *Catholic School Authority* refers to a Catholic School Authority which has responsibility for the establishment and ongoing operation of schools within the jurisdictional authority of a diocese or a religious institute.

*Catholic School Renewal* refers to the intentional activity which focuses on the purposes and processes for Catholic schooling which fosters positive change and growth for students and others in school communities.

*Clause* refers to a clause of this Constitution.

*Collaboration* is a clearly defined relationship entered into by the members of the Board to achieve common goals. It involves the identification, release and union of the gifts of the members.

*Collaborative ministry* refers to the co-operative, joint activity of Board members which acknowledges the God given variety and diversity of gifts, wisdom and expertise in the group, explores ways in which they complement each other and calls them forth in service of the educational mission of the church.

A *Consultative Board* is one which participates in the policy-making process by formulating and adopting but never enacting policy.

The term *Diocese* refers to 'a portion of the people of God which is entrusted to a Bishop to be nurtured by him....' (Code of Canon Law)

*Education of Board* members refers to the processes by which the members are regularly informed regarding matters which are relevant to their responsibilities as set out in this Constitution.

*Faith Development* refers to the growth which occurs within an individual towards a deeper appreciation, understanding and lived experience of faith in God.

*Formation* refers to those processes in which Board members engage in order to equip themselves to conscientiously, earnestly and diligently fulfil their role on the Board.

*Goals* are the milestones which a group would hope to reach before too long when implementing its mission to achieve its vision.

The term *governance* as used in this Constitution is defined in terms of its usual English meaning in referring to the various authority structures, decision-making processes and lines of accountability and responsibility that pertain to any organisation or enterprise: in this case a Catholic school or parish education agency. In speaking of "governance in a Catholic School" the document assumes and implies that there are certain principles of Catholic teaching and practice that should infuse the governance of any Catholic institution.

*In-service* is any program of education and formation which is presented to persons following their election and appointment to the Board.



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A *Juridic Person* or *Public Juridic Person* refers to an entity which has status under Canon Law and is broadly equivalent to the term "Legal Entity" which pertains in Civil Law.

Wherever a *public juridic person* is the subject of a provision in this Constitution, it is referred to as a jurisdictional authority.

*Mission* is the purpose for which the group is established (i.e. what it is designed to do) and, in the case of a Catholic educational group, it would accord with the educational mission of the Catholic church.

*Parent* includes a guardian and every person who is liable to maintain or has the actual custody of a child who is a student.

The *Parents and Friends Association* of a school is the official parent body in a school which operates in support of the school under its own Constitution.

A *Parish* is a community of Christ's faithful whose pastoral care, under the authority of the diocesan Bishop, is entrusted to a parish priest as its proper pastor.

*Participation* (Subsidiarity) is the principle that powers and functions in any community should be exercised, wherever possible, by the persons and bodies closest to and most accountable to those affected.

*Parish Priest* - See *Parish* (above) and *Spiritual Leader* (below)

*Pastor* - See *Parish* (above) and *Spiritual Leader* (below)

*Policy* is a statement of a broad and general direction which provides a guide for discretionary action.

*Pre-service* is any program of education and formation which is presented to persons prior to their election and appointment to the Board.

*Principles of Governance* are those statements set out at Article III, Section 6.1 of this Constitution.

*School* means the school for which the school Board is formed.

In the context of this Constitution, *Shared Wisdom* is understood to be a term developed by Sr Mary Benet McKinney in her book *Sharing Wisdom* to describe a philosophy and practice of decision-making which is based on the tradition of discernment within the Catholic church.

*Spirituality* refers generally to the manner and style of expressing Catholic faith, not only through explicitly religious rituals and symbols, but also through the cultivation of Christian habits and virtues in everyday activities and practices.

*Spiritual Leader* of the Board is that ex-officio member of the Board who is appointed to that position by the jurisdictional authority. Where the school community is part of a parish, this



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position will normally be held by an ordained minister of the Church (Parish Priest / Pastor of the Parish).

*Staff* means all the persons who are employed by the Catholic school authority and/or the parish and assigned to the school.

*Standing Committee* – a committee established by the Board to conduct research into, or to transact business concerning, specific matters on a continuing basis.

*Student* means a student of the school.

*Subsidiarity* – See Participation.

*Task Force* (or ad-hoc committee) – a temporary group established by the Board to handle projects or issues of a developmental nature.

*Vision* is an image of the desired future of a group such as a school, parish or a Board which is usually expressed in a succinct written statement.



## Article III: Roles, Functions, Responsibilities and Powers

### SECTION I: AUTHORITY OF THE BOARD

1.1 The Board exists by virtue of the jurisdictional authority (Canon Law) and legal entity (Civil Law) which has approved this Constitution namely the Corporation of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba in the person of the Director of Catholic Education of the Diocese of Toowoomba.

1.2 In carrying out its role, the Board shares the canonical authority of the **Priest Director of St Joseph's Parish** and the **Executive Director of Catholic Education of the Diocese of Toowoomba** and the leadership authority of the **Principal** within the designated areas of responsibility as set out in Article III Section 6.

1.3 The Board is neither a jurisdictional authority nor a legal entity.

1.4 Any recourse to civil law action on the part of the Board will be addressed by the jurisdictional authority and its legally appointed agents.

### SECTION 2: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE JURISDICTIONAL AUTHORITY

It is the right and the responsibility of the Corporation of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba to:

2.1 Ensure that Board members are appropriately educated and prepared for their role, particularly in relation to the special spirituality of the school;

2.2 Exercise stewardship over and protect the temporal goods of the Church as represented by the property and assets of the school in circumstances where the jurisdictional authority owns property used by the school;

2.3 Promote freedom of action by the Board within the scope of its powers, subject to the rights, duties and responsibilities of the jurisdictional authority, the Diocese, and responsible Catholic education authorities;

2.4 Develop strong partnerships with others of the Church, including bishops, leaders of religious institutes and Catholic education authorities, for the purpose of ensuring proper coordination and distribution of resources between Catholic schools; and

2.5 Ensure that any disposal of property is carried out in accordance with both Civil and Canon Law.



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### **SECTION 3: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL AUTHORITY**

Catholic Education of the Diocese of Toowoomba has the responsibility to:

3.1 Develop school governance policies that encourage unity of purpose and solidarity between all Catholic schools, while recognising and protecting diversity in particular communities and spiritual traditions; and

3.2 Develop policies concerning the equitable distribution of resources among Catholic schools.

### **SECTION 4: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STATEWIDE CATHOLIC EDUCATION AUTHORITY**

The Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) has responsibility for providing state-wide support for matters relating to educational governance which includes:

4.1 State-wide support for Catholic education boards and councils; and

4.2 Co-ordination of the periodic review of the Model Constitution at the request of jurisdictional authorities.

### **SECTION 5: SERVICE**

5.1 Members of the Board will render service by utilising the principles of Collaborative Ministry and Sharing Wisdom.

### **SECTION 6: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD**

In discharging its responsibilities the Board will:

6.1 Function in accordance with the general and binding Principles of Governance as follows:

6.1.1 The Love of Christ

6.1.2 The Role of Parents as the primary educators of their children

6.1.3 Faithfulness to the Mission of the Church

6.1.4 Church Solidarity

6.1.5 Support for the common good

6.1.6 Embracing the poor



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6.1.7 Educational quality

6.1.8 Participation (Subsidiarity)

6.1.9 Inclusiveness

6.1.10 Unity in Diversity

6.1.11 Stewardship of Resources

6.1.12 Rule of Canon Law

6.2 Collaborate in nurturing the **Special Religious Character** of the School.

6.3 Participate in the **planning** of the ongoing development of the Catholic school in accordance with diocesan guidelines, government requirements and school renewal planning.

6.3.1 Review the school's **statements of Vision, Mission and Special Religious Character** periodically, as part of the Catholic School Renewal Process.

6.4 **Develop, Review and Maintain Policies** on matters referred to it by the principal or by responsible Catholic education authorities.

6.5 Participate in the **selection process for the appointment of a principal** by the Catholic School Authority.

6.6 **Support staff**, especially the principal, who has the day-to-day responsibility for maintaining and promoting the Special Religious Character of the school.

6.7 Provide advice, at the invitation of the principal, regarding the **staffing provision of the school** with due regard to educational excellence and particular emphasis on nurturing the Special Religious Character of the school.

6.8 Reflect on the Curriculum in accordance with any relevant requirements of Government authorities and the Catholic Education Office of the Diocese of Toowoomba and without trespassing upon areas of professional educational judgement.

6.9 Oversee the prudent **Financial Management** of the school particularly with a view to ensuring access to quality education for future generations.

6.9.1 Recommend the annual school budget for approval under jurisdictional authority and Catholic School Authority guidelines ensuring that the budget is:

(i) a valid response to the school's renewal plan (or equivalent);

(ii) responsible within the resources available and the policies and guidelines of government and jurisdictional authorities;



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(iii) focussed on the delivery of Catholic education consistent with the education vision and mission of the diocese/ parish; and

(iv) prepared in consultation with the Board Finance Committee under the guidance of the Board Financial Advisor.

6.10 Oversee the prudent **maintenance of school buildings and plant** and also plan for the **provision of future facilities** in accordance with the guidelines of the Diocesan School Authority.

6.11 Seek to ensure that the school fulfils its potential as an **option for the disadvantaged**, including the poor.

6.12 Provide **advice** on any matters referred to the Board by the principal.

6.13 Facilitate the **preparation and induction of Board members** so that they understand the scope and extent of their role.

6.14 Appoint **standing committees** which will assist it in carrying out its responsibilities and establish temporary task forces for the handling of short term projects of a developmental nature.

6.14.1 Establish a Finance Committee, where appropriate, as a Standing Committee of the Board, which reports to the Board in such a way as to enable the Board to discharge its responsibilities under Article III Section 6.9 of this Constitution.

6.15 Develop an **awareness of the roles of all levels of government** and how these impact on the conduct of Catholic schools

6.15.1 Develop and support strategies designed to influence government members and other political representatives for the betterment of the school.

6.16 Establish and maintain networks and processes for **formal/informal communication** between the Board and the school and parish communities.

### **SECTION 7: RESERVED POWERS OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL AUTHORITY RELATING TO THE BOARD**

The Catholic Education Office of the Diocese of Toowoomba reserves unto itself the following powers over the school and the Board:

- 7.1.1 To appoint the principal of the school
- 7.1.2. To dismiss the school principal according to law
- 7.1.3 To appoint members of the Board
- 7.1.4 To dismiss members of the Board
- 7.1.5 To appoint and dismiss staff



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- 7.1.6 To appoint the Board's liaison officer
- 7.1.7 To approve amendments to this Constitution.

### **SECTION 8: RESERVED POWERS OF THE PRINCIPAL**

The principal reserves the power to:

- 8.1.1 Manage the day to day operations of the school including the implementation of its curriculum;
- 8.1.2 Make operational decisions about the use of teaching or learning resources in the school;
- 8.1.3 Allocate duties to all members of staff;
- 8.1.4 Act separately from the Board on those rare occasions where circumstances and serious responsibility for the leadership of the school demand such action.

### **SECTION 9: RESERVED POWERS OF THE PARISH PRIEST**

Where the Board serves one or more Catholic schools and/or educational agencies which come under the authority of a Parish, the Parish Priest reserves the power of the jurisdictional authority of his office to:

- 9.1.1 Exercise the pastoral care of the parish community entrusted to him under the authority of the diocesan bishop by carrying out the offices of teaching, sanctifying and ruling;
- 9.2 Act separately from the Board on those rare occasions where circumstances and his serious responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the faithful demand it, as long as such action is not in conflict with the jurisdictional authority of the diocese;
- 9.3 Ensure that parish goods are administered in accordance with Canon Law.

### **SECTION 10: POWERS NOT AVAILABLE TO THE BOARD**

The Board may not -

- 10.1 Have control of funds;
- 10.2 Enter into contracts;
- 10.3 Acquire, hold, dispose of or deal with, property; or
- 10.4 Sue or be sued.
- 10.5 Directly interfere with the operation of the school





## Article IV: Membership

### SECTION I: GENERAL

#### 1.1 Definition

A member of the Board is a person who ministers collaboratively to the community which the Board serves by fulfilling the duties outlined in this Constitution. Such ministry demands that the needs and interests of all the community's members are taken into account.

#### 1.2 Eligibility and Suitability

1.2.1 Membership is open to all members of the parish and/or school community who have completed a prescribed formation program and have a commitment to uphold the Catholic ethos.

1.2.2 *A person who has been **found guilty or convicted of a serious offence or an offence relating to dishonesty** is ineligible to be a member of the Board.*

*Members who are eighteen years of age or older must be holders of a current positive notice (blue) card issued by the Public Safety Business Agency (PSBA).*

*However, a member who is eighteen years of age or older who is a volunteer parent of a child attending the school, or a registered teacher under the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 does not require a blue card.*

*Persons requiring verification of their suitability for membership who are elected to the Board may not attend meetings until their positive notice (blue) card or other form of verification is issued. (Updated July 2015)*

1.2.3 Members of the Board will identify strongly with the Special Religious Character of the school particularly as it applies to its Special Spirituality.

1.2.4 A significant number of members will be parents of current, prospective or recent students of the school.

#### 1.3 Appointment and Dismissal

1.3.1. Members of the Board will commence service on the Board when they are officially appointed by the Catholic School Authority.

1.3.2. The instrument of authority for elected and co-opted Board members will be an official Letter of Appointment, duly signed by the Director of the Catholic School Authority "for and on behalf of" the jurisdictional authority.

1.3.3. Where a member of the Board is in serious breach of or fails in his/her obligations under the provisions of this Constitution, that member may be dismissed by the Catholic School Authority responsible for appointing that member.



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## 1.4 Legal Responsibility

1.4.1 The legal responsibility of Board members is set out in the provisions of Article III of this Constitution.

1.4.2 By approving of and participating in the **St Joseph's School Board**, the Parish Priest or Director of the Catholic School Authority will share their responsibility for leadership decision making and policy development. This sharing is limited by the reserved powers set out in Article III of this Constitution.

## 1.5 Ministry and Service

Board members will participate in Board meetings with the understanding that they are participating in the broad ministry of governance and that their particular service to the Board and its community is undertaken as a collaborative ministry in and for the Church.

## 1.6 Relational Dimensions of Membership

In general, Board members will relate to each other and all other individuals and groups in the school (or educational agency) on the basis of their understanding of and commitment to the principles which underpin Sharing Wisdom and Collaborative Ministry.

## **SECTION 2: PREPARATION AND FORMATION**

### 2.1 Preparation Program

When a Board is being established for the first time, all members of the school or parish communities will be invited to participate in a comprehensive preparation program.

### 2.2 Intending Members

Intending members of an existing Board will participate in an abbreviated preparatory educative program.

### 2.3 Major Themes

Programs of education and formation will draw upon the provisions of this Constitution and focus on the major themes of:-

- Collaborative Ministry and Sharing Wisdom
- Role and Responsibilities of the Board
- Board Relationships - Internal and External
- Board Membership.

### 2.4 Ongoing Programs

It is a condition of membership that all members of a Board participate in ongoing programs of formation and education.



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### 2.5 Board Liaison Officer

Programs of formation and education will be made available through the Board Liaison Officer for use at each Board meeting.

### 2.6 Local Resources

At their own initiative, Board members will also access suitable resources for formation.

## **SECTION 3: CLASSES OF MEMBERSHIP**

### 3.1 Ex-Officio

The ex-officio positions on the Board are:

- Spiritual Leader Member
- Principal Member
- Secondary College Administration Team Member

### 3.2 Elected

The elected positions on the Board are:

- Parent Members
- Teacher Member/s
- Parish Member (Optional for Secondary School Boards)

### 3.3 Appointed

The optional appointed positions on the Board are:

- Catholic School Authority Member
- Special Religious Character Member
- Indigenous/Ethnic Community Members

### 3.4 Co-Opted

3.4.1 A Co-opted Member of the Board may be appointed following a decision and recommendation by the ex-officio and elected members of the Board to the Catholic School Authority.

3.4.2 Co-opted Members will be appointed for the specific contributions they might make to the Board.



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## **SECTION 4: MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE**

### 4.1 Approval

With due regard to the Special Religious Character and needs of the school or parish, each Board / school community will propose its membership structure for approval by the Catholic School Authority.

### 4.2 Numerical Size

4.2.1 In most instances, the number of Board members will be not less than seven (7) and will not exceed twelve (12).

4.2.2 The Board/school community will provide a rationale for its membership structure if the number of members proposed is less than seven (7) or more than (12)

### 4.3 Balance

Members will bring to the Board a broad spectrum of skills, talents and personal attributes.

## **SECTION 5: TERM OF MEMBERSHIP**

### 5.1 All Positions

The term of membership for each position on the Board is as follows:

5.1.1 Spiritual Leader Member – For period of office

5.1.2 Principal Member – For period of office

5.1.3 Executive Leadership Team Member – for period of office or as determined by the Authority

5.1.4 Parent Members – Three years

5.1.5 Teacher Members – Three years

5.1.6 Faith Community (parish) member – Three years

5.1.7 Co-opted Members – One year and renewable for up to three years

### 5.2 Casual Vacancy

The term of office for a member, elected or co-opted, to fill a casual vacancy on the Board will not extend beyond the next election. Such a member may be nominated and elected at that time or subsequently co-opted.



# St Joseph's School Board Constitution

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## 5.3 Consecutive Terms

An elected member of the Board will serve no more than two consecutive terms of office.

**SECTION 6: Following reflection on Article IV, Sections 1 to 5 and Appendix IV to this Constitution, the local Catholic school community or Catholic education agency may use this section to design and propose its membership structure.**

## Membership Structure of the **St Joseph's School Board**

The members of the **St Joseph's School Board** are:

- Spiritual Leader Member; and
- One Principal Member
- Four Parent Members selected in the way set out in Article VII of this Constitution; and
- One Faith Community (parish) member; and
- Up to two Co-opted Members determined by a consensus decision of the ex-officio and elected members of the Board.

## **SECTION 7: RECOMMENDED OPTIONAL MEMBERSHIP STRUCTURE**

The membership structure proposed by the school community or the existing Board will be based on a consideration of each of the Optional Membership Structures listed at Appendix IV of this Constitution.

## **SECTION 8: OFFICE BEARERS AND DUTIES**

### 8.1 Chairperson / Board Leader

8.1.1 Each year the members of the Board will elect a Chairperson from the membership of the Board.

8.1.2 Ex-officio members, employees and students of the school will not be the elected Chairperson.

8.1.3 The Chairperson presides at all regular and special meetings of the Board.

8.1.4 A retiring Chairperson may offer for re-appointment, but a continuous term of office should not exceed three years.



## St Joseph's School Board Constitution

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8.1.5 The Chairperson will prepare the Agenda for the Board meeting in consultation with the Principal

### 8.2 The Secretary

8.2.1 The Secretary will be appointed annually by the Board.

8.2.2 The Secretary will cause the Minutes of all Board meetings to be recorded.

8.2.3 The Secretary will forward the Minutes of the previous meeting and the Agenda for the next meeting to members one week prior to the forthcoming meeting.

### 8.3 Accountant/Financial Adviser

8.3.1 The Board Financial Adviser will be appointed annually by the Board.

8.3.2 Where a suitably qualified person is not a member of the Board, the Board Financial Adviser will be co-opted as a member of the Board.

8.3.3 The Board Financial Adviser will play a key consultative role pursuant to the provisions of Article III Section 6.9 of this Constitution particularly the preparation of the annual budget.

8.3.4 The Board Financial Adviser will maintain an ongoing appreciation of the performance of the school/college budget in accordance with its stated intentions and will report to the Board at least quarterly.



## Article V: Relationships

### SECTION I: RELATIONSHIPS INTERNAL

#### 1.1 Spiritual Leader

1.1.1 The Spiritual Leader will ensure that regular formation for members occurs at Board meetings including opportunities for faith sharing.

1.1.2 Where the school community is part of a parish which has a Parish Priest, the priest will be the Spiritual Leader of the Board. He will share pastoral responsibility for the educational community with the members of the Board. This will centre on:

- spiritual formation
- shared ministry
- sharing wisdom of the Spirit
- shared responsibility for decision making, and
- shared responsibility for the religious education policies and programs of the school.

1.1.3 Where the school community is part of a parish and the Parish Priest is not available to be an active Board member, he will nominate a person to be Spiritual Leader of the Board.

1.1.4 In all other circumstances, the Catholic School Authority will appoint the Spiritual Leader of the Board.

#### 1.2 Principal as Educational Leader

1.2.1 It is the essential function of the Principal as Educational Leader of the Board to provide educational leadership to the whole school community; not only to staff and students but also to parents and to the Board.

1.2.2 The Principal is a member of the Board and the Executive Officer of the Board.

1.2.3 The Principal is the official channel of communication between the Board and the community it serves.

#### 1.3 Teacher Member

The Teacher Member on the Board provides the Board with a practical perspective of teaching and learning in the school.

#### 1.4 Other Members

In the same way that the Teacher Member brings a perspective to the Board through his/her particular expertise, other members do so from the perspective of their own expertise and life journey.



# St Joseph's School Board Constitution

## **SECTION 2: RELATIONSHIPS EXTERNAL**

### 2.1 General

The Board will clarify its relationships with all external bodies which have the potential to impact significantly on the educational community it serves.

### 2.2 Local Faith Community (Parish/es)

The Board will clarify its relationship to the Parish Pastoral Council (if one exists), to the Parish Finance Committee and to any other relevant parish groups.

### 2.3 Parents and Friends Association

2.3.1 The Board will clarify its relationship to the Parents and Friends' Association.

2.3.2 The Board will acknowledge and respect the role and functions of the Parents and Friends' Association as set out in the Association's Constitution.

### 2.4 Catholic School Authority

2.4.1 It is the duty of the Board to know the essential nature of the relationship of the Board to the Catholic School Authority and it is the duty of both Board and Catholic School Authority to ensure there is mutual understanding.

2.4.2 Minutes of meetings are to be made available on request to the Director of the Catholic School Authority.

2.4.3 The Director of the Catholic School Authority, or representative of the Chief Executive Officer, has the right to attend Board meetings.

2.4.4 The Board Liaison Officer appointed by the Catholic School Authority will assist Boards to function effectively and efficiently within the provisions of this Constitution.

2.4.5 From time to time the Board may invite other Catholic School Authority personnel to meetings to assist the Board.

### 2.5 Staff

The Board will normally relate to the Staff of the school through the Principal.

### 2.6 Civic Leaders

In collaboration with the Principal, the Board will develop sound relationships with representatives of local, state and federal government.





## Article VI: Meetings and Decision Making

### SECTION I: MEETINGS

#### 1.1 General

1.1.1 Board meetings will be held at the times and places the Board decides.

1.1.2 The Board will meet bi-monthly during the year with a minimum of nine (4) meetings per year including the Annual General Meeting.

1.1.3 The Chairperson will meet with the Principal to compile the Agenda of the coming meeting. This will occur with sufficient time to distribute the Agenda and Minutes of the previous meeting at least 7 days before the day of the meeting.

#### 1.2 Quorum

1.2.1 A quorum for meetings is to be a simple majority of the members provided both ex-officio and elected members are present.

1.2.2 If the quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the advertised starting time of a Board meeting, the Chairperson will adjourn the meeting to a time and place decided by the Chairperson in consultation with Board members.

#### 1.3 Special Meetings

A special meeting may be called at any time to deal with urgent business after consultation between the Chairperson and the Principal.

#### 1.4 Meeting Mode

While Board meetings are best conducted 'face to face', the Board may hold meetings or permit members to take part in meetings by telephone, video link, or other form of communication that allows reasonably contemporaneous and continuous communication between the members taking part in the meeting.



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## SECTION 2: AGENDA

The Agenda at Meetings will be:

- Item 1        Welcome
- Item 2        Formation
  - Scripture
  - Faith Sharing
  - Prayer and Reflection
- Item 3        Board Education (Knowledge and Skills development)
- Item 4        Minutes Approval
- Item 5        Confirm the Written Report of Action taken following last meeting
- Item 6        Reports:
  - Principal
  - Spiritual Leader
  - Finance
- Item 7        Policy Development, Review and Monitoring
- Item 8        Other Business Items
- Item 9        Closure & Confirmation of the Date of Next Meeting

## SECTION 3: MINUTES

### 3.1 Record of Proceedings

A brief record of meeting details will be maintained on behalf of the Board. These will include:

- The names of the members present at each meeting of the Board;
- The names of any persons who are not members but are present at a meeting of the Board;
- The decisions taken and the actions required to implement those decisions.

### 3.2 Minutes Confirmation

The minutes of each Board meeting will be submitted for confirmation at the next Board meeting.



# St Joseph's School Board Constitution

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## **SECTION 4: BOARD RECORDS**

The records of the Board will include all documents that the Board has created or acquired in the course of carrying out its functions.

This will include but is not limited to:

- Minutes of Board meetings;
- All records that come into existence in connection with Board meetings;
- A manual of policies approved by the Board including the date of publication and the anticipated/actual date of review.

## **SECTION 5: ACTING CHAIRPERSON**

### 5.1 Election

In the absence of the Chairperson, members will elect an acting Chairperson to preside over the meeting.

### 5.2 Eligibility

Any member other than the Student Member is eligible for election to the position of Acting Chairperson.

## **SECTION 6: DECISION MAKING**

### 6.1 Process

Decisions will be reached by dialogue, Sharing Wisdom and consensus.

### 6.2 Outcome

When the consensus process fails to produce an outcome within a sufficient period of time, the Spiritual Leader or Principal will note the concerns of the Board and if necessary will make the decision independently of the Board in accordance with the usual authority provisions for the Spiritual Leader who is the Pastor and the Principal.

## **SECTION 7: ATTENDANCE OF NON MEMBERS OF THE BOARD**

### 7.1 Invitation

The Board may from time to time invite non-members to attend meetings.



## St Joseph's School Board Constitution

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### 7.2 Requests

The Board will consider any requests from non-members to attend Board meetings to address the Board.

## **SECTION 8: ABSENTEE MEMBERS**

### 8.1 Reason for Absence

In the event that an elected or co-opted member of the Board shall have been absent without reasonable cause from two consecutive regular meetings, the Chairperson or the Principal will approach that member to seek clarification of the member's position.

### 8.2 Continued Absence

If, following an approach from the Chairperson or Principal, an elected or co-opted member of the Board shall be absent without reasonable cause from the next regular meeting, that membership will be declared vacant. Upon such a declaration, that member is deemed to have resigned.

## **SECTION 9: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BOARD**

### 9.1 Timing and Participation

An Annual General Meeting of the Board will be held in November or February each year to which members of the Board's school /education community will be invited to attend and take part in proceedings.

### 9.2 Order of Business

The order of business of this meeting will include:

9.2.1 A presentation of a modified education and formation program based on the four themes of the preparatory education program (see Article VII Section 2 of this Constitution);

9.2.2 A report of the Board's operations for the past year; and

9.2.3 The presentation by the principal of the school budget for the school year.



## Article VII: Elections

### SECTION I: ELIGIBILITY OF CANDIDATES AND ELECTORS

#### 1.1 Eligibility of Candidates

Persons eligible for election to the Board are those described in Article IV Section 1.2 of this Constitution.

#### 1.2 Eligibility of Electors

Persons eligible to elect members of the Board are those who have participated in the Board formation program.

### SECTION 2: PREPARATION OF POTENTIAL MEMBERS

#### 2.1 Board Formation Program

Before the establishment of a new Board and any election of members, electors and candidates will participate in a comprehensive Board formation program.

#### 2.2 Modified Program

A modified program based on the four themes of the preparatory education program will be presented prior to the elections of members to an established Board.

### SECTION 3: TIMING

#### 3.1 Newly Established Board

Election of the members of a newly established Board ordinarily will be conducted at the conclusion of the initial Board formation program.

#### 3.2 Established Board

Elections for an established Board will be held at least every three years or as required by casual vacancies.

### SECTION 4: ELECTION PROCEDURES

#### 4.1 Prayerful Discernment

Wherever possible, the process of election by prayerful discernment should be the means by which members are elected to the Board.



## St Joseph's School Board Constitution

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### 4.2 Multiple Vacancies

Where more than one position on the Board is vacant, the election for each position will be conducted separately so that electors may choose members who will make complementary contributions to the Board according to their diverse qualities, knowledge and skills.

### **SECTION 5: CASUAL VACANCIES**

In the event of a vacancy/resignation, the Board may appoint a replacement to hold the position until the period for which the retiring member was appointed expires.



# St Joseph's School Board Constitution

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## APPENDIX I

### CODE OF ETHICS FOR BOARD MEMBERS

1. A Board member's role, first and foremost, will be to serve people in a Christ-like way not seeking power or prestige. In this way it is a ministry in the church.
2. A Board member's life will reflect Christian values and be consistent with the values, teaching and lifestyle of Jesus. (N.B. "The Sermon on the Mount" - Matt 5)
3. Board members will invest the necessary time, thought and study into the Board's work between (as well as during) meetings.
4. Decisions will be based on all available facts, will normally be reached by consensus and be free of personal bias.
5. A Board member will accept the final decision of the Board regardless of his or her personal position on any issue.
6. Members will form themselves as a faith community which respects opposing points of view, strives for co-operation and harmony and manages conflict constructively.
7. An elected or co-opted member of the Board will refer day to day administrative problems to a person with the authority to deal with those problems. e.g. parish priest or school principal.
8. While having due regard for the responsibilities accorded by the Constitution and Commentary, each elected or co-opted member shares authority equally with other members. Only when the Board clearly delegates an individual member to act on its behalf will that person be empowered to speak or act on behalf of the Board.
9. Board members will keep confidences when the Board agrees that information is so confidential that it should not be shared outside a meeting.
10. The welfare of people comes before material things.
11. A Board member will work for the good of all members of the community, rejecting bias or the conflicting interests of self or any other group.
12. All Board members will be familiar with the provisions of the Constitution and Commentary of the Board and the current statements of Special Religious Character, vision, mission, goals and policies of the community they serve.
13. All Board members will participate as fully as possible in prayer, reflection and the sharing activities at each meeting.
14. All Board members will be committed to regular spiritual formation and self education programs offered at each meeting and at regular intervals by the Diocesan Catholic School Authority.
15. Members will co-operate with the leadership of the local pastor and the bishop of the local diocese.



# St Joseph's School Board Constitution

## APPENDIX II

### SAMPLE LETTER OF APPOINTMENT OF BOARD MEMBER

(Letterhead of the appropriate Catholic School Authority)

Date:

Addressee:

Address:

Dear .....

Having met all the requirements of membership as outlined in the Constitution and Commentary for Boards of Catholic Education (2005), you are **HEREBY APPOINTED** to the **St Joseph's School Board** as ..... **{an elected / a co-opted}** member for a period of .....year/s.

Boards of Catholic Education are established by and for the Corporation of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba and it is under the authority of the corporation represented by the Director of Catholic Education of the Diocese of Toowoomba that you are called to give service.

You are to be congratulated on the important step you have taken. By accepting this position you have agreed to commit your gifts and industry to shared decision making in the educational ministry of the church. As such, you have undertaken to act as a member of the Board within the terms of the Board's Constitution which draws its authority from both Canon Law and Civil Law. You are urged to maintain your familiarity with this document.

This Constitution will be both a reference and a guide to you as you grow and develop as a Board member. For your frequent reference, your attention is drawn to the Code of Ethics for Board Members at Appendix I of the document. You will note the importance of confidentiality, integrity and the necessary commitment to your ongoing personal formation and education in your responsibilities as a Board member.

Undoubtedly you are approaching this role with a degree of optimism and enthusiasm which, you may be assured, will reap their own rewards in the satisfaction of faithfully serving others.

May you, your Board and the community you serve, receive all God's richest blessings and always be guided by the wisdom which comes from the Holy Spirit.

Yours sincerely

.....  
For and On Behalf of the corporation of .....(particular diocese)





### APPENDIX III

#### LOCAL STATEMENTS

We at St Joseph's School create community through sharing of faith, living out Gospel values and accepting change as part of renewal.

Within our Catholic Christian community, we work together to encourage all members to develop their individual gifts, to deepen their personal spirituality and to recognize and celebrate the giftedness of others.

***"St Joseph's School offers a holistic education within a Catholic Christian ethos whilst developing and valuing the uniqueness of the individual as we encourage each student to become a lifelong learner."***

***July 2000***

#### **Consequences Statement:**

As a School founded by the Sisters of Mercy, the charism of Catherine McAuley calls our community to:

Act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with their God" (Micah 6:8). Inspired by their example and in keeping with the Gospel ideal, we live and work by the following Mercy Values...

#### ***THE MERCY VALUES:***

- Respect for Human Life
- Dignity
- Service
- Compassion
- Mercy & Justice
- Option for the Poor



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### ***CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN ETHOS:***

- Witness to Christ's presence in the world through concern for others, for the environment and for just and peaceful actions.
- Working together to build a community of support for each other within our School.
- Acceptance of other faith communities.
- The celebration and maintenance of Catholic traditions.

### ***VALUING THE UNIQUENESS OF THE INDIVIDUAL:***

- Support each community member through their acceptance of responsibility for self-development.
- Recognize opportunities for individual growth.
- Accepting, protecting and encouraging the unique giftedness of each community member.

### ***BECOMING A LIFE LONG LEARNER:***

- Develop the ability to acquire knowledge and skills as the need arises.
- Make reasoned, reflective and informed choices.
- Reflect on and identify their own strengths and weaknesses.
- Develop skills enhance their strengths and improve on their weaknesses.
- Living as an integral and vital part of the wider community.
- Reflect on and evaluate their decisions and choices.

Question the relevance of information in order to make a difference in this world.



## APPENDIX IV

### PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BOARD DYSFUNCTION

1. Following discussions with the Chair and the Spiritual Leader, the School Principal will approach the Board Liaison Officer assigned by the Director of Catholic Education for advice and assistance. It would be highly desirable that such discussions include the Chair and the Spiritual Leader.
2. If the Principal, Parish Priest (where appropriate) and the Board Liaison Officer judge that the Board is dysfunctional, the Board will undertake a program of special assistance designed to restore it to a state of effective functioning.  
  
Such a program may include some adjustment to the membership of the Board.
3. If at the conclusion of the program of special assistance the Board is still dysfunctional, the Board Liaison Officer will convey to the Director the recommendations resulting from the review of the program which may include dissolution of the Board.
4. The **Executive Director of Catholic Education, Diocese of Toowoomba**, will exercise his/her authority to dissolve a Board when all available evidence confirms that the Board is not capable of functioning within the provisions of this Constitution and Commentary.



### APPENDIX V

#### **DUE PROCESS FOR APPROVING AND AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION**

The approval of the initial proposed Constitution and any amendment to the Constitution may be approved in writing when **the Executive Director of Catholic Education, Diocese of Toowoomba** is satisfied that:

- (a) the proposal/amendment has been recommended by a duly constituted meeting of the Board according to the provisions of Article VI of this Constitution;
- (b) At least 30 days before the meeting of the Board at which this matter was discussed, written notice of the proposed constitution / amendment was given to the following:
  - the members of the Board;
  - the parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school;
  - the school's staff;
  - the school's students (where there is a student member of the Board);
- (c) the proposed Constitution / amendment provides for a membership that –
  - is sufficiently inclusive of parents, staff, students and other members of the school /local faith community; and
  - takes into account the Special Religious Character of the school;
- (d) the proposed Constitution/amendment provides for the Board to carry out its functions in an effective and fair way;
- (e) provisions of the proposed Constitution/ amended Constitution are otherwise sufficient, clear and appropriate; and
- (f) the proposed Constitution/amended Constitution is consistent with the provisions of the model Constitution, of Canon Law and is otherwise lawful.



## APPENDIX VI

### **POLICY PROCESS OF THE BOARD**

1. Identify the Issues and define the policy topic.
2. Clarify the Issues through reflection on key Gospel values and a range of authoritative documents including Catholic school authority policies and Church documents.
3. Identify Options for Policy Direction. Identify particular consequences for implementing each option.
4. Select Preferred Policy Direction and list the likely and intended consequences of implementing this Preferred Policy Direction.
5. Draft the Policy Text and the likely and intended consequences of implementing this policy.
6. Distribute the Draft Policy for Consultation.
7. Review Feedback from the consultation. (Further consultation may be necessary.)
8. Redraft the Policy in the light of feedback.
9. The Board will Approve the Policy.
10. Set a month and year for the Review of the Policy and indicate this on the policy document.
11. Celebrate and Launch the Policy in a creative and appropriate way.
12. The Principal and Staff will Implement the Policy.
13. The Board will Review and Evaluate the effectiveness of the Policy on or after the due date.
14. Go to Step 1 and follow the above procedure or, preferably, a modified process which is similar.



## St Joseph's School Board Constitution

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### APPENDIX VII

#### ROLE OF PARENTS AND THE PARENT BODY IN RELATION TO THE SCHOOL AND THE BOARD

Within a Catholic school, parents/caregivers can exercise roles at any given time which see them as *teachers, learners, supporters and advocates*.

As stated in Article V Section 2.3 of this Model Constitution and Commentary, the Board and the Parents and Friends Association (P & F) have a relationship which is based on the different but complementary roles they exercise in the school. The essential difference is that the P & F is the official parent body in the school while the Board is part of the official governance structure of the school.

Parents/caregivers are engaged in both forums and do so within the scope and limitations of the constitutions for each group.

Members of the Board do not represent any individuals or groups when engaged in their deliberations but draw upon their experience and *shared wisdom* to discharge the responsibilities of the Board. Quite clearly, members of the P & F can represent the views of parents in their meetings and the P & F Association has an advocacy role in representing the views and interests of parents within the school and beyond. Individual parents/caregivers will undertake such a role with the approval of the P & F.

Beyond these groups, parents/caregivers engage with the school in a variety of ways for the benefit of their own children, the children of others, the staff and the school community generally. Such participation is primarily an opportunity for parents/caregivers to exercise their rights and responsibilities as the *first educators* to be partners with the school staff in the ongoing education and formation of their children.

This activity will be governed by a range of policies and procedures which are established by the school's lawful authorities in the context of Church and Civil Law.

For further reflection on the role of parents and the Parents and Friends Association, the reader is referred to the website of the Federation of Parents and Friends Associations Queensland [www.pandf.org.au](http://www.pandf.org.au)

Of particular interest will be the Parent Manual, P & F Constitution and the Information Sheet *Parents in Partnership*.

**[The above text is provided as essential information with which every Board member should be conversant. There is great value in producing an amended version of this statement which will be particularly relevant to a specific school or school authority.]**



### APPENDIX VIII

#### THE MODEL CONSTITUTION AND THE GOVERNANCE OF CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS INSTITUTE SCHOOLS

The *Model Constitution for Catholic Education Boards in Queensland* is primarily a basic resource for the use of any Catholic education authority wishing to produce a constitution and commentary which will serve the particular needs of a school or other education agency operating under that authority.

The essence of the *Model Constitution* can be reproduced as a major component of the constitution of any type of Catholic board of education regardless of whether it is a governance body which is a consultative/advisory board, a management group or a governing body in its own right.

In particular the philosophy and practice of *Sharing Wisdom and Collaborative Ministry*, the *Fundamental Principles for the Governance of Catholic Schools*, the *Definition of Membership* and key elements of other sections of this document would have universal application to any type of body which is part of the governance of a Catholic school or education agency.

One document is not capable of setting out all possible options for every type of body. Instead, one version of the *Model Constitution for Catholic Education Boards in Queensland* which is applicable to consultative Catholic school and college boards under the authority of a diocese has been published. This action has been taken because such boards are the most numerous in Queensland and there is a need to provide a replacement for the 1990 Constitution.

It is acknowledged that the majority of Religious Institute schools in Queensland have established governance structures which are, for the most part, management bodies or governing bodies in their own right with explicit and different civil law responsibilities. At the same time, the changing circumstances of Religious Institutes has led to a consideration of the governance structures required to continue the schools which have been their apostolic works for many years. Several options for restructuring the governance of these schools are being considered.

In this climate of change, there is real value in examining the *Model Constitution for Catholic Education Boards in Queensland* to see what contribution it might make to the development of constitutions for governance bodies of Religious Institute schools in the future.