

**Archdiocese of Chicago
Office of Catholic Schools
Description of Boards of Specified Jurisdiction (BSJ)**

The movement from advisory or consultative boards to Boards of Specified or Limited Jurisdiction has occurred for many years in Catholic universities, high schools, and hospitals, whether owned by the archdiocese or religious communities. Such Boards have given significant support and strength to these institutions.

The goals of an Advisory Board and a Board of Specified Jurisdiction in a school are often similar; the difference between the two boards lies in their composition and in the fact that the BSJ is a Governance Board that shares in *responsibility for decision-making* for the school in **specified** areas. *Advisory Boards advise* on matters brought to them by the pastor or superintendent and/or principal. An Advisory Board's members are primarily parents of current students who wish to support the school's vitality. *Advisory Board* members may be *elected* or *appointed*, and they deal with concerns that surface in the current agenda.

The *Board of Specified Jurisdiction* (BSJ,) as a Governance Board, is empowered to share in making decisions in the specified areas of **Development, Marketing/ Recruitment, Planning, and Fiscal and Facilities Oversight**. Membership is diverse and selected for *specific skill sets*, from the parish, alumni/ae, parents of current students and parents of alumni/ae, local universities, and the business community, to deal with the areas of Board responsibility. Through its work, the Board develops an infrastructure of support for the vitality of the school in the specified areas. Board members serve on Committees where much of the Board's work is done. The Pastor (or Assistant Superintendent) and Principal are ex officio members

For parish or archdiocesan elementary and secondary schools, *BSJ* members are *appointed* by the Pastor or Superintendent. The Board's work is done in committees, and each Board Member serves on at least one Standing Committee wherein the board's work is done. Matters for decision are brought to the whole Board by the Committee working on the issue to be decided. The work of the Board and the Committees are the following:

Fiscal Management: Finance Committee (finances and facilities) – to implement the Fiscal Management guidelines of the Archdiocese; this responsibility may be divided into subcommittees for **Financial Resources** and **Physical Plant and Facilities**.

Institutional Advancement—to plan and implement activities designed to attract human, financial, and physical resources; these responsibilities are divided among several committees of the BSJ:

Communication;

Development; and

Marketing/ Enrollment Management (Recruitment and Retention.)

Continued on next page >>

The **Executive Committee** is made up of the Pastor or Superintendent's Representative, the Principal, the Board Chair, Co-Chair, and Secretary. The Executive Committee sets the Agenda for each Board meeting and prepares the board packet that is distributed to each member; the packet includes agenda for the upcoming Board meeting, minutes of current committee meetings, and any other relevant material to enable members to prepare for the Board meeting, and should be distributed in sufficient time prior to the Board meeting.

The Board has responsibilities in the following areas, as well. The **Executive Committee** decides the manner of implementation, either to do the work themselves or to appoint ad hoc committees of Board members:

Ministry Effectiveness: to understand and evaluate the school's implementation of its Mission/Vision/Faith-based Core Values;

Member Development: on-going professional development for Board members.

Planning and Policy: develop local policy to enhance and strengthen Archdiocesan policies which are enacted by the Superintendent or the Pastor and administered by the principal;

Ongoing **Evaluation** of the effectiveness of BSJ operations.

The **Chairperson** of each committee or subcommittee must be a BSJ member. Other people in the community are recruited to serve on a committee or subcommittee and do not need to be board members. The BSJ is established consistent with the policies, procedures, guidelines, regulations, and best practices promulgated by the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Office of Catholic Schools. ***Specified governance areas that the Archdiocese reserves to itself include: the academic program, personnel and human resources, legal and ownership issues.***

It is recommended that a BSJ be composed of 11 to 21 members. An individual is appointed by the Pastor and/or Superintendent for a ***specified term*** (usually three years), and is selected based on a certain ***skill set and expertise*** in one of the above mentioned areas of board responsibility. Up to twenty percent (20%) may be non-Catholic. Individuals with these skill sets may be:

- o Parents of current students (up to 25%)
- o Parishioners
- o Alumni/ae and parents of alumni/ae
- o Leaders within the neighborhood, business, and professional communities

The Pastor and Principal serve as ex officio, non-voting members of the Board. They provide the leadership for Catholic teaching, thought and culture, which are foundational to the work of the Board, and in which the decisions of the Board are rooted. They are also ex officio to all committees.

Board Members are appointed to serve a committee based upon their expertise and desire. The committees are project-directed groups. Other interested individuals from the parish, school, and /or civic communities are recruited to join the committees as well, to help accomplish the projects of the committee. BSJ members' commitment is to come prepared to Board meetings and actively participate on one of the Standing Committees of the BSJ.