

Essential Practices for Effective Boards

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Board Chair at St. James Academy



Essential Practices for Effective Boards

- Maintain a Mission Focus
- Establish Clarity of Roles and Goals
- Utilize Strategic Onboarding
- Optimize Efficiency in Meetings
- Embrace Reflection to Drive Improvement
- Identify Potential Challenges
- Foster a Positive Environment



Maintain a Mission Focus

- Mission Committee→ entire board is responsible
- Mission is always the top agenda item
- Complete Mission activities during the year
 - Board Retreat, book readings
 - Review the school quantitative mission surveys
 - Participate and review mission touchpoints: mass attendance, witnesses, draw near, campus ministry events, retreat feedback, etc
- Annual Mission Report by the President (end of school year)



Establish Clarity of Roles and Goals

- Charter
- Board member role descriptions
- Meeting protocols
- Committee matrix
- Self evaluation process




St. James Academy Board of Trustees

Charter

Purpose:
To ensure the school fulfills the spiritual mission of a Catholic secondary school by establishing and following policies for the High School that assure a sound Catholic educational and spiritual formation program consistent with applicable policies of the Archdiocese. To manage, control, and evaluate the financial policies, plans and actions associated with the operation of the High School.

Documents:
ByLaws of St. James Catholic Academy
Board of Trustees Chairperson Role Description
Board of Trustees Member Role Description
Meeting Protocols
Board Member Nomination Process
Board Terms
Board Self Evaluation

Deliverables: Strategic Plan Completion Independent Financial Review	Budget and Tuition Approval Annual President Performance Review
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Roles: School President Board Chair Board Vice Chair	Board Treasurer Board Secretary Members (13-17 total members with at least 2 clergy)
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Committees: Strategic Planning/Mission Advancement	Facilities Finance
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Skills Represented on the Board:
Catholic formation, leadership, management, financial, legal, marketing/PR, facilities

Utilize Strategic Onboarding of New Members

- Define what skills are needed on the board
- Are there any “perspective” gaps that need to be filled
- Complete a lunch conversation (small group setting) to introduce the potential new member to the board leadership, board dynamics, board member responsibilities and expectations
- Attend first board meeting
- Board Chair reviews board documents with new board member
 - Charter
 - Role description
 - Meeting protocols
- Utilize board buddy if needed



**WELCOME
TO OUR TEAM**

Optimize Efficiency in Meetings

- Meeting protocol
- Board calendar
- Committee matrix
- Standard agendas

St. James Academy Board of Trustees Meeting Protocol

Before the Meeting:

- Email the agenda and the prior meeting minutes a few days before the Board meeting
- Set up a meeting location and provide water
- Every member needs to be on time and come prepared for the meeting

During the Meeting:

- Start and end each meeting with a prayer
- Approve the minutes from the previous Board Meeting
- Begin with the President's report
- Committee Chairs report on their respective focus areas
- When voting, motions should come from the Board Members. The proper procedure should be: any discussion, first motion, second motion, all in favor, opposed, approved or not approved.
- Every Board Member is involved in the meeting
- Hold an Executive session if needed
- List future Board meetings and event dates on the agenda and minutes
- Make the meeting fun and promote a family atmosphere within the Board

Annually:

- Hold 1-2 socials (can include spouses, typically June/December)
- Plan a retreat/formation (1-2 per year)
- Review examples of adherence to the School Mission via leadership presentations (2-3 times per year)
- Attend the Archdiocese annual meeting (typically in October)
- Provide a thank you to SJA staff at least annually

St. James Academy

Board Committee Assignments

Board Members	Executive/ Nominating	Advancement/ Admissions	Facilities	Finance	Strat Plan
Mike Book			X		
Dr. Vince Cascone	X				
Brandi DiGiorgio	X			X	
Dan Himmelberg			X		
Teresa Kempf	Treasurer			X	
John Kmetz				X	X
Mike Mahoney	Vice Chair		X	X	X
Kathy Rasmussen	Chair			X	
Steve Smith					X
Jeff Tauscher	X			X	
Andy Tylicki		X	X	X	X
Fr. Scott Wallisch		X			
Zena Weist	Secretary	X			X
Fr. Jaime Zarse		X			X
Non Board Members					
Chris Albright			X		
Karen Cmokovich			X		
Jenn Godar		X		X	X
Amber Hellwig		X			
Debbie Nearmyer					X
Shane Rapp					X
Christy Peterson				X	

	Executive/ Nominating	Advancement/ Admissions	Facilities	Finance	Strat Plan
Roles/Goals:	Complete annual President performance review	Oversee and help with fundraising activities	Review Facilities maintenance masterplan quarterly	Review Quarterly financials	Review Strategic plan annually
	Be available to the President as needed for issue resolution	Increase donor base	Facilitate monthly Facilities meetings	Recommend Tuition annually	Refresh Strategic plan every three years
	Nominate new board members	Support Alumni board		Participate in annual financial review	
	Complete annual BOT "retreat"	Assess scholarship/ endowment plans			

Embrace Reflection to Drive Improvement

- End of Year board assessment (qualitative and quantitative)
 - Self evaluation form, Start/Stop/Continue form
- Summarize opportunities for improvement
 - Onboarding system created
 - Book reading for formation improvement
 - Committee goals better defined
- Document successes and opportunities for next years plan
- End of Year individual self assessment - coming soon!



Identify Potential Board Challenges/Issues

- Board members having personal agendas
- Working day to day issues vs. strategic plan/forward thinking
- Misalignment with decisions made in the board meeting
- Board members not fully participating/attending
- Procrastination of committee work



Foster a Positive Environment

- Prayers (or prayer cards) for beginning and end of meetings
- Celebrate and appreciate school staff (give back)
- Complete team building within the board (ice breakers, games)
- Plan social events for the board (include spouses)
- Keep meetings to an hour



Questions?