



Catholic School Board Chair overview

PURPOSE AND SCOPE:

The Board Chair is the leader of the Board. The Chair consults regularly with the Principal (and Pastor when appropriate) to anticipate and strategize issues, concerns and priorities as they relate to the sustainability and mission of the school. The Board Chair also performs all member responsibilities.

THE TRAITS AND THE INTANGIBLES:

Identifying a results-driven and capable Chair can be more of an art than a science. Often the skills required of the Chair change over time based on the school's current state and challenges. The ideal balance of strategic and operational strengths in this pivotal role may shift over time.

The Chair understands their role as influencer in four areas: Board members, Principal, donors/community and parish/Pastor.

Someone probably *not* suited for this role:

- May be “nice” and may “mean well” and “love the school” but is not a change leader willing to advocate for a new way forward
- Helicopter parent who has tunnel vision on the school as it currently exists based on the experiences of their own student
- May have capacity but not the passion and strategic thinking needed to communicate a vision and plan

Someone well suited for this role:

- Believes in the school's mission
- Experienced leader who serves as an agent of change
- Innovative – a visionary
- Entrepreneurial
- Collaborator who appreciates diversity of thought; elicits the input of all Board members
- Has a history of thoughtful and, when needed, bold decision-making
- Is goal directed, action and results oriented
- Holds others accountable and is comfortable delegating



Board Chair roles & responsibilities

CHAIR, Board of Specified Jurisdiction

Leader

1. Meets regularly with the Principal; works collaboratively with the Principal to execute the Board's vision and plan
2. Leads the Board to ensure that it functions effectively
3. Ensures the Board does not overstep its roles and responsibilities
4. Makes a financial commitment to the school's annual fund commensurate with leadership role on the Board
5. Presides at all regular and special meetings of the Board
6. Speaks on behalf of the Board; serves as a spokesperson for the vision and mission of the school
7. Participates in key school function and activities including but not limited to Back to School Night and the State of the School Address
8. Accepts responsibility to serve as Board disciplinarian when necessary and is willing to help counsel unproductive, disruptive and counterproductive members of the Board
9. Has zero tolerance for bad behavior and knows how to get meetings back on track quickly while preserving unity

Delegator

1. Holds Committee Chairs accountable for goals, progress and reporting to ensure voting happens, when appropriate, at board meetings
2. Recommends Committee Chairs with an eye to future succession

Motivator

1. Ensures that the Board focuses on the key areas of sustainability – finance, enrollment management, development, facilities and board membership
2. Participates in donor cultivation activities and, where appropriate and with the guidance of the advancement office, in donor solicitation
3. Invites friends and contacts to join the mission

Strategist

1. Works in partnership with Principal to develop meeting agendas and assures that they are sent out in advance of meeting (i.e. one week prior to meeting)
2. Presents to the Board an evaluation of the pace, direction and organizational strength of the institution
3. Initiates the meeting before the meeting (solicits input before meetings)
4. Naturally steps into the role of crafting the vision; sets an inspiring tone