

**St Paul Apostle Catholic Community  
Endeavour Hills**

**Parish Education Board Guidelines**

(approved March 8, 2006)

**1. Introduction**

St Paul Apostle Parish was established in January 1980 from St Mary's Parish Dandenong. In the next 5 years, St Paul Apostle South & North Schools were formed. The parish incorporates the suburbs of Endeavour Hills and Lysterfield South, with active parishioners living in the neighbouring suburbs.

Endeavour Hills Parish covers a suburb of approximately 25 sq.kms with a population of over 26,000. It has a relatively higher proportion of Catholics compared to the older suburbs of Melbourne. There is a healthy mix of professional and non professional persons, with many households having two or more members in the work force.

St Paul Apostle Parish is culturally diverse community, with people born in over 72 countries. As such many households speak languages other than English.

Socio-economically

**2. Vision Statement**

The Parish Vision statement says:

*"St Paul Apostle Parish enriches our belief that we are disciples of Jesus. Our aim is to experience God in our personal lives and to reflect that reality in our community. We work together to nurture family life in its many forms and diverse cultures. Our worship should nourish and reflect the spirit of joy and reconciliation in our community. We are called to look to the future with hope in our God who is always with us. We work in partnership with God to better our world so that God's kingdom may be fully established".*

**3. Statement of Purpose**

*The St Paul Apostle Parish Education Board has as its central purpose the realisation of the Vision of the Parish and Schools. The Board brings together the Parish Priest, Principals, parents and teachers as a forum for discussion.*

These Guidelines have been developed in order:

- To give pastoral oversight of all aspects of education in the Parish.
- **Parish:** To promote life long learning in faith for all members of the parish.
- **Schools:** To bring together in a spirit of co-operation, the parish priests, principals, and representatives of the teachers, parents, and other interested persons to act as an advisory body to the parish priests & principals of the schools, in all matters concerning education in the schools. To encourage the participation of parents in decision making processes that effect the life and mission of our parish schools.
- **Government Schools:** To further develop the ministry of religious education to Catholic children attending government schools.

## **4 Aims**

- 1) To act as a forum for discussion on matters concerning education in the schools.
- 2) To act as an advisory body to the Parish Priest and Principals, on all matters concerning education in the parish.<sup>1</sup>
- 3) To provide a link between Parish Priest, Principals, parents and teachers in relation to the provision of Catholic education in the Parish Community.
- 4) To promote community development by fostering a strong interrelationship between parish and schools.

## **5. Functions**

The Board's functions are outlined as follows:

- 1) Celebrating the integration of faith and life through parish and school experiences.
- 2) Assisting in the formulation and review of school policy, in conjunction with the Parish Priest, Principals, school staff and parents.
- 3) Monitoring of the schools' financial operations and contributing towards the budget process.
- 4) Planning for the future and ensuring that the parish schools can accommodate future enrolments.
- 5) Assisting the Parish Priest in the selection of a lay principals<sup>2</sup> when such an appointments are being made.
- 6) Working in collaboration with parish and school auxiliary groups to promote effective communication, and contribute to building the parish community by realising the school's vision and achieving its aims.
- 7) Developing strategies for the local promotion of Catholic education.
- 8) Making annual educational reports to the community.
- 9) Enabling individual parents to speak on educational matters through their representatives.
- 10) Ensuring the appropriate provision of Catholic Education for children attending Government schools.
- 11) Assisting with the formation of children and families in preparation for the Rites of Christian Initiation of Children.
- 12) Fostering adult education in faith.

In summary, the functions of the Board are carried out in relation to the following areas of responsibility:

- Education and Religious Education
- Building and Maintenance
- Policy and Planning
- Finance<sup>3</sup> and Fundraising
- Welcome and Hospitality
- Promotion & Enrolments
- Communication and Accountability

## **6. Membership**

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<sup>1</sup> The Parish Priest delegates the administration of the school to the Principal

<sup>2</sup> This appointment happens in accord with Diocesan Guidelines.

<sup>3</sup> Limited function by Board at primary level.

### **(a) Representation**

Through membership on the School Board, each person assumes a leadership role in the parish. Members must be committed to the values and principles outlined in the Statement of Purpose.

Members contribute equally to all discussions. In the final analysis, decisions are taken to build community through consensus. If a discussion goes to a vote. A two-thirds majority is required to secure the vote.

All members are appointed by the Parish Priest on the advise of the constituent bodies. The membership of the Board shall be as follows:-

#### **Ex-Officio Members**

- Parish Priests (2)
- Principals (2)

#### **School Representatives**

- Principals' nominees (1 each school)
- Nominee of the Parents' and Friends Associations (1 each school)
- Parents nominated by the parent communities (1 each school)

#### **Parish Representatives**

- Parish Priest's nominee
- A Representative, St John's Regional College Parents
- A representative of the Government Schools Ministry
- A representative of the Parish Sacramental Ministry

When members are unable to attend, a substitute will represent them, after consultation with the Principal or the Parish Priest.

### **(b) Elections**

All members of the Board, except ex-officio members, are to serve a two-year term, with half of the members rotating annually. No Board member may serve more than two consecutive terms.

### **7. Office Bearers**

Co-Chairpersons will be appointed at the first meeting each year. No Chairperson shall serve more than two years consecutively. The Board may choose to appoint chairpersons.

The Board will appoint a Minute Secretary who will be responsible for the Minutes of each meeting and for other administrative tasks as may be necessary from time to time. This is a non voting position.

The Chairpersons, Parish Priest and Principals form the Executive of the Board. The Executive will meet prior to each meeting of the Board.

### **8. Working Parties**

The Board may create Working Parties from its membership. These Working Parties have the option to co-opt additional members from outside the Board. Their work is to address specific tasks and perform specific functions from time to time on the Board's behalf.

Each Working Party should have at least one member of the Board among its membership. Each Working Party should be chaired by a Board member.

## **9. Meetings of the Board**

### **(a) General Meeting**

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Parish Education Board shall normally take place in Term 4 of the school year. The school/parish communities will be notified 14 days prior to the meeting by the calling for nominations to fill the positions which become vacant.

The Agenda will be published for the school/parish communities. At the meeting the Chairperson(s) and Principals will provide an Annual Report. There should be an opportunity for those in attendance to ask questions. Written reports will be available to all parents.

Where there is more than one nomination for a vacancy, the Chairperson will call for a ballot amongst those present.

At the AGM the new members will be officially appointed to the Board, with their term to commence at the next ordinary meeting.

### **(b) Ordinary Meetings**

The School Board shall hold no less than 7 ordinary meetings a year. Meetings will be scheduled in the annual school calendar and agenda papers will be circulated no less than one week prior to the scheduled date.

A time will be set aside at the start of each meeting for prayerful reflection.

## **10. Confidentiality**

At certain times matters before the Board may be considered confidential. Confidential matters should be identified as such, and any documents must be marked accordingly.

Once this has occurred, members must refrain from discussing, outside the meeting situation, the information and dialogue shared at the Board meeting.

In general the opinions shared by Board members should not be reported outside the meeting by reference to any one person.

Any matters regarding the competence of staff, or about individual student progress, should be referred immediately to the Principal or the Parish Priest.

## **11. Board Solidarity**

It may be quite appropriate to discuss matters outside the meeting during the dialogue or information gathering stage prior to any decision being reached.

Once any decision is reached it is expected that Board members will represent that decision regardless of their personal opinion.

## **12. Grievance Procedure**

The objective of the Grievance Procedure is to resolve any disputes under the rules between:

- (a) a member and another member, or
- (b) a member and the Board.

A Grievance Sub Committee will be established by the Board Executive to investigate and facilitate the resolution of any disputes of the nature described above.

*The Grievance Sub Committee must decide whether any action under the rules or otherwise should be taken arising from the grievance and advise the Board of such action.* (cf Appendix 1)

## **13. Amending these Guidelines**

The Parish Education Board has the power to amend this document by agreement through consensus of its members. If consensus cannot be reached a two thirds majority will suffice by vote.

These changes should then be presented to the AGM and the Parish Pastoral Council for approval.

## **14. Member Folio**

Each Board member will be issued with a folio to file all relevant correspondence. All members must bring along this folio to meetings. It is a point of common reference. Folios will be passed on to new members to assist with the induction process.

### **Appendix 1. Grievance Procedure**

#### **1. Objective:**

The objective of the Grievance Procedure is to resolve any disputes under the rules between:

- (c) a member and another member, or
- (d) a member and the Board.

#### **2. Grievance Sub Committee:**

A Grievance Sub Committee will be established by the Board Executive to investigate and facilitate the resolution of any disputes of the nature described above. The Grievance Sub Committee shall comprise (3) persons drawn from the Board of which one will be the Chairperson. The Board may change the composition of the Sub Committee at any time provided the Sub Committee remains constituted by Board members.

#### **3. Grievance Officer**

A Grievance Officer will be appointed from the Grievance Sub Committee. The role of the Grievance Officer is to receive any grievances submitted to the Board and to ensure the Procedure described below is carried out.

#### **4 Procedure:**

A member may initiate a grievance in respect of a dispute of a type described above by reducing the grievance to writing and lodging it with the Grievance Officer.

Upon receipt of the grievance, the Grievance Officer must call a meeting of the Grievance Sub Committee within 14 days.

Prior to the meeting the Grievance Officer must investigate the grievance including interviewing any persons whom may be the subject of the grievance or have some knowledge relevant to it.

The Grievance Sub Committee must offer the member who lodged the grievance and any member who may be the subject of the grievance, an opportunity to be heard and to submit any other matters relevant to it.

The parties to the dispute must meet and discuss the matter in dispute, and, if possible, resolve the dispute within 14 days after the dispute comes to the attention of all the parties.

If the parties are unable to resolve the dispute at the meeting, or if the party fails to attend that meeting, then the parties must, within 10 days, hold a meeting in the presence of a mediator. The mediator must be a person chosen by agreement between the parties.

***The Grievance Sub Committee must decide whether any action under the rules or otherwise should be taken arising from the grievance and advise the Board of such action.***

The Board at the next scheduled meeting, may confirm, modify, or reject the decision of the Grievance Sub Committee. The decision of the Board will be final.

All parties to the dispute including the member who lodged the grievance must be advised in writing of the Board's decision.

5 **Proviso:**

This Procedure is not intended to alter a member's right arising out of any other rules under the Guidelines for Operation.

The executive is made up of the parish priest, the 2 principals, and the 2 chairpersons. Meet twice a term. **Contacts:**

**North School Chairperson:** Mick Credlin  
**South School Chairperson:** Michael O'Connor  
**St Johns Regional College Parish Rep:** Rob Millard.