

BOARD OF EDUCATION MANUAL

for

_____ **Ev. Lutheran School**

*Adopted by the voter's assembly of _____ Ev. Lutheran Church
in lawful assembly on _____*

The appropriate governing agency may vary according to type of school. For example, a Lutheran high school may be governed by a conference or federation. Depending upon the duties of the board, an official set of board policies may have to be approved by a plenary session of such a body. In the case of congregations this is usually the voter's assembly. In any case, the ultimate authority over the school should formally adopt this manual of operations.

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FORWARD

Introduction

Lutheran educational agencies and institutions have grown in number, size, variety, and complexity over the last several decades. In the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, early childhood centers, elementary and middle schools, high schools, and a liberal arts college have emerged to provide Lutheran education to a wider age-range of young people. Congregations and groups of congregations have also developed educational programs outside the traditional scope of the Lutheran elementary school to address the needs of adults, teens, families, and young children in more informal, seasonal, and situational contexts.

The need for competent educational leadership has never been greater. At the same time, principals and other heads of educational programs are increasingly finding themselves under intense pressure from parents, state and federal agencies, and local public school districts to guarantee high standards of educational quality. Too often they find themselves at odds with those members of their congregation or high school federation who have been elected to serve as members of the board of education or board of directors. Isolation of school administrators, micromanagement by board members, and disengagement of faculties from the decision making process, are common complaints among our schools and congregations.

Lutheran schools need highly qualified and competent principals. They also need committed and gifted lay people to serve on those schools' governing boards. Together they all need a shared understanding of those roles and responsibilities that are unique to each if good order and constructive working relationships are to be developed and maintained.

Philosophy of Governance

Throughout the New Testament Era, the Christian Church has organized itself in various ways in order to focus the energies and gifts of people to most effectively administer the Means of Grace. In the early Christian Church, the apostles appointed overseers to administer the various forms of service and ministry. Stephen, for example, was a man "full of the Spirit and wisdom" who was placed in charge of feeding the widows (Acts 6:3,4). The Bible describes many different positions held by individuals in the Church. Before enumerating the different manifestations of spiritual gifts, the Apostle Paul says, "There are many different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men." (1Cor. 12:4-6).

In the Church of our day sanctified Christians have organized schools to impart the truths of the Bible to our children through all subject areas. God has called some to be pastors and teachers to provide directly for such Christian teaching. God has also equipped individuals with the gifts of administration (1Cor. 12:28) encouraging, and leadership (Rom 12:8) to oversee the operation of these schools. In the early Church these were overseers and deacons (cf. 1Tim. 3). Today these leaders are elders and members of church councils. They are also godly men who are either called as school administrators or elected to serve on boards of education. The contemporary arrangement of called school administrators working with volunteer lay boards is as much an outgrowth of Western democratic practices as it is the result of churchmen using sanctified

judgment to ensure for the members of a congregation that our schools are being governed wisely.

The Apostle Paul uses the analogy of the human body numerous times to explain how the Church is to use all the gifts given to it so "everything can be done in a fitting and orderly way" (1Cor 14:40). While operating manuals for boards of education may speak of roles and responsibilities, lines of authority and accountability, policies and procedures, it is of far greater importance that those entrusted with the oversight of Christian schools understand that their service to the board is their way of building up the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12). It is imperative that principals and board members realize the God-given responsibility they have for working together for the glory of God.

It is also a principle of Scripture that those called into the public ministry be accorded special honor as God's representatives to His Church on earth. Even though all believers are members of God's "royal priesthood," (1Pet.2:9), not all are able to directly engage in the public ministry. Board members should hold in high esteem those called by the congregation or federation and provide every support possible for their ministries. At the same time, these same called workers are accountable to God through the Church for the faithful exercise of the calls. In this capacity, the board of education represents the entire congregation in making sure that called workers are effectively executing the requirements of their calls.

Governance, then, is believed to be a process by which the effective operation of a school is assured, accountability to legitimate stakeholders is maintained, and respect for the respective roles and responsibilities of administrators and board members is upheld. In most schools effective governance consists of a delicate balance between a principal called by a congregation or group of congregations to oversee the general operation of the school and a board whose responsibility is the broad consideration of policy.

It is this distinction in role and responsibility that will characterize the approach to Lutheran school governance advanced in this manual. It is widely supported by organizations such as the [National Association of Independent Schools](#), the [National School Board Association](#), and the [Association of Governing Boards](#). At the heart and core of this philosophy is the critical symbiosis that must exist between principals and their boards. It must be assumed that principals in our Lutheran schools are qualified, competent, and capable. It must also be assumed that their administrative responsibilities have been defined in their call. Further, it is assumed that school board members earnestly desire to support their school by supporting the efforts of the principal. It is further assumed that board members understand the significance as well as the limitations of their roles.

In general, principals recommend policies and procedures. Boards of education approve, amend, or disapprove. Principals supervise teachers and curriculum. Boards ensure that these tasks are done satisfactorily. Principals seek the advice and counsel of good boards. Good boards respect the professional expertise of the principal. Board members adopt mission statements and goals. Principals implement the same. Throughout the give and take necessary for effective operation, the lines of distinction between these two must be maintained. The lore of congregations is replete with horror stories which describe the results of a breakdown in these distinctions. It is the philosophy of this manual that clear and explicit understanding of the differing roles and

responsibilities of principals and boards is fundamental to the successful and God-pleasing operation of our Lutheran schools.

Purpose of this Manual

This manual emerged from a dialogue between the administrators of parish education of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. Common concerns and “problems in the field” led to a joint brainstorming weekend among education leaders and laymen from both synods. The purpose of the meeting was to identify the issues and areas related to Lutheran school governance with the intent to construct a conceptual framework for the development of a prototypic operating manual for Lutheran schools.

The approach chosen by the WELS team was to create a manual that met the following criteria:

1. The manual was to be written in the style of a policy manual;
2. It had to reflect “best practice” with appropriate references and resources;
3. The manual was to be published electronically, that is, it is intended to be posted on the WELS website as a downloadable document;
4. It had to be written in a generic manner so that it could be easily customizable by each congregation or federation;
5. The manual would also be made available on diskette as a word document;
6. The manual would provide deletable in-text dialogue boxes with commentary to explain the issues and offer alternatives;
7. Hypertext links to web-based resources as well as in-text links would be provided;
8. Provide a template and guidelines for policy formulation.

In short, the goal was to create a document that reflects the best of what is known about the administration and governance of independent parochial schools while allowing each school to customize the manual to fits its particular needs. It is believed that this approach avoids three common pitfalls observed in previous efforts of this type. The first is the fact that the vast majority of congregations have no board operating manual – other than the by-laws of the constitution – and lack the experience or expertise to construct one. In the absence of an operating manual, the rules of operation tend to change as board leadership changes. The second pitfall is the idea of being able to create a “one-size-fits-all” manual that ignores the uniqueness of each school. Such efforts tend to be so general as to be unable to deal with local circumstances. Finally, it is generally true that such operating manuals are out of date by the time they are published. By publishing this manual in a customizable electronic format, it is hoped that the Commission on Parish Schools can update the web-site regularly to reflect changes recommended from the field, and that congregational leaders can regularly edit the file to reflect their own needs.

The ultimate goal is to promote better working relationships between boards and administrators, improved understanding of roles and relationships, and advancement of Lutheran Christian education for the benefit of our children and to the glory of God.

Possible Uses For This Manual

Any manual is only as effective as the use to which it is put. It is the hope of those responsible for its publication that governing boards will find ways to use this manual for their benefit.

As a resource, this manual has been constructed to put educational leaders in touch with other agencies, schools, web sites, and professional associations. This is accomplished through hypertext links and links to other web sites. Those schools with internet access will have at their disposal connections to many different sites that can offer insight into effective school governance.

As a stand alone handbook, this manual provides the opportunity for congregational leaders to create an operating manual that meets their needs. The outline was constructed to be as broad as possible. Dialogue boxes were inserted to offer commentary on various ways in which the manual can be customized. As a Word document, congregations can edit the text in any way that suits their needs.

The text file with dialogue boxes left intact has potential for use as a new board member orientation tool. It may also be used in conducting a periodic board development retreat or as an assessment tool for measuring board effectiveness.

Finally, such a tool is only as valuable as its relevance to the needs of practitioners. Although its development emerged from a number of veteran school administrators and board members, constant improvement will occur only if constructive criticism is received from those who use it. Suggestions for improvement can be sent to the author, john_bauer@wlc.edu

Editing Instructions

Copying from the CD to your hard drive: This manual will be distributed as a Word document on a CD. After opening the file, click **file>save as** to save the document to your hard drive or to a floppy drive. It is always advisable to keep a back up copy on a floppy disk in the event you experience hard drive failure. Keep the CD in a safe place. Customize the copies on your computer to fit your situation. Back up your file whenever you make changes.

To delete a dialog box: Dialog boxes can be deleted by placing the cursor anywhere inside the box, and then clicking the following buttons on the tool bar: **table>delete>table**.

To move a dialog box to another location: If the user wishes to remove the dialog boxes but save them to another page for future reference, that operation can be accomplished by shading the text inside the dialog box and then clicking the following buttons on the toolbar: **edit>cut>**. Move the cursor to the location on a new page where you want the dialog box to appear. Click the **paste** icon on the toolbar, or click **edit>paste**. This action is recommended if the board of education wishes to have an official manual without the commentary of the dialog boxes, and yet wishes to retain the advice contained in the dialog boxes for future use, maintain the web links that are found in them, or to use for new board orientation.

To navigate the document using the hypertext links in the table of contents: If the user wishes to navigate the document on the computer using the hypertext headings in the table of contents, click the following commands on the toolbar: **view>toolbars>web**. This will permit the user to click on any heading in the table of contents to go to that section of the manual, and then return to the table of contents using the back arrow on the web toolbar.

I. BOARD DEVELOPMENT

A. Board Member Qualifications

To ensure the creation of a productive and effective board, a diversity of talent is necessary. To that end, the nominating committee of the congregation shall solicit members who are knowledgeable about the school's mission and goals, as well as current operations and issues. The nominating committee shall also strive to recruit a diversity of gifts, educational backgrounds, occupations, and ages. Above all, board member candidates must be spiritually mature, leaders of their own families, and committed to Christian education at all levels.

I. A. 1. Some congregations appoint members to the board of education from a general election of the voters. It frequently happens that individuals are appointed to the board of education after having won a seat on the church council. This practice, though an efficient means of filling slots, does little to ensure that members of the board of education are knowledgeable about the school or have an interest in serving the school. It is strongly recommended that the congregation's nominating committee seek to identify candidates for the board who bring a diversity of talent and who possess the qualifications listed above. Interviewing candidates for board positions is recommended with an eye toward qualifying candidates through questions related to the qualifications listed below.

Although diversity of talent is sought, the common qualifications all board members should possess include the following:

1. They should actively support and promote the mission of the school.
2. They should be prepared to attend all meetings and to participate fully in all matters.
3. They should support the principal and teachers and demonstrate that support in the congregation and community.
4. They should be able to respect the confidentiality of board discussions and accept and support board decisions.
5. They should be an example to others in terms of the Christian education of their own families.
6. They should be examples of Christian stewardship in the financial support of the school.

*I. A. 2. For an excellent listing of "Principles of Good Practice," in the area of board member qualifications, see the publications section web site of the National Association of Independent Schools at <http://www.nais.org>. The NAIS also has other publications including the 1974 classic, *Trustee Handbook*, by Barbara Hadley Stanton.*

B. Spiritual Growth and Development

The members of the board of education shall serve as examples of Christian leadership through their own worship and devotional lives. In accepting election to the board, they shall commit themselves to personal growth in the knowledge of God's Word through regular corporate worship, attendance at Bible class, and in personal study and meditation.

Because the board is responsible for a Christian school, meetings shall begin with prayer and guidance from God's Word in order to focus the thoughts of the members on the ministry of the Word carried on through the school. The task of leading Bible study and prayer is the responsibility of the chairman, although this task may be delegated to other members.

I. B. It is often left to the pastor to begin meetings with a devotion. It is a beautiful testimony to the priesthood of all believers, however, if various lay members of the board assume this duty when asked. The pastor or principal can serve as a resource for developing appropriate Bible studies.

C. Board Member Orientation

Effective membership on the board of education requires a substantial knowledge of the school and its related agencies of education. New members will be provided a thorough orientation to the school and to the operating procedures of the board. This orientation shall be conducted by the principal before the new board member assumes his place on the board. The orientation shall consist of at least the following:

1. Review of the Board of Education Manual and Policy Book;
2. Review of the Parent Handbook;
3. Review of the Faculty Handbook;
4. Walking tour of school facilities;
5. Review of appropriate sections of the Constitution and By-Laws;
6. Orientation to budgeting and expenditure reports;
7. Introduction to faculty and staff;
8. Summary of plans, problems, and challenges facing the school.

Additional orientation may be provided by the pastor(s) and the chairman of the board.

I. C. In the case of high school conferences or associations of congregations which support an elementary or middle school, the principal may also wish to review conference membership, levels of support and attendance from each congregation, athletic conference contracts, and other cooperative arrangements.

D. Professional Development of the Board

In addition to the ongoing spiritual growth required to maintain a Christ-centered board, it shall be the responsibility of the chairman of the board in consultation with the principal to provide periodic appropriate leadership training to assist board members in becoming more effective in their board capacities. Such development might consist of such activities as: board effectiveness surveys, self-assessments, goal setting, training in how to run a meeting, planning, and preparing budgets.

I. D. It should never be assumed that members of a board have expertise in how to run meetings. Neither should it be assumed that they are continually knowledgeable about all facets of the school's operations. Periodic presentations by competent staff can provide additional knowledge and skill. Some boards request that a different teacher or staff person provide a brief report at each meeting. This communicates concern for all faculty and staff and also connects board members in a personal way with those workers for whom they are responsible.

Informal assessments can also provide an opportunity for the board to discuss how they can be more effective. For example, five or ten minutes might be reserved before the adjournment of each meeting to discuss questions such as "How effective were we tonight?" or "What could be have differently to make this a better meeting?" Each board should add to the list those activities which it deems appropriate.

II. BOARD ORGANIZATION

The board of education shall annually organize itself by determining its officers, committee chairs, its calendar of meetings, and reviewing its duties and responsibilities.

A. Board Membership

1. Elections

The members of the board of education shall be elected according to the procedures described in the by-laws of the congregation following their proper nomination as qualified candidates for the board of education. Once elected to the board of education, the members of the board shall elect from among themselves the officers of the board. The board chairman, having already been elected to his position on the Church Council by the voting members of the congregation, shall officiate over the subsequent elections for the remaining officers and committee chairmen.

2. Size of the Board and Terms of Office

The board of education shall be comprised of ___ members. Each board member shall be elected for a term of three years. Terms of office shall be staggered with not more than two members of the board having their terms expire in any one year.

II.A.2. Generally, boards are made up of five to seven members. An odd number is recommended to avoid the possibility of tie votes.

3. Ex Officio Members

The principal and staff minister in charge of part-time educational programs shall be ex officio members of the board of education with full voting rights and privileges.

4. Advisory Members

The pastor(s) shall be an advisory member of the board of education to offer spiritual guidance and overall leadership in ministry. In deference to the expertise of the principal and the leadership responsibilities of the board, however, the pastor will not be accorded voting privileges. Other members of the congregation such as the president of the parent-teacher organization, athletic coaches, music director, youth group leader, Sunday School superintendent, et.al., may serve as non-voting advisory members of the board of education at the invitation and discretion of the board of education.

B. Duties of the Officers

1. Chairman

The chairman of the board shall uphold the following responsibilities:

- a. In cooperation with the principal and other professional staff, prepare the monthly meeting agenda;
- b. Chair all meetings of the board according to accepted Parliamentary procedure;
- c. Represent the board of education by serving as a member of the Church Council;
- d. Provide regular reports to the Church Council and the voter's assembly concerning the operation of all educational programs;
- e. Officiate over the election of other board officers and committee chairmen;
- f. Represent the educational programs of the congregation to internal and external publics;
- g. Encourage and support the work of professional staff in the exercise of their responsibilities.

2. Vice Chairman

The vice chairman of the board of education shall perform the following duties:

- a. Serve as chairman of the board in the absence of the chairman;
- b. Assume assignments and responsibilities as requested by the chairman or the board;
- c. Represent the chairman publicly when called upon.

3. Secretary

The secretary of the board of education shall perform the following duties:

- a. Keep an accurate log of minutes of all meetings of the board of education;
- b. Handle all correspondence as directed by the board;
- c. Maintain orderly files of all materials, committee reports, budgets, and staff reports;

4. Treasurer

The treasurer of the board of education shall perform the following duties:

- a. In cooperation with the professional educational staff, prepare monthly financial reports which indicate revenues, expenditures, and performance in relation to the education budget;
- b. Lead the board of education in the preparation of an annual budget which reflects the planning priorities of the board;
- c. As required, disperse funds appropriated to the board of education;
- d. Supervise the financial operations of all part-time educational agencies of the congregation.

C. Committees

The board of education shall carry out its oversight responsibilities for all educational programs supported by the congregation through the establishment of committees. Such committees will provide opportunities for service among a greater number of members. Each committee will focus on the work of one educational program. Each committee shall have a defined set of responsibilities, shall report through its chairman to the board of education, and shall keep minutes of all meetings. The committees of _____ Ev. Lutheran Church shall include:

- Christian Day School Committee to oversee the formal Pre-K through grade eight school;
- Sunday School Committee including Vacation Bible School;
- Adult Education Committee including all adult Bible classes, retreats, and library resources;
- Youth and Special Programs Committee including high school youth groups, singles ministry, and Pioneers.

II. C. A congregation can organize its committees to meet its own needs. The preceding are listed as a representative example of how committees can be organized to provide appropriate and balanced supervision. For congregations lacking a Christian Day School, more emphasis should be placed on Sunday School and other youth programs. Those congregations with a Christian Day School must guard against allowing it to overshadow the efforts in other areas.

1. Committee Membership

The membership of each committee shall consist of one member of the board of education who shall serve as its chairman. Each committee shall have at least four other members besides the chairman. These members shall be nominated by the members of the board of education and recruited by the chairman of each committee. Individuals should have knowledge of the area of education for which they are being asked to serve and must be willing to devote time and attention to serve the particular educational agency of the congregation. Each member of the board of education shall serve as the chairman of one committee except the chairman who shall be considered an ex officio member of all committees.

II. C. 1. The model suggested here provides for a broader participation by members in the educational life of the congregation. Many have found that such a governance structure streamlines board meetings, permits members to focus on one area of educational ministry, and improves communication and involvement. It may not be appropriate for relatively small congregations with only a few educational programs. In such a case, the board of education generally assumes responsibility for all programs.

2. Meetings

Committees of the board of education shall meet prior to the board of education meeting, but not more than one week before the regular meeting of the board. Meetings shall begin with a prayer or devotion. The chairman of the committee shall establish the agenda for the meeting in consultation with the ministerial staff person whose responsibilities include the respective area.

3. Minutes

A secretary shall be appointed for each committee to take accurate minutes of the meeting, to prepare recommendations for the board of education, and to maintain a file of minutes from previous meetings. Committees are free to determine who shall serve as secretary as they deem appropriate.

4. Accountability and Reporting

Committees of the board of education are directly accountable to the board through its chairmen. Activities, recommendations, and other issues are brought to the board of education by the chairmen of the committees.

D. Board Calendar

Although monthly agendas include many regular business issues, the board's primary business is determined by its annual agenda. It shall be the responsibility of the board to prepare an annual agenda which should include but not be limited to the following:

- Curriculum evaluation and planning;
- Long range planning;
- Budget planning, salaries and benefits;
- Annual evaluation of the principal/staff ministers;
- Evaluation of facilities;
- Review of mission, vision, objective statements;
- Evaluation of enrollment management plan;
- Evaluation of parent/student handbooks;
- Review of staffing needs, recommendations for calls;
- Review of tuition, fees, and other revenues;
- Annual review of policies;
- Evaluation of board performance.

The board shall establish an annual calendar indicating at which regular meetings the foregoing items shall be considered. The board shall also determine the dates on which the monthly meetings are to be held. Proper coordination with scheduled meetings of the church council, voter's assembly, and other boards and committees will ensure the timely consideration of business at all levels of congregational governance.

II. D. If the congregation's fiscal year begins January 1, items such as planning and budgeting should be scheduled for fall meetings of the board. Items such as evaluation of curriculum, staffing needs, performance reviews of the principal, etc. might better be conducted at the end of the academic year. It is important that the annual agenda items be scheduled throughout the year to promote timely consideration by the board and to ensure that recommendations are forwarded in time to be included in the next year's plan. If the congregation's fiscal year begins July 1, planning and budgeting will have to occur in the spring and other matters such as facilities evaluation, long range planning, curriculum review, etc., might have to be handled in the fall.

III. CONDUCTING EFFECTIVE BOARD MEETINGS

The board of education conducts its business through regularly scheduled meetings. Through regular, active attendance, board members advance the educational mission of the congregation. Well organized and properly conducted meetings promote efficiency and effectiveness.

A. *Meeting Agendas*

An agenda shall be prepared for each meeting of the board of education. The chairman of the board will prepare the agenda in consultation with the principal and/or other professional educational staff members. The meeting agenda shall normally include, but not be limited to, the following items:

- Opening devotion;
- Review of the minutes from the previous meeting;
- Chairman's report;
- Staff reports;
- Committee reports and recommendations;
- Old Business;
- Items that require board action;
- Upcoming dates;
- Review of the meeting;
- Closing prayer.

Ill. A. It is important that the board function in a formal and business like manner. A well planned agenda can assist in keeping the focus of the board on its important tasks. It is also important to provide opportunity at the close of each meeting to evaluate how well the meeting was conducted. Such self-evaluation is a valuable aspect of board member development.

B. *Notification of Meetings*

The board of education shall establish an annual calendar of meetings which indicates the major agenda items to be considered in each meeting. It is the responsibility of the chairman to notify members of the board of education of all meetings. The agenda for each upcoming regular meeting along with the minutes of the previous meeting should be sent to each board member at least one week prior to the meeting. The notification should include the date, time, and location of the meeting. Notification of special meetings should be made at least one week prior to the date of the meeting. If possible, an agenda and necessary materials should be sent with the notification. Notification of emergency meetings should be made to allow as much time as possible for board members to prepare for the meeting, and if necessary adjust their schedules to attend.

C. *Types of Meetings*

The board of education will, under normal circumstances, conduct its business at its regularly scheduled monthly meetings. It may, however, at the discretion of the chairman or a majority vote of its members, meet at other times for special purposes.

1. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the board of education shall be held once per month on the date established on the annual calendar. These meetings shall follow the agenda distributed prior to the meeting.

2. Special and Emergency Meetings

The board of education may, at the discretion of the chairman or a majority of the members of the board, schedule special meetings to deal with particular items which cannot be considered or completed at the regular monthly meeting. In the case of special meetings which have been called to deal with a particular issue, the meeting's agenda shall consist only of the issue for which the meeting has been called. At least one week's prior notice should be given to board members along with pertinent information to aid in discussion of the issue.

Emergency meetings may be convened to deal with issues that cannot wait for a regular meeting, or which require immediate attention. Such meetings can only deal with the issue for which the meeting has been called.

3. Social Gatherings

The board of education may consider it appropriate to gather socially with spouses and friends. Such fellowship can foster good working relationships and build camaraderie. Although it is natural to talk about those matters of the congregation's educational ministry that provide a basis for the relationship, it is also important to avoid conducting board business in a social setting. Decisions should not be made at social gatherings, but should be reserved for formal board meetings at which minutes and written records can validate the board's action.

D. *Parliamentary Procedure*

The general principles articulated in Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed by the board of education.

III. D. The official website of Robert's Rules of Order provides ordering information <http://www.robertsrules.com/>. An online version for the rules can be downloaded from <http://www.constitution.org/rror/rror--00.htm>. A very handy chart which can provide an on-the-spot guide for chairmen can be found at <http://dolphin.upenn.edu/~philo/apocrypha/roberts-rules/tables.html>.

E. Minutes

The secretary is responsible for maintaining the minutes of all regular, special, and emergency meetings of the board of education. Accompanying the minutes should be all reports and recommendations which contribute to the official business of the board. Copies of the minutes shall be provided to all elected, ex officio, and advisory members of the board of education.

F. Time Limitations

The regular meetings of the board of education shall begin at _____ and end at _____. Extension of the time of meeting beyond the established end time shall require a motion approved by a majority of the members.

Ill. F. It is most common for board meetings to be scheduled during evening hours and to last for 1.5 to 2 hours. Establishing an end time promotes efficiency. If there is no end point for the meeting, the old axiom that "work expands to fill the time allotted to it" becomes true. In some settings, the education committees meet for an hour or hour and a half prior to the board of education meeting. In such a scenario, the committees might meet from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. and the board from 8:00 – 9:30 or 10:00.

G. Decision-Making Procedures

Under normal circumstances, decision making by consensus is most desirable. The chairman may poll the board to determine if consensus exists on any matter. Should there be no dissenting opinion, the chair can declare the item approved by consensus and the secretary shall record it as such. If consensus does not exist, and the chairman is compelled to call for a vote, a voice vote is taken in a manner which is consistent with Robert's Rules of Order. The board chairman shall provide sufficient opportunity for all board members to express themselves before a vote is taken. The secretary shall indicate the division of the board's votes only when a "division of the house" has been moved. In such a case, the number of votes for and against shall be entered in the minutes.

IV. BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Mission, Vision, Goals, Objectives

The board of education shall be responsible for developing and regularly reviewing the mission and vision statements of the congregation with respect to its school and other educational agencies. It shall also approve on an annual basis the goals and objectives for the school and other educational agencies. The board of education will ensure that all foundational statements are in harmony with that of the congregation, will seek formal ratification of the mission and vision statements, and will communicate the mission and vision statements regularly through established lines of communication to parents, congregation members, and to the community.

B. Stewardship of Financial Resources

The board of education shall carry out its fiscal duties through its annual budgeting and planning activities, through the establishment of tuition and fees, through its recommendations for salary and benefit increases, and through the development of policies related to other sources of revenue.

1. Annual Budget

The board of education shall prepare an annual budget for the school and all other educational agencies of the congregation. The budget should reflect both anticipated revenues from tuition, fees, sale of assets, third source funds, gifts, and other subsidies, as well as anticipated expenditures which reflect planning priorities.

The annual budget shall be prepared in conjunction with the board's educational plan and should be submitted to the congregation in its _____ meeting for the following school year. The budget process will begin with an estimate of revenues based on enrollment projections, tuition and fee changes, and anticipated funds from congregational and other sources. The revenue budget will be allocated according to the program priorities identified by the board of education in its planning process.

2. Tuition and Fees

The board of education shall annually recommend the amount of tuition that should be charged to students attending the school. Differentiated scales shall be developed for member children, non-member children of other congregations, and non-member children from other churches. The board of education shall also establish a schedule of fees for auxiliary services not covered by tuition. These may include, but are not limited to:

- a. textbooks;
- b. lunch and/or milk;
- c. athletic participation;
- d. technology replacement;
- e. field trips;
- f. transportation.

3. Salaries and Benefits

The board of education shall annually recommend to the congregation increases in salary and benefits for all called and hired staff. The board of education shall identify comparative benchmarks for salaries and benefits from comparable WELS schools and shall endeavor to provide equitable compensation for all workers. The board of education shall also review the scope and range of benefits including, but not limited to:

- a. health insurance;
- b. long term disability insurance;
- c. short term disability insurance;
- d. Synod pension plan;
- e. dental insurance;
- f. TSA contribution;
- g. ½ self employment tax for male called workers;
- h. tuition remission for dependents;
- i. housing, utilities, and furnishings allowances;
- j. transportation expenses if applicable.

4. Other Sources of Revenue

The board of education shall approve all other sources of revenue through the thoughtful development of policies and the approval of fund raising projects. Sensitivity to the potential impact on congregational stewardship will direct policies related to fund raising efforts and the solicitation of third source funds. Approval by the board of education is required for project funding including, but not limited to:

- a. direct solicitation of funds from members for specific projects;
- b. sales of items such as pizza, books, concessions, etc.;
- c. submission of grants to foundations, government agencies, and other funding agencies;
- d. fund raising events such as dinners, car washes, etc.

5. Capital Expenditures

The board of education shall be required to approve all capital requests in excess of \$_____ but less than \$_____. Recommendations for material, equipment, furnishings, and modifications or improvements to the school facilities which exceed \$_____ must be submitted to the congregation for approval along with a plan for funding the capital project. Capital projects which are less than \$_____ and which have been budgeted, do not require board of education approval. The school administrator may purchase such items on his own authority, but should provide documentation that he has sought the best price. All capital projects which exceed \$_____ require three price quotes before the project can be approved.

C. *Staffing*

The board of education shall ensure that all personnel working in the school and related educational agencies are qualified to carry out their responsibilities and are competent in the performance of their duties. In carrying out this responsibility, the board of education recommends to the congregation all staff and faculty position additions, along with the qualifications and job description for each. Generally, this responsibility is delegated to the school administrator, who presents annual staffing analyses and recommendations.

1. Divine Calls

The board of education does not have the authority to extend divine calls to faculty or staff. This is generally left to the congregation which votes on those candidates who are presented by the board of education. However, the board does have the principal responsibility for making sure that call lists of qualified candidates are presented. The board should make sure that an appropriate position description has been provided to the district president, and once the call list is obtained, to review the qualifications of all candidates on the list before submitting it to the congregation.

IV. C. 1. Some boards of education are expected to evaluate a call list and recommend to the congregation or conference which candidate they believe is most qualified. Although the board does not formally call the individual, it is in the best position to judge the qualifications and competence of individuals with respect to the position to which they are being called. Some congregations or conferences have delegated the responsibility for calling to the board of education. The thinking is that once a position has been approved by the congregation or conference, the board is capable of staffing it through a divine call. Neither of these practices is inconsistent with the doctrine of the call, but should be clearly defined in the bylaws of the congregation or conference.

2. Part-time agencies

The board of education shall ensure that qualified and competent workers are provided for the part-time educational agencies of the congregation or conference. These may include but are not limited to:

- a. Sunday school teachers;
- b. Adult bible class leaders;
- c. Vacation bible school teachers;
- d. Youth group volunteers;
- e. Pioneer leaders.

All such staff members, whether paid or unpaid, should be approved by the board of education and formally called and installed into their respective office. The board of education should coordinate the staffing of such positions with the pastor(s) and /or principal to make sure that candidates for such positions are spiritually mature and educationally qualified.

IV. C. 2. The doctrine of the call does not distinguish between paid or unpaid, full-time or part-time, permanent or temporary, ordained or non-ordained. Those who engage in public ministry on behalf of a congregation receive a divine call to do so. Congregations can demonstrate this truth of God's Word by publicly calling such individuals and installing them into their offices.

3. Supervision of Staff

The board of education is responsible for making sure that all called workers and hired staff are fulfilling the expectations of their positions. It performs this responsibility with respect to the faculty and staff of the Christian elementary or secondary school through its principal or administrator. It performs this responsibility with respect to part-time agencies through those individuals who have been called to be responsible for those areas of educational ministry. Supervision of staff by the board of education is conducted indirectly through policies and procedures. The board of education's chief responsibility is to ensure that all school personnel are being appropriately supervised.

Direct supervision of the principal is the responsibility of the board of education. Such supervision is conducted formally in an annual performance review, as well as informally when the principal prepares reports to the board of education and interacts with it in board meetings.

The board of education contributes to the meaningful supervision of staff when it ensures that clearly stated job descriptions exist for all teachers and staff, and that annual evaluations are conducted by the principal on the basis of those job descriptions. An annual report of the principal's direct supervisory and evaluation activities should be filed with the board of education.

IV. C. 3. The WELS' Commission on Parish Schools provides the forms and procedures for conducting comprehensive evaluation of teachers and principals. Board members are often asked to participate in this process and should view it as an opportunity to assist teachers and administrators to improve their performance.

4. Separation

Recognizing that all faculty and staff will eventually complete their service to the congregation, the board of education shall ensure that such separation is accomplished in accordance with Scriptural principles, with good order and due process, and that the best interests of the congregation and the faculty or staff member are protected. Separation may occur because of retirement; resignation; physical, mental, or emotional incapacitation; staff or program reduction; termination; or dismissal for cause. The board of education shall maintain policies and procedures regulating the separation of teachers and/or staff due to the above causes.

The board of education shall also maintain policies regarding the separation from service of those who serve in part-time educational agencies, whether employed or volunteer. In those cases where non-renewal of service is determined to be in the best interest of the program, Christian love dictates that the volunteer staff member be informed of the reasons for non-renewal.

5. Professional Development

The board of education supports the on-going professional preparation and development of its teachers and staff. To that end, the board has established policies which explicitly state the expectations for teachers to continue their education, improve the performance of their skills, and expand their professional horizons. Likewise, hired support staff will also be encouraged to acquire additional training to improve the quality of their service.

Teachers and staff members are to develop in cooperation with the principal an annual plan for professional development and submit it to the principal. Such a plan should describe the classes, conferences, workshops, and other development activities along with an estimate of the cost. The principal shall include the cost of these professional development plans in the school's budget.

Staff members employed by the congregation/federation/conference are also encouraged to obtain additional professional training. Such staff development activities will be funded within the limits of the school's budget.

All teachers and staff will be actively encouraged by the board of education to continue their own growth in their knowledge of God's Word through regular devotions, personal Bible reading, and regular attendance at Bible classes.

D. Instructional Program

The board of education shall ensure that appropriate educational programs are provided which are consistent with the mission and vision of the school, that the materials and resources necessary to support the instructional program are sufficient, that graduation requirements are consistent with local and state standards, and that academic policies and procedures are consistently applied. These broad areas of board responsibility are categorized under the general headings of curriculum, instructional resources, standards, assessment, and academic policies and procedures.

1. Curriculum

The board of education shall approve the curriculum for the Christian elementary school, Sunday School, and/or part-time educational agencies. The curriculum should be published and made available to parents and other interested parties. The curriculum of the school should consist of at least the following elements:

- a. subject areas taught in each grade;
- b. broad learning objectives for each subject for each grade;
- c. specific concepts to be developed in each subject for each grade;
- d. instructional materials, textbooks, etc. used to teach the subject;
- e. means of assessing learning outcomes.

The board of education shall approve all revisions to the curriculum. The board shall approve each year the schedule according to which the curriculum is

reviewed by the faculty, or by the committee responsible for the part-time educational program, to ensure that the curriculum reflects contemporary standards, reflects the Lutheran Christian mission of the school, and keeps God's Word at the center of all subject areas.

2. Instructional Resources

The board of education shall approve all textbooks and other significant instructional resources that are requested by the faculty to support the curriculum of the school and/or educational agencies. Because textbooks represent a significant investment, the board should be assured that such an investment is fundamental to offering the best possible program of instruction. The board shall also, however, maintain vigilance over the curriculum to ensure that it does not become the textbook. It is reasonable for the board of education to expect the professional staff to demonstrate the manner in which textbooks and other materials will be used to ensure that the truths of God's Word are consistently and appropriately integrated.

Criteria for judging the merits of proposals for new textbooks and other significant instructional materials should include but are not limited to:

- a. life expectancy (How long will they be useable?);
- b. cost (factored per student over the life of the material);
- c. compatibility with the curriculum;
- d. philosophically and theologically adaptable;
- e. ancillary support materials for the teacher and student.

IV. D. 2. One of the most common weaknesses of WELS elementary and secondary schools is that they lack a written, comprehensive curriculum. Too often, the curriculum is defined in terms of subjects for each grade and the textbooks which are used to teach them. It is imperative that boards of education insist that school faculties prepare curricula which define the standards and corresponding learning outcomes.

3. Standards

The board of education shall ensure that the school is operated in accordance with all state and local statutes, regulations, standards, and administrative codes. The principal of the school shall be responsible for maintaining a current file of all applicable standards, and shall provide the board of education with documentation of compliance when asked. If state or regional accreditation is required or desired, the board of education shall, through the principal, ensure that all appropriate accreditation criteria and/or standards are met, and that such accreditation relationships are consistent with the school's mission and compatible with the school's vision.

IV. D. 3. Usually, local school districts are the best source for obtaining lists of state and local statutes, codes, and standards. Because public school boards are quasi-legal entities regulated in their functions by state statutes and administrative codes, they are required to maintain a high degree of awareness of all applicable laws.

4. Assessment

The board of education shall assure itself on a regular basis that the stated academic aims and objectives of the Lutheran elementary school are being met and that the school uses the results of assessment data to improve its effectiveness. The board of education shall approve the use of achievement tests, diagnostic testing, performance based assessment, and other forms of school assessment of academic outcomes. The board of education shall also ensure through appropriate policies and procedures that the individual results of all such forms of assessment are treated with confidentiality, and that the results of assessment are reported to the congregation in summary form only. The principal of the school should annually report the results of school assessment along with recommendations for addressing documented weaknesses.

The board of education shall also ensure that appropriate forms of assessment are conducted on part-time educational programs and ancillary educational agencies. Assistance from school staff may be necessary to define and assess the educational outcomes of part-time educational programs.

5. Academic Policies and Procedures

The board of education shall develop appropriate policies and approve corresponding procedures intended to support the instructional program and its administration. Policy topics related to the instructional program include but are not limited to:

- a. philosophy of Christian education;
- b. accreditation;
- c. attendance;
- d. evaluation and grading;
- e. graduation requirements;
- f. homework;
- g. parent-teacher conferences;
- h. academic probation;
- i. retention;
- j. promotion;
- k. testing and assessment;
- l. school calendar;
- m. curriculum;
- n. library/media resources;
- o. student records;

- p. classroom discipline;
- q. suspension;
- r. expulsion;
- s. special needs;
- t. field trips;
- u. technology.

E. Policy Development

The board of education governs the programs of Christian education through its policies. Policies are principles adopted by the school board to chart a course of action to be taken by the school's administration in meeting the day-to-day operational needs of the school. Policies are implemented and administered through the use of administrative procedures, which are the detailed directions developed by the administration to put policy into practice.

Detailed considerations for developing policies, as well as a list of policy subjects are found in the Appendix.

IV. E. Numerous good sources exist to guide school boards in the development and organization of educational policies. The Educational Policies Service of the National School Boards Association has published a comprehensive compilation of sample policies along with an organizational scheme. Entitled, Educational Policies Reference Manual, it can be ordered from the NSBA on its website: <http://www.nsba.org>. Another excellent guidebook for developing policies appropriate to the Lutheran elementary school is the Board of Education Handbook: Planning for Lutheran Elementary Schools published by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in 1978 and available as an ERIC document, ED176384. A more recent effort by the LCMS has yielded an online Governing Manual for Lutheran Schools which can be found at <http://dcs.lcms.org>. Click the "school" button at the top, the "resources" button on the side, and you will see "Board Manual."

F. Individual Board Member Responsibilities

The board of education, although comprised of individuals with diverse talents, gifts, and points of view, speaks and acts as a single body. Whenever possible, decisions shall be made by consensus. When the board formally acts by voting on an issue, the majority opinion will be supported by each member of the board, whether they voted in its favor or not. Board members are to think and act individually in board meetings, but once the board has decided a matter, the decision of the board belongs to every board member. In view of these general principles, individual board members will carry out the following responsibilities:

1. be prepared to discuss all educational issues coming before the board;
2. actively participate in all board discussions;
3. communicate informally with other board members and school personnel to ensure a shared understanding of issues;

4. honor the opinions of others, even if you disagree;
5. be punctual and faithful in attending all meetings of the board;
6. pray for the school, its teachers, and the board;
7. faithfully and sacrificially support the school and congregation financially;
8. publicly speak in support of the school and other educational agencies of the congregation.

V. BOARD RELATIONSHIPS

A. Constituents

Members of the board of education serve on behalf of the entire congregation as its representatives responsible for overseeing the educational ministries of the congregation. At the same time, board members have a special relationship with the parents and children who are involved in the various educational programs of the congregation. Finally, board members have a working relationship with those teachers and staff who have been called to administer the educational programs. Maintaining appropriate and effective relationships with these constituent groups requires skill and a proper understanding of the nature and scope of those relationships. The servant-leadership expected of board members begins with a commitment to the mission and ministry of the congregation, extends itself in openness to those who are served, and finds application in ethical conduct which is consistent with the Eighth Commandment.

1. Parents and Students

Board members shall reflect interest and concern to parents of children enrolled in the educational programs of the congregation. Board members shall develop the means to share information with parents and students as well as be attentive to their concerns. Generally, communication with parents and students occurs through the development of carefully worded and published policies and procedures. Informally, board members shall be receptive to ideas and concerns expressed by parents which are related to policy matters. When such concerns involve others, however, or when the concerns involve administrative procedures, it is the board member's responsibility to make sure that the concern has been properly expressed to the individual (e.g., teacher, principal, pastor) in a manner consistent with the Eighth Commandment. The board, through its principal or other professional staff, shall consider the ideas and concerns of parents only as they deal with policy or the application of policy.

2. Other Boards and Committees of the Congregation

The board of education is but one of several boards of the congregation. As such it must communicate and coordinate its ministry responsibilities with the activities of other boards and committees. Reports to the church council and voter's assembly shall be made in their regular meetings by the chairman or his designee. Actions of the board of education shall be communicated to the various education committees by the chairmen of those committees.

B. Faculty, Staff, and Administration

The relationship of the board to the teachers, staff, principal and/or staff administrators of other educational programs shall be collaborative in nature, respectful of the divine call held by those directly involved in the full and part-time educational ministries of the congregation, but also mindful of their accountability to the board of education. Consistent with the principles of policy leadership, the board of education will seek the professional advice and counsel of staff as it considers policy formulation. Likewise, staff will seek the advice and counsel of the board in their development of procedures which apply the policies. The relationship between board and staff must be defined in terms of those areas which are under the exclusive purview of each. This is best accomplished when open communication is fostered.

V. B. For an excellent presentation of policy governance, Dr. John Carver has created a model which has found wide application to congregational governance structures. It can be found at his website: <http://www.carvergovernance.com/>. It is especially instructive in helping board members understand the distinction between management and governance.

C. Community

_____ Ev. Lutheran Church is an integral member of the _____ community. As an evangelical church it seeks to share the Gospel with those in the community. Through its educational programs, the congregation offers various opportunities to other residents in the community to come to know and love Jesus. The board of education shall reflect the evangelical mission of the congregation through its various educational programs, shall represent in a positive manner those programs, and shall ensure that appropriate marketing and outreach are conducted in the community.

The congregation's elementary school exists in the context of a public school district and coexists with other private and religious schools in the community. Members of the board of education shall reflect with the highest integrity the mission and vision of _____ Ev. Lutheran School to the rest of the education community. The board shall seek to collaborate with other schools in areas which benefit the school but do not compromise doctrinal principles, and ensure that the school has appropriate access to public school district resources where the law and biblical principles do not restrict.

D. District and Synod

As a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, _____ Lutheran Church and School must conform to the doctrine and practice of the WELS and submit to the ecclesiastical authority of elected synod officials. In matters such as calling teachers, exercising discipline against a called worker, the board shall, through its pastor or principal, collaborate with the district president in addressing such concerns.

The Synod's Board for Parish Services and its Commission on Parish Schools can provide many resources which may be of value to the board of education, including training materials for board members. The WELS website is <http://www.wels.net/>.

VI. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Under the United States Constitution, education and the operation of schools has been left primarily to the purview of the respective states. Members of the board of education should have a general knowledge of those areas of law that influence the operation of Lutheran schools and which affect the manner in which they govern the educational programs of the congregation. Most statutes relating to church-related education will apply to the operation of the Christian Day School. It is reasonable for the board of education to expect the school's administrator to know, understand, interpret, and apply the laws that are relevant to Lutheran Schools, and to keep the board of education informed of changes in local, state and federal laws.

A. Federal Law

The United States Constitution provides equal protection for all citizens. The federal government has extended the basic principles of the Constitution through laws which protect the civil rights and privacy rights of individuals. The board of education shall establish policies which demonstrate conformity with federal law in the areas of nondiscrimination in employment and access to programs, accepting and accommodating disabled students, acceptance of federal aid, student suspensions and due process, and tort liability.

With respect to nondiscrimination, the board of education may not establish policies which restrict or deny employment or access to programs on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, or national origin. Religion in Lutheran Schools may be considered a "bona fide occupational qualification" (BFOQ) when it is shown that the program of the school is inherently religious in nature. Increasingly mental and physical disabilities are not considered BFOQ's and race is never considered a BFOQ. An excellent resource for staying current on legal issues affecting religious schools is the annual Private School Law in America, published by Oakstone, Burnsville, MN.

1. Nondiscrimination

The board of education shall establish policies which ensure equal access to potential employees and students and that the administration of all programs do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, and national origin.

2. Privacy of Student Records

The board of education shall establish policies to ensure the privacy of student records in conformity with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1972 and the related "Buckley Amendments."

3. Disabilities

If the school chooses to enroll students with disabilities, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1992, reasonable accommodations must be made for the student. Consistent with PL94-142, the school must provide the “least restrictive environment” for its students, including those with handicapping conditions. The board of education shall ensure that facilities comply with state and federal standards for handicapped access and that furnishings and services are provided within reason.

4. Due Process

Students enrolled in parochial schools are not entitled to the same due process rights as students in public schools because their enrollment is contractually defined and voluntarily entered into. Nevertheless, the board of education shall establish policies and procedures which ensure the fair treatment of students when they are subject to school discipline and especially when they face potential suspension or expulsion.

5. Tort Liability

A tort is a civil wrong in which there is an assumed duty of care, a breach of that duty, and resultant loss or injury as a proximate cause of the breach. The most common tort for schools is negligence. The board of education shall establish policies and ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to avoid tort liability. Examples of negligence include: unrepaired faulty equipment, inadequate supervision, insufficient classroom management, and improper training in the use of equipment.

B. State Statutes

Although each state is free to establish the manner in which it regulates education, there are common areas of responsibility among all states of which the board of education must be aware. States have the right to regulate such things as the length of the school year, the scope and content of the curriculum, the training and licensure of teachers, and transportation of students. States may also mandate the provision of certain student services such as testing, assessment of learning disabilities, and support for disabled students. The board of education shall monitor all such programs for undesirable entanglements and conditions.

C. Local Ordinances

Local municipalities may establish ordinances which regulate such things as building codes, fire and health safety standards, student transportation, and access to public services. The board of education shall establish policies and annually review procedures to ensure that all educational facilities and programs comply with local requirements.

D. Risk Management

The board of education shall ensure that appropriate insurance coverage is provided to protect the school, its employees, and its students against loss or liability. Such insurance coverage may be part of the congregation's umbrella policy, but the board of education may recommend additional liability coverage for its teachers. The insurance underwriter shall be regularly consulted regarding any potential risk of exposure to liability and shall be informed by the school administrator of all incidents with potential risk of liability.

E. Agreements and Associations

The board of education shall annually review all agreements which obligate the school to participate in consortia, athletic conferences, library associations, public school student services, or to use specific vendors or products to make sure that such agreements and associations do not compromise the mission and program of the school.

F. Legal Representation

The board of education shall ensure that legal resources are available to the school administrator for consultation and referral.

G. Immunity

When members of the board of education responsibly perform in good faith those duties which are consistent with its established policies and guidelines, they are immune from prosecution due to the quasi-governmental nature of the board. If in the exercise of those duties it can be demonstrated that the board or members of the board acted arbitrarily, capriciously, or contrary to its established policies and guidelines, then the board or members of the board may be held liable.

V.A,B, ff. There are numerous sources for principals to obtain specific information related to the local and state statutes that apply to their schools. A good starting point is the local school district which is required to have available copies of all relevant laws and codes. A web source for general education law resources is <http://www.findlaw.com>. There are links to both federal sources and to individual states.

VII. PART-TIME AGENCIES

The educational mission of _____ Lutheran Church is carried out by numerous part-time agencies, each of which addresses the specific educational needs of the population for which it is targeted. _____ Lutheran Church supports the following part-time agencies:

- Sunday School;
- Vacation Bible School;

- Adult Bible Studies;
- Youth group(s);
- Boy's and Girl's Pioneers;
- Church library;
- Singles ministry.

A. Supervision

The board of education shall establish appropriate education committees to supervise the programs provided by the various part-time educational agencies. The board of education shall recruit and call qualified volunteers and lay leaders to provide direct supervision and administration of each part-time agency.

B. Representation on the Board

One member of the board shall serve as chairman of each committee. Program planning, budgeting, implementation, and evaluation for each part-time agency shall be reported by its chairman to the board.

C. Staffing

The board of education shall monitor the staffing needs of each part-time agency to determine which programs can be sufficiently managed by volunteers and which require paid staff attention. The board shall submit recommendations for hiring or calling necessary staff to the congregation through the church council.

VIII. PLANNING

The principal purpose of the board of education is to ensure the ongoing viability and quality of the educational programs of the congregation. Although regular monthly meetings provide an avenue for dealing with issues on a somewhat frequent basis, it is the long range educational plan which will contribute most to accomplishing that purpose. It is the responsibility of the board of education to make sure that an annually updated long range plan is in place by including in its annual calendar a schedule for its review. Administrators and staff in charge of the school or other programs shall be responsible for drafting changes and providing the necessary data.

The board of education shall review the following components of the educational plan:

- Mission statement;
- Vision statement;
- Goals;
- Objectives;
- Action plans for the upcoming year;
- Targeted performance measures;
- Budget.

A. *Mission, Vision, Goals, Objectives*

The mission statement is a brief declaration of the broad purpose for which the school or educational agency exists. It defines who is to be served, the nature of the educational service being provided, and the broad outcome that is being sought. The mission statement captures in one or two sentences what the school is ideally. The mission statement should provide clear direction for the goals and objectives of the school or agency.

VIII. A. 1. An example of a mission statement for an elementary school:

St. Manual's Lutheran School is an elementary school owned and operated by St. Manual's Ev. Lutheran Church for the children of its members. It is committed to providing an outstanding education in God's Word and a Christ-centered academic program which prepares students for high school success and a life of service to the Church.

The vision statement is a brief declaration of what the board of education believes the school or educational agency should strive to become. In one or two sentences, the vision points the school to the future.

VIII. A. 2. An example of an elementary school vision statement:

St. Manual's Lutheran School strives to become the recognized community leader in urban education for disadvantaged minority students by serving as the most effective tool of St. Manual's Lutheran Church for sharing the Gospel with its community. The school shall strive to prepare all of its students for advanced placement in college preparatory high school programs, while integrating these children and their families into a life of congregational service.

The board of education shall annually review the goals of its school and other educational agencies. Goal statements amplify the mission and provide direction for overall school operation. These statements further define the purpose of the school with respect to the various facets of school function. Generally, the board of education will approve goal statements for curriculum, staff, facilities, technology, evangelism, etc.

VIII. A. 3. Several examples of goal statements:

- 1. Curriculum: St. Manual's Lutheran School will provide a broad comprehensive curriculum that thoroughly integrates God's Word into every subject, challenges every student according to their ability, and prepares students for successful transition into high school.*
- 2. Staffing: The faculty of St. Manual's Lutheran School will continue to develop their professional preparation through continuing education.*

The board of education shall also approve annual objectives which demonstrate in measurable terms how each educational goal is going to be obtained. The development of objectives provides the means by which the educational administrator articulates his plans for each school year. They also provide the means for evaluating the performance of the school, its administrator, and its faculty. An objective is an action statement which defines who is going to do what, and what the measurable outcome will be. Objectives will be prepared by the principal and approved by the board of education in its April meeting for the following school year.

VIII. A. 4. Examples of Objective statements:

- 1. The school faculty will attend the ASCD conference on technology in March.*
- 2. The faculty will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the mathematics curriculum and present its findings and recommendations in May.*
- 3. The principal will successfully complete 9 credits toward his master's degree.*

B. Planning Processes

Mission and vision statements rarely change. It is important, however, that the board of education annually review those statements to make sure that their plans for the year are consistent with the mission and vision and that the activities of the board in fact amplify those statements. In a similar manner, goals are more enduring statements which communicate a particular emphasis or direction for a long period of time.

In the planning process, it is natural for the board to spend most of its time evaluating the objectives which are being recommended for the next year. As the board evaluates proposed objectives, it should ask itself how it will know at the end of the year if those objectives have been met.

*VIII. B. 1. A good source for materials related to strategic and long range planning in independent schools is the National Association of Independent Schools
<http://www.nais-schools.org/inform/magazine/zine.html>*

C. Key Performance Indicators

Tracking progress over time for several key indicators is essential for the board of education to be able to adequately evaluate the effectiveness of its programs. The board shall identify six to ten key performance indicators which measure the essential variables of performance, shall keep updated records of these indicators, and shall use these indicators in evaluating its long range plan.

Key Performance Indicators shall include, but are not limited to:

- Christian Day School enrollments by grade;
- Adult Bible class attendance;
- Student/Faculty ratios by classroom;
- Sunday School Attendance;
- Achievement test results by grade compared to local and national norms.

VIII. C. One method for tracking trends in Key Performance Indicators is to list in a table the data from the three previous years, the current year's objective, and the projections for the next three years. This permits board members to determine the extent to which projections are realistic, and to adjust programs or action plans when targets are not met.

D. Action Plans

When the long range educational plan is carefully crafted, it becomes a living document for the board of education to use at every meeting. Well written objectives should be translated into action plans by the committees or administrators of the various educational programs. Meetings of the board provide opportunities to focus on the priorities identified in the long range plan. Rather than becoming mired in the minutia of detail which often accompanies the absence of a coherent plan, boards can focus on the policy decisions that will best advance the mission, vision, goals, and objectives of the plan.

APPENDIX A

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ESTABLISHING SCHOOL POLICIES

The role of the board of education is to set policy; the role of the administration is to execute it. The board expresses its policy determinations in the form of written policy statements; the administration implements policy through such devices as administrative procedures, memoranda and directives, and through daily contacts with staff.

Policies, Procedures, and Decisions

Policies are principles adopted by the board of education to chart a course of action. They tell *what* is wanted and may include also *why* and *how much*. They should be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be taken by the administration in meeting a number of problems day-after-day; they should be narrow enough to give the administration clear guidance (EPS/NSBA, 1975)

Procedures are the detailed directions that are developed by the administration to put policy into practice. They tell *how*, *by whom*, *where* and *when* things are to be done. (EPS/NSBA, 1975)

Decisions are actions of a board or principal which deal with immediate issues. Good decisions are consistent with long term policies, and are generally backed up by appropriate procedures.

To illustrate the distinction between these three concepts, the board may, for example, have policies which describe the causes and circumstances under which a student might be expelled from school. Procedures which ensure a reasonable measure of fairness or due process will protect the board from acting in an arbitrary manner. Finally, however, the board must make decisions in individual cases which are consistent with its policies.

Another more mundane example will further illustrate these differences. The board of education has decided to formulate a dress code by writing a policy which informs parents and children of the general standard for dress that is being sought, the rationale for the dress code, and some guidelines to assist parents and students in the selection of appropriate attire. The principal of the school develops procedures which describe how the dress code is going to be explained to parents and students, as well as what will occur if a student comes to school improperly dressed. On the day that a student comes to school wearing a questionable item of clothing, the principal must make a decision concerning whether or not the student is violating the dress code and what action will be taken if that is judged to be the case.

Policy Formulation

While the board is responsible for policy development, it looks to the administrator for leadership. The administrator best knows the school, its needs, its strengths and weaknesses. He knows where improvements are needed. Often teachers work with the administrator to develop first-drafts of policy statements, or provide input as policies are developed. The administrator is a key resource who suggests to the board which policies are needed. As partners, the board and the administrator develop needed policy statements. Board members may raise issues or identify

problems that need to be addressed by policy statements. However, board members must be sensitive to areas of school life that need improvement as they suggest policies that will give guidance and direction (Wessler, 1993, p. 22).

It is generally advised that boards instruct administrators to do the draft writing of policies and procedures. Effective boards use their time to discuss the relative merits of a proposed policy and tend to avoid spending valuable board time trying to “wordsmith” the statement. Furthermore, placing the primary responsibility for drafting policies on the administrator acknowledges his educational and administrative expertise and allows him to propose wording that in his judgment best serves the students and parents of the school. The board of education exerts its governance responsibility by adopting, rejecting, or amending the proposed policy.

An annual review of policies provides an excellent opportunity to identify areas which are in need of policies. There are, however, numerous other occasions during the course of a school year which might suggest the need for a policy. As board members, pastors, and school administrators listen to the concerns of parents, suggestions may be made which support the creation or modification of a policy. The school administrator may conclude as a result of managing the day-to-day operations of the school that an area of school life exists which could benefit from the direction of a policy statement. Finally, in the course of board meetings, ideas or issues may arise which can best be handled by a policy statement.

A word of caution is in order, however. Because policies are statements which provide long term direction to the operation of the school, they should not be drafted as a means to solve an immediate problem. If a problem arises which requires tactful Christian leadership from the board or the school administrator and for which a policy does not exist, it is best to deal with the problem first in a fair and loving manner, and then seek to develop a policy statement which will deal with similar situations in the future. In law this is termed *ex post facto* legislation and is prohibited. Christians dealing with each other in love should observe this simple rule of fairness as well. This sounds easier in principle than it is in reality.

Policy Development for Part-Time Educational Programs

Most congregations operate numerous part-time programs of Christian education. These range from Sunday School and vacation Bible school, to adult Bible education, confirmation instruction, Pioneer programs, youth groups, early childhood and day care programs, home-based fellowship groups, and others. The board of education has a responsibility to govern these programs as well and to make sure that they are consistent with the mission statements of the congregation and the board of education. These programs most often are supervised by volunteer members of the congregation and do not benefit from the administrative expertise of a school principal. Nevertheless, these programs warrant the attention of the board of education, and the exercise of its governance responsibilities through the formulation of policies and procedures which are appropriate to each endeavor. This is especially important in those congregations which do not support an elementary school.

Steps to Take in Formulating Policy

Policies are intended to provide long term direction and order for the operation of the school. Because policies affect the lives of children, teachers, staff, and parents, they should be prepared

in an orderly and systematic fashion to ensure their acceptance. Parents, congregational members, pastors, teachers, and perhaps even community members should be involved in the formulation of policies. The goal is to achieve consensus of opinion before the policy is enacted. The following steps can help to create useful and enduring policies which are understood and accepted by all constituents.

1. Define the problem. The board of education should first strive to answer the question, "What is the problem?" Actually writing down the problem or issue is an important first step to finding a policy solution. Rather than saying, "The students are sloppy," it is more instructive to say, "Our students are wearing clothes that seem to be influenced by gangs in our area." Obtaining parent input at this stage is far better than waiting until the policy is written and adopted to inform them.
2. Identify the desired outcomes. Again, it is helpful to write down what the board would like to see accomplished by a new dress code. It may wish to create a positive learning environment. It may wish to promote neatness, or help develop respect for personal appearance. The outcomes should be stated in general terms. The specifics of a dress code policy should be left to the school administrator to implement in the form of procedures.
3. Describe what can be done to achieve the desired results. This set of action alternatives forms the core of the policy. Should certain clothing items be banned? Can better and more specific guidelines be provided to parents? What assistance do the parents and students desire?
4. Try to anticipate both the positive and negative results if any of the alternatives were adopted. Remember that a policy is a general statement that provides long term direction. Rules and procedures which flow from a policy are more immediate and adaptable to changing conditions.
5. One person, usually the school administrator, is assigned the task of drafting the policy. He should seek input from various people in crafting the statement before submitting it to the board of education for adoption. He may propose the policy at a parent-teacher meeting as a trial balloon to elicit reaction. If strong opposition is evident, the principal and board may have to repeat some of the above steps.
6. The board of education considers the proposed policy. It may adopt, reject, or amend the policy. If approved, the policy should be placed in the appropriate section of the board's policy manual.
7. The school administrator is responsible for notifying the students, parents, teachers, staff, and other constituents who are affected by the policy. The school administrator should also seek the input of parents, students, teachers and other affected constituents as he develops the rules and procedures which are necessary to implement the policy. Care should be taken to make sure that such procedures neither go beyond the scope of the policy, nor fail to fully implement the intent of the policy.

Organizing the Board's Policy and Procedure Manual

Keeping track of board policies in an organized manual is essential for a variety of reasons.

1. It provides for efficiency of operation when previously adopted policies can be readily referred to for guidance.
2. It promotes continuity and stability in the face of board and faculty turnover.
3. It gives credibility to board actions.
4. It contributes to a business-like operation.
5. It provides a quasi-legal record of board actions.
6. It provides an impersonal guide for school operation. Having a policy manual makes whimsical or idiosyncratic administration difficult.
7. It brings clarity to the working relationship between the board of education and the school or program administrator.
8. It provides a means for evaluating the effectiveness of the board in carrying out its responsibilities.

The first task in developing a policy manual is to create an outline which describes the various functional areas of the board's responsibility. A suggested table of contents is found in Appendix B.

The second and most difficult task is searching through the minutes of board of education meetings for those actions which might be interpreted as school policy. A search through faculty and parent handbooks should also be conducted. Care should be taken to preserve the date on which the policy was approved. If dates are missing, such as often happens when policies are copied to faculty or parent handbooks, cite the date of the most recent publication of the handbook.

The policies which are gathered from these various sources should be placed into the table of contents under the appropriate headings. Policies which are missing should be identified. Incomplete or outdated existing policies should also be noted.

A practice recommended by the National School Boards Association is to transcribe each policy on a single sheet of paper which indicates its place in the outline, the dates on which it was approved and/or amended, and documents where the policy is published. A sample form is found in Appendix C.

The board should develop a plan for updating the policy manual. It should assign writing responsibilities to appropriate individuals to write those policies which it deems to be missing. It should also establish a schedule by which it will review all existing policies to ensure their completeness and applicability. The board may wish to delegate this task to a committee of two or three board members so that valuable board meeting time is not consumed with burdensome detail.

The board of education should also consider including with the policies, copies of relevant procedures, rules, and forms which were developed by the school or program administrator to facilitate implementation of the policies. Color coding policies, procedures, and forms by using different colored paper for each can provide an easily referenced document.

All policies, procedures, and forms should be filed in a three-ring binder. When a policy is adopted, revised, or eliminated, the manual can be easily updated by adding or removing pages. Electronic compilation of policies is also possible, but requires continuing expertise by someone in the congregation.

APPENDIX B

OUTLINE FOR SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

- I. Foundation statements of the board
 - A. Mission
 - B. Vision

- II. School board governance and operations
 - A. Board member elections
 - B. Powers and duties of the school board
 - C. Conflict of interest
 - D. School board meetings
 - 1. Regular meetings
 - 2. Special meetings
 - 3. Executive sessions
 - 4. Board meeting procedures
 - i. agenda format
 - ii. agenda preparation and dissemination
 - iii. quorum
 - iv. rules of order
 - v. voting method
 - vi. minutes
 - vii. public participation
 - viii. reporting results of board meeting
 - E. Board policy development
 - 1. policy format
 - 2. policy development system
 - 3. policy adoption procedures
 - 4. policy dissemination
 - F. Board member services
 - 1. new board member orientation
 - 2. board member development opportunities

- III. School Administration
 - A. School calendar
 - 1. length of school year
 - 2. holidays
 - 3. emergency closings
 - B. School schedule
 - C. Emergency closings
 - D. Attendance
 - E. Admissions qualifications
 - F. Tuition
 - G. Fees
 - H. Access to student records

- I. Child abuse – reporting requirements
 - J. Fund raising
 - 1. advertising of promotions and sales
 - 2. student fund raising
 - 3. acceptance and disposition of gifts to the school
 - i. gifts of cash
 - ii. gifts in kind
 - 4. third source funds and grants
 - K. Sexual harassment of students
 - L. Sexual harassment of faculty/staff
 - M. Church attendance
 - N. Nondiscrimination
 - O. Transportation
- IV. Facilities and Equipment
- A. Use of school buildings by church groups
 - B. Use of school buildings by community groups
 - C. Maintenance of facilities and equipment
 - D. Access and use of computer technology
 - 1. internet access
 - 2. user agreements/parent permission
 - 3. software licenses
 - E. School vehicles
- V. Fiscal Management
- A. Budgeting
 - B. Financial aid
 - C. Financial support by members
 - D. Purchasing policies
 - E. Past due accounts
 - F. Teachers handling money
 - G. Auxiliary services
 - 1. bookstore
 - 2. lunch and milk programs
 - 3. concessions
 - H. Property rental
 - I. Financial controls
 - J. Annual audit
- VI. Students and Student Services
- A. Student conduct and discipline
 - 1. suspension and discipline
 - 2. corporal punishment
 - 3. locker searches
 - 4. alcohol and other drugs
 - B. Dress code
 - C. Safety

- D. Student records
 - 1. student directory information
 - 2. access to student records
 - 3. contents
 - E. Sickness and injury
 - F. Health services
 - G. Immunizations
 - H. Activities and student parties
 - I. Athletic policies
 - 1. eligibility to participate
 - 2. medical exams and insurance
 - 3. codes of conduct for athletes
 - J. Playground policies and rules
 - K. Transportation policies
 - 1. parent transportation to and from school
 - a. drop off and pick up times
 - b. parking
 - 2. bicycles
 - 3. pedestrian
 - 4. bus conduct rules
 - L. Student worship, church attendance
- VII. Personnel
- A. Principal's position description
 - B. Teacher qualifications and responsibilities
 - C. Staff descriptions and qualifications
 - D. The divine call
 - 1. Requesting call lists
 - 2. Board role in evaluating candidates
 - 3. Voting procedures
 - 4. Minister of the Gospel status
 - E. Lifestyle expectations of Christian educators
 - F. Criminal background checks
 - G. Teacher certification requirements
 - H. Professional development
 - 1. conference attendance
 - 2. graduate study
 - 3. teacher in-service workshops
 - I. Supervision and evaluation of faculty and staff
 - J. Supervision and evaluation of the principal
 - K. Leaves of absence
 - 1. sickness
 - 2. maternity
 - 3. personal
 - L. Substitute teachers

- M. Employee benefits
 - 1. health insurance
 - 2. short and long term disability insurance
 - 3. pension/retirement/social security
 - 4. worker's compensation
 - 5. moving policy
- N. Teacher liability
- O. Receiving gifts
- P. Orientation of new teachers
- Q. Orientation of new staff
- R. Additional responsibilities
 - 1. Compensated
 - 2. Non-compensated
- S. Summer service
- T. Volunteers
- U. Separation policies
 - 1. retirement
 - 2. resignation
 - 3. physical, mental, or emotional incapacitation
 - 4. staff or program reduction
 - 5. non-renewal of temporary staff
 - 6. termination
 - 7. dismissal for cause
- V. Appeals of separation decisions
- W. Additional outside employment
- X. Jury duty
- Y. Personnel records

VIII. Curriculum and Instruction

- A. Philosophy of Christian education
- B. Accreditation
- C. Class size
- D. Assessment
 - 1. Achievement testing
 - 2. Diagnostic testing
 - 3. Other assessments of learning outcomes
 - 4. M-Team
- E. Library and media resources
- F. Field trips
- G. Curriculum evaluation and textbook adoption
- H. Music Program
- I. Reporting student progress
 - 1. Report cards
 - 2. Parent teacher conferences
 - 3. Grading system
- J. Graduation requirements
- K. Acceleration to a higher grade
- L. Honors programs

- M. Homework
- N. Retention/promotion
- O. Classroom management
- P. Copyright laws
- Q. Sex education
- R. Use of computers

APPENDIX C

POLICY TEMPLATE

Policy Category:	
Policy Heading:	
Policy Title:	Policy #
(text of the policy)	
Date Initially Adopted:	
Date(s) Revised:	
Local Regulation References	
State Statute Reference:	

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE POLICY

Policy Category: Legal Considerations	
Policy Heading: Conflict of Interest	
Policy Title: Board Member Conflicts of Interest	Policy # VI. B. 1.
<p>No member of the board of education of St. Manual’s Lutheran School shall participate in discussion of board matters, nor vote on such matters which conflict with the interests of St. Manual’s Lutheran School, or which interfere with his ability to fully perform his responsibilities as a board member. For example, and not by limitation, if board responsibilities include approval of purchases, or if one is in a position to influence such purchases, there should be no proprietary or pecuniary interests in any business that furnishes products, materials, or services to St. Manual’s Lutheran School or in any related transaction, nor may a member of the board of education of St. Manual’s Lutheran School benefit directly or indirectly from a third party who furnishes products, materials, or services to St. Manual’s Lutheran School.</p>	
Date Proposed:	4-1-98
Date Adopted:	5-1-98
Date(s) Revised:	6-1-99; 3-1-00
Statutory Reference:	