

Questions for Review & Discussion

1. In what concrete ways are board members models of Catholic school formation and/or education?
2. In what concrete ways does the board affirm the pastor/s and the school administrators?
3. In what specific ways has the board promoted the development of a family spirit among the constituents of the school community?
4. In what concrete ways has the board promoted the *Catholicity* of the school?
5. In what ways has the board taken a leadership role in ensuring the success of school programs and/or endeavors?
6. What specific board in-service programs have you attended?
7. What specific in-service programs would you like to be offered for your board?

Application

1. Review the current constitution and/or bylaws to determine in what specific ways they promote the Catholic identity of the school.

The Board Member's Thumbnail Series is ideal for 10-minute discussions at the beginning of meetings, or expanded for longer sessions. They can be given to new board members and collected by members as a handy reference library. Some titles may be helpful to teachers or parents.

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THE
BOARD*
MEMBER'S

THUMBNAIL

SERIES

What Does a Catholic Education Board* Do?

Department of Boards
and Councils of the
National Catholic
Educational Association



*The word "board" always includes council, commission and other titles given to governance groups.

The Second Vatican Council provided the impetus for the People of God to become more actively involved in various ministries of the Catholic Church. Among those ministries is participating more actively on Catholic education boards.

Lay men and women today enjoy the privilege and opportunity and, concurrently, have the obligation to use their talents and expertise to ensure that a Catholic school education continues as a viable option for parents. How does a Catholic education board do this?

Considerations

- The board accepts the challenge of becoming a significant partner with the administration and those with the final say in the ministry of education by ensuring that the school retains its Catholic identity and its value for the clients it serves.
- The board participates with the administration and those with the final say in developing and promoting a shared vision for the school, its programs, and its students and graduates.
- The board, in collaboration with the administrators and those with the final say, takes a leadership role in ensuring the success of all school programs and endeavors.
- The board internalizes and accepts the respective roles and responsibilities of the one with the final authority (pastor, bishop, head of religious order), the administration, and the board in the operation of the school.

- The board affirms and supports the administrators as they carry out their responsibilities in the school community.
- The board takes a leadership role in promoting and developing a Catholic school family of believers who reflect a community of faith.
- The board puts into place the committees, the processes, and the procedures to best carry out the deliberations and activities of a Catholic school board.
- The board develops a program and a process that ensure financial stability for the school.

- The board writes and updates policies that guide the operation of the school, which are promulgated by the appropriate authority.
- The board agrees that in-service, self-growth programs enable the board members, individually and as a group, to perform effectively and efficiently.
- Board members commit themselves to attend all in-service programs planned by the board.
- Board members should be exemplars of a good Christian life and good citizenship.

Internalize Considerations

The board and its members need to make and take the time—in a retreat setting—to explore, to discuss, to accept, and to internalize the above considerations and others that may emerge. It is important that board members are in agreement, individually and as a group, so that in principle and in practice the board speaks with one voice and moves in a unified direction in its deliberations and in its actions.

Review Constitution

Now is not the time for each of the considerations listed above to be fleshed out. Rather, at this time, in concert with the administration and those with the final say, the board should determine if the *Considerations* describe what our Catholic school board should be doing. The next step should be to review the constitution and/or bylaws to determine if the document reflects and embodies the characteristics of a Catholic school board in action.

