DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 240 673 EA 016 395

AUTHOR Brent, Daniel; Jurkowitz, Carolyn
TITLE School Board Study Programs: Board Member's Manual Series 1.
INSTITUTION National Catholic Educational Association, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 83
NOTE 53p.
AVAILABLE FROM Publication Sales, National Catholic Educational Association, Suite 100, 1077 30th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20007 ($5.00 prepaid; NCEA members may deduct 10 percent for prepaid orders).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Board Administrator Relationship; Board of Education Policy; Board of Education Role; *Boards of Education; *Catholic Schools; *Educational Administration; Elementary Secondary Education; Evaluation Methods; *Management Development; Organizational Objectives; Participative Decision Making; Religious Education; Self Evaluation (Groups)

ABSTRACT

This document provides eight lessons intended to improve the functioning of school boards and education committees for Catholic schools. Each lesson consists of three parts: a reading or activity to be done by the members in preparation for the lesson, a study activity to be done at the board meeting, and a reading or exercise to be done after the meeting. Notes for each lesson are also provided to aid the person responsible for leading the presentation. The following lessons are provided: responsibilities of the school board; board policy and administrative regulation; developing an agenda for the board meeting; getting things decided (the consensus process); church documents on Catholic education; evaluating the board's performance; setting goals for the board; and the key relationships among principal, pastor, and board. (PB)

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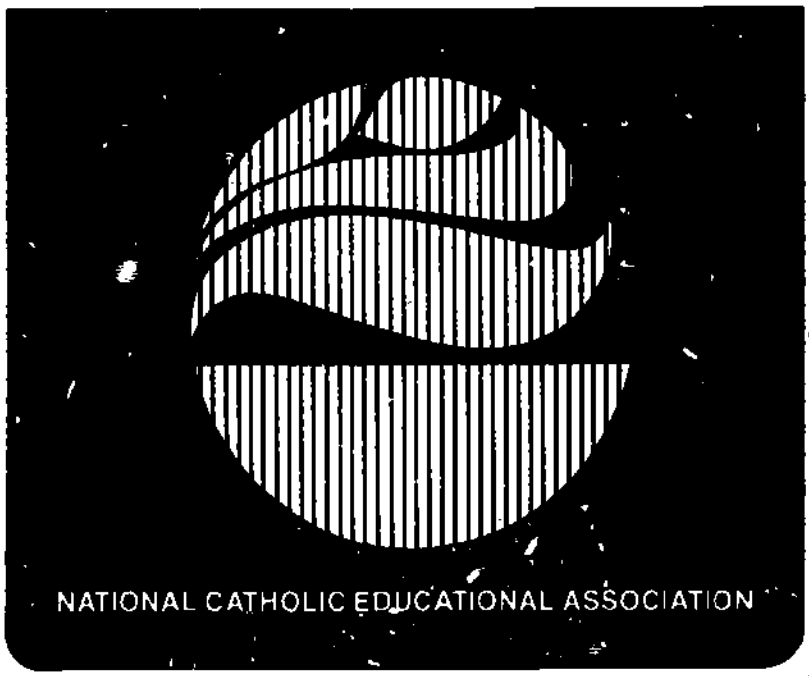
SCHOOL BOARD STUDY PROGRAMS

Board Member's Manual
Series I



EA 016 395

SCHOOL BOARD STUDY PROGRAMS

Board Member's Manual
Series I

A series of study lessons
for Catholic school boards

prepared by

Daniel Brent

and

Carolyn Jurkowitz

for

The National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA)

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INTRODUCTION

Each year a large number of very generous people give their talents to Catholic schools by serving on school boards and education committees. While we as Catholic educators have been enormously successful in establishing Catholic school boards and promoting their integration into the organizational structure of the Church, we have not been nearly so successful in providing adequate orientation and training for them.

We have brought in national authorities for workshops; a small percentage of board members attend. We have made "house calls" to provide training for local boards; the scope of what we can cover is limited and, within a year, a large proportion of the membership has changed. Something is needed that can deal with all of the key understandings needed by board members, come to them in their own setting, involve them in the learning process, and not overwhelm them with information all at one time.

This series of study lessons is our response to that prescription. It requires a 15 to 20 minutes time commitment at a series of board meetings. It also requires a few minutes of each board member's time between meetings.

There are eight lessons covering the topics we judged to be the most useful for effective board functioning. The local board can alter the order of these or delete a lesson that it considers unnecessary. Each lesson consists of three parts. Section A is a reading or activity to be done by the members in preparation for the lesson. Section B is a study activity to be done at the board meeting. Section C is a reading or exercise to be done after the meeting.

Provided for each lesson also are notes. These outline the steps to be followed in the presentation of the lesson, and supply some other information that might prove helpful to the leader. The notes for all eight lessons are located at the end of the book. We have presumed skills normally expected of a group leader such as the president of the board. We have not presumed any expert group process skills nor any special knowledge of theory about school boards.

It is not required that the board president lead this series of learning exercises. That responsibility might be delegated to the principal, another board member, or some outside person who is willing to help.

Target Audience

This material is specifically designed for use by Catholic school boards that are associated with a parish. We realize that there are other types of groups: education committees, consolidated school boards, secondary school boards, diocesan boards, etc. Much of the material will be equally useful to them; some of it will not. Specifically, the sections on policy and regulation, developing agendas, goal setting, and consensus process deal with concepts that are useful in the other settings; the examples are drawn mostly from the elementary school board setting. The section on Church documents is of general interest but we have especially highlighted their application to the Catholic school. The section on board responsibilities, relationships, and evaluation would be of limited value to groups whose scope is different from that of the elementary school board.

The Authors

Daniel Brent, the principal author, is Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Columbus. He was previously Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Rochester and Director of School Planning for Columbus. In addition to his work with boards in Columbus, he has addressed the National Association of Boards of Education at the

N.C.E.A. meetings in New York (1981), Chicago (1982), and Washington (1983). He has also addressed the Mid-South Catholic Educational Leadership Conference (1981) on the Catholic school board topic.

Carolyn Jurkowitz is the Assistant Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Columbus. She was previously a Catholic school teacher and administrator in St. Louis and Erie. Dr. Jurkowitz has given numerous orientations and workshops for board members in the Diocese of Columbus and was on the program of the National Association of Boards of Education at the N.C.E.A. convention in Washington (1983).

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Lesson 1
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

The purpose of this lesson is to clarify board members' understanding of the board's role and responsibilities.

For Leader's Notes, see page 42.

SECTION A
Normal Board Responsibilities

The school board is advisory to the pastor and principal. (A school board gets started because the pastor and principal want its advice and normally intend to take it.) The pastor or principal can ask the board's advice on any issue or item. However, there have emerged some general guidelines which have become the accepted standards for board functioning. Some areas are considered normal responsibilities of the board. There are other areas in which a board should not be involved under any circumstances.

Here are the normal board responsibilities:

1. Setting goals and objectives for the school and designating the responsibility for their implementation. The board should attempt to identify the school's long range needs and ideals and project goals that respond to those needs and hopes. Objectives are the more short range plans toward achieving the goals. The board should delegate to the principal the responsibility for implementing goals which are administrative in nature. (e.g., increasing the number and variety of enrichment activities for students, reviewing the testing program.)
2. Making policy for the school. A *policy* is a guide for the administrator. It tells the principal in general how the board would like to have the school function. It differs from a *regulation* in which the administrator spells out specifically how a board policy is to be implemented. (Policy: fire drills are to be held regularly. Regulation: fire drills will be held once each week in good weather at times selected by the principal.)
3. Approving the school budget. Usually a draft budget is prepared by the pastor or the principal for the board's consideration. The board reviews the budget and makes changes as it deems appropriate. Often the parish subsidy portion of the budget must be approved by the parish council or finance committee; these groups do not have authority to change other items in the board's budget. (If the parish subsidy is reduced, the board must decide how to rebalance the school budget, or the board may renegotiate with the council or pastor.)
4. The board (and its individual members) may sponsor or participate in activities which pursue those goals and objectives which are the board's responsibility to achieve. (Note that it is not *necessarily* the *board's* responsibility to achieve all of the objectives which it sets; it *is* the board's responsibility to achieve all of the objectives which it sets; it *is* the board's responsibility to *see that* the objectives are realistically addressed, assigned, and achieved.) It is under this rubric that the board might sponsor and run a festival or a recruitment campaign.

5. The board (usually through a committee) should have a participatory voice in the selection of the new principal. The Diocesan Superintendent should also have a voice (or at least a veto), particularly in determining whether various applicants are qualified to be candidates for the position. If a member of a religious community is being considered, that community may have further processes. Having received the recommendation of the board, the pastor makes the ultimate decision in selecting and hiring the school's principal. After a principal is in place, the board should see that professional evaluation of his/her performance is done. The board should also itself evaluate the principal's service to the board and his/her implementation of its policies and goals.
6. The board should periodically review its own performance, including the effectiveness of its policies and projects.

There are areas which are clearly outside of a school board's jurisdiction. Administration is the job of the school's principal. Board intrusion into administrative matters spells trouble for the school's operation. Here are three examples:

1. Regulations. Establishing regulations is the principal's job. The board gives the guide, the general rule. The principal decides how to implement it. It's bad news when the board tries to do both jobs. The same thing happens when the board tries to create a "policy" which is so specific that it is really a regulation.
2. Cases involving individual students. The board may establish some policies on discipline (e.g., prohibiting corporal punishment, insisting that parents be contacted for certain infractions). The board should not become a reviewer and reverser of the staff's implementation of discipline policies. The same would be true of academic decisions (e.g. on assignment of marks, promotion, or honors decisions). One possible exception to this norm might be expulsion, which is so serious that the board might validly establish a review process.
3. Cases of individual faculty members. Boards (or individual board members) do not screen or hire teachers, participate in their evaluation, or fire them. Boards may set standards for teachers, determine their salaries (via the budget) and their benefits (via board policies), and insist that professional evaluations are done. It is a terrible thicket when neighbors are allowed to make board members feel responsible for the professional competency of a teacher with whom their child is having a difficulty.

SECTION B
Appropriate Responsibilities

Below is a summary of items with which a school board actually dealt in the course of a year. Based on the background reading on the role of the school board, which items were appropriate responsibilities of the board (mark those "OK" on the line at the right) and which should not have been the responsibility of the board (mark those "NO" on the line at the right). If you are uncertain, leave the space blank or put a "?" on the line. Your chairperson has the "correct" answers to share with you afterwards.

1. The board received a monthly financial report on the school. _____
2. The board received information from the principal on textbook changes in math and spelling. _____
3. The board received information from the principal on standardized testing results. _____
4. The board adopted a policy "normally" giving grade 1 enrollment preference to families with older brothers or sisters already in the school. _____
5. The board authorized the hiring of an aide for the library and fixed the salary for that position. _____
6. The board listened to two parents who felt dissatisfied with the lunch supervision arrangements. _____
7. The board helped to sponsor a Catholic Schools Week open house. _____
8. The board passed a policy directing that all students must attend the First Friday Mass. _____
9. The board developed a tuition scale and budget for next year and appointed a committee to present them to the parish council. _____
10. The board approved a school calendar for the new year as presented by the principal. _____

SECTION C
Expectations vs. Responsibilities

1. Call three parents with children in school and ask:
   "What kinds of things do you think your school board should be doing?"
2. Think about what they say. Is there any consensus in their expectations? Do their expectations relate to what *really* happens at your board meetings? How close do these expectations come to what the theory says boards should be doing?

ALTERNATE PROJECT

Review the minutes (or agendas) of your meetings of the past 3 months and rate each item "O.K." or "NO" or "?" as you did in the study exercise.

SECTION D
Boards for Consolidated Schools

1. The board for a consolidated school is normally advisory to the pastors of the parishes that co-sponsor the school and to the principal whom those pastors have hired to conduct the school.

   The pastors may, in a given setting, delegate the school board to select the principal but he/she becomes the employee of the pastors.

2. In meeting its responsibility to approve of a school budget, the consolidated school board may assist the parishes in working out an equitable formula for sharing the school costs. This arrangement should include clear provisions for:

   a. adjustments in parish responsibilities should the number of students from each or any of the parishes change during the year (see Note);

   b. arrangements for a schedule of subsidies to assure adequate cash flow for school expenses;

   c. understandings for covering deficits resulting from budget overestimates of income or underestimates of expenses;

   d. understandings for disposition of excess operating funds resulting from underestimates of income or overestimates of expenses;

   e. financial responsibility for capital repairs judged necessary for the facilities; agreement on the process for establishing the need for such capital repairs.

3. The principal is usually the financial officer of a consolidated school and has the responsibility of doing the ordering and paying the bills (within the budget). While it is desirable that the pastors exercise some surveillance over this operation, that frequently does not happen. Therefore, a consolidated school board should take a more than ordinary interest in the principal's monthly financial statements and reports. It is advisable that the board (perhaps through its president or treasurer) make periodic informal audits. It is appropriate for a board officer to be designated to open the bank statements for all school accounts. The board should also provide for annual audits unless the parishes or diocese include the school in their own audits.

4. A consolidated school board needs to take special care to see that the sponsoring parishes are kept well informed of its activity and the school's progress. Representatives from the parishes must be conscientious about seeing that the pastors and the parish at large are apprised of what the school is doing. Meeting minutes should get out quickly, especially if the pastors are not present at the meetings. The board (or principal) should create short reports of school activity for inclusion in parish bulletins. It is terribly important that the sponsoring parishes are continuously reminded that this is *their* school.

5. The board might give some thought to moving the location of its meetings from parish to parish. This may involve some inconvenience and risk some confusion. (Admittedly it is simpler just to meet in the school.) But this mechanic of meeting alternately at the sponsoring parishes speaks volumes about each parish's "ownership" of the school and makes it easier for the parents and parishioners of each parish to attend a meeting occasionally.

NOTE

Usually, the parishes agree to pay the subsidy needed on a prorated formula according to the proportion of students from eac parish. (Students not affiliated with a sponsoring parish are required to pay the prorated share in additional tuition. Th alternative is that the sponsoring parishes simply assume that cost in the ratio of their students enrolled in the school.)

Another formula is for parishes to contribute on the basis of their "ability to pay", i.e., they contribute to an identical percentag of their gross income (from last year) regardless of the number of students they send. The percentage is set high enough t cover the subsidy need. This type of formula tends to motivate parishes to encourage attendance.

Some combination of these formulas is also possible. e.g., 60% of the subsidy to be based on percentage of students and 40% assessed according to parish "ability to pay".

Once the budget is approved, the parishes are obliged to the dollar amount agreed to, even though enrollment changes ma alter the ratio. It would be reasonable to recalculate the amounts during the year, for example, in September and January an alter the parishes' shares accordingly. Obviously though, it is not possible to pay the bills if a parish assessment is reduce each time a student transfers out.

Lesson 2
BOARD POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

The purpose of this lesson is to give board members an understanding of the distinction between policy and regulation as well as some skill in constructing policy.

For Leader's Notes, see page 43.

SECTION A
Policy/Regulation Clarification

One of the key responsibilities of a school board is adopting policies for the school. Policy gives direction to the school. To a large extent, it sets the tone and style of the institution. It is the link that translates the board's vision and expectations into the practical day-to-day life of the school.

Making policy is the role of the board. Implementing policy is the role of the principal. The "administrative regulation" is one of the tools used by a principal to implement board policy. It is extremely important that both the board and the principal understand and honor the distinction between policy (the board's area) and regulation (the principal's area).

A *policy* is a guide for discretionary action. This is a very important definition. A policy gives the administrator the mind of the board. It tells the principal what outcome the board expects. It does not tell the principal how to achieve that outcome. It is the principal's responsibility to determine how the policy should be implemented. This is where the principal's professional judgment and management skill come into play.

A *regulation*, on the other hand, is a rule which mandates certain procedures or behaviors. A regulation is created by the administrator. It is much more specific than a policy and outlines (or helps to outline) how the administrator is going to implement a policy.

An example might help. The board adopts a policy which says, "Students are to wear uniforms which are neat, modest, and provide for seasonal differences." The regulation takes it from there. It might say, "Boys shall wear dark green or dark blue pants, white shirts and dark, solid color ties. Girls will wear . . ." The regulation becomes a very detailed and precise instruction that implements the general direction set in the policy.

Remember, regulation is just one tool. The principal may implement the policy also by adopting programs or by establishing procedures. For example, in response to a board policy which requires that sex education be provided through formal, sequential instruction in grades one through eight, the principal might simply implement such a program—without enlisting the aid of a regulation. Similarly, the principal could follow a board policy which directs that graduation exercises be simple and brief by arranging for eighth grade commencement activities faithful to that description. Here again, a regulation would be unnecessary.

Just as not every policy demands a corresponding regulation, not every regulation written by the principal follows from board policy. Indeed, it would not be unusual to find that most of the regulations contained in the principal's handbook for parents and students have no antecedent in policy.

If a board begins to specify how its directions are to be implemented, the school is in for trouble. The board must trust its administrator to determine the specifics of how a policy will be implemented. The principal does not have to do this in the way that the board members might have chosen. If the policies are, in fact, implemented, and the desired result is achieved, the administrator is successful. Putting it strongly, it's none of the board's business how the result is achieved, as long as it is achieved. (Of course, it is also important that the regulations made by the principal are designed to implement the board's policies, not what he or she thought should have been adopted by the board as policy!)

Appreciation of this distinction is one of the most important understandings that board members need to bring to their role. If the board does not provide its administrator with policy direction, then it has seriously failed in its reason for existing. If, on the other hand, the board attempts to "run the school" with a collection of detailed, board-adopted regulations, then the school is in the hands of amateurs who are paying a hobbled and frustrated principal just to be an enforcer.

Here are some examples of policies and regulations which might help to clarify the concept.

Policy: Teacher evaluations should be geared toward teacher growth. They should be done regularly and written summary records of progress should be included with teachers' files.

Regulation: The principal will make class observations for each teacher once in September, at least once again before Christmas, and in the second semester. Evaluations will include a pre-conference, a lesson observation, and a post-conference with the teacher. Summary notes for the record will be signed by both the principal and the teacher.

Policy: Prayer, including memorized prayer, is to be a regular part of the school program.

Regulation: Teachers are to include prayer daily in the opening exercises. The following memorized prayers are to be included at least once each week, beginning with the second grade: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be to the Father.

Policy: A reasonable amount of homework will be expected of students, at least in the middle and junior high grades.

Regulation: For grades 4-6, homework assignments should be given at least three times each week, and should include from 30 to 60 minutes of work.

Policy: Tuition is to be paid monthly, and delinquent accounts shall be referred to the pastor.

Regulation: Tuition payments are due by the 10th of each month (September-June). The principal will contact families in arrears. Accounts more than one month overdue will be referred to the pastor, and those students are subject to suspension.

Policy: The school shall provide opportunities for students to participate in service activities.

Regulation: The principal will determine a service project with each teacher. This project shall be the specific responsibility of that class during the year. Service activities which require parental involvement or absence from school are to be individually approved by the principal.

SECTION B
Policy Proposal Drafting

Below are drafts of some policy proposals for a school board. Based on your understanding of the nature of school policy, and the distinction between a board policy and an administrator's regulation, review these drafts. Identify any weaknesses that you find and, together, try to rewrite the drafts so that they meet the definition of good policy.

(Note: for purposes of this exercise, it's not necessary to debate the wisdom of the policy. Just try to get each one into good policy form.)

1. Students are not permitted in the school building before 8 o'clock in the morning or after 4 o'clock in the afternoon.
2. The laws of this state make corporal punishment of students legal.
3. Field trips and other use of community resources are encouraged. Precautions for student supervision and safety should be scrupulously observed.
4. Faculty meetings are to be held at 3:00 on the second Tuesday of each month. They should provide opportunity for professional growth as well as for doing necessary school business.
5. Just as children grow physically at different rates, so also their ability to master skills and concepts will vary from individual to individual. The school has an obligation to be sensitive to the differing needs of students. Admittedly, this is not always easy to do in a large school with relatively large classes and limited resources. The school should, however, use a variety of resources, grouping techniques, provisions for remedial work, and enrichment opportunities to reach out to the individual needs of students as far as is practicable. Parent volunteers should be enlisted to assist as teacher aides, library assistants, and remedial tutors. Our school should do all that it can to sustain our wonderful reputation as concerned about each family and each child.

SECTION C
Policy/Regulation Exercises

Here is a series of examples of policies and administrative regulations. On the line under each number, indicate whether the statement is a policy (P) or a regulation (R). At the end are the answers so you can check your responses.

1. Empty milk cartons are to be discarded in the trash cans at the cafeteria exit. _____
2. Parents are expected to contribute to the life of the school in general as well as to support the education of their own children. _____
3. Teachers are to leave weekly lesson plans in the office by noon on Monday. These will be returned by the end of the day. _____
4. When a student returns to school after an absence, the principal shall require a note or other means of verification from the parent. Tardiness will be dealt with as the principal thinks appropriate. _____
5. For purposes of safety, the south parking area is reserved before and after school for the school bus traffic: auto traffic should use the north entrance. _____

6. The decision to retain a child in the same grade is to be made by the principal, based on what the principal considers to be in the best interest of the child and after thorough consultation with the child's teachers and parents. _____

7. The fourth Friday of each month is dress-down day. _____

8. Weekly detention period will be on Thursday from 3 until 4 p.m. _____

9. Fundraising projects are not to involve door-to-door solicitation by students. _____

10. Normally class size shall not exceed 35 for grades 1-8 or 20 for kindergarten. _____

11. Each teacher's list of absences for the day is to be sent to the office promptly after the opening exercises. _____

12. Teachers must be active, committed Catholics. _____

13. An appropriate observation of Martin Luther King day is to be scheduled annually. _____

14. No talking in the library. _____

15. No loud talking is allowed in the library. _____

16. The library is to be kept exclusively as a location for study and reading. _____

Answers:

1. R	5. R	9. P	13. P
2. P	6. P	10. P	14. R
3. R	7. R	11. R	15. R
4. P	8. R	12. P	16. P

Lesson 3
DEVELOPING AN AGENDA FOR THE BOARD MEETING

The purpose of this lesson is to give the group some new insights and skills in building agendas which better focus meetings and make them more productive.

For Leader's Notes, see page 44.

SECTION A
Agenda Formats

Here are three agendas. Believe it or not, they are for the very same meeting. The first generally follows the *Robert's Rules of Order* format which is probably quite familiar to you. The second lists topics. The third gives a more detailed outline of the items to be dealt with.

Read them through. Then go on to the question at the end.

AGENDA 1

1. Prayer
2. Approval of minutes
3. Correspondence
4. Committee reports
5. Old business
6. New business
7. Other

AGENDA 2

1. Prayer
2. Approval of January minutes
3. Budget; tuitions
4. Tuition prepayment
5. Policy on separated parents
6. Religion test
7. Enrollment Committee report
8. Principal's report
9. Monthly financial report
10. President's report
11. Diocesan School Board report
12. Open session

AGENDA 3

1. Prayer
2. Report on the religion test taken in November by eighth grade students (Ms. Jackson)
3. Open session (20 minute limit)
4. Approval of January minutes
5. Review of preliminary budget; determination of tuition rates for next year. (See Finance Committee recommendations.) (Mr. Carney)
6. Second reading and vote on proposed policy P-17: "In situations of divorced or separated parents, the parent who does not have custody will, on request, be entitled to general information on the child's progress." (Mr. Lohr)
7. Discussion: Would we want to adopt a tuition prepayment policy as a possible means of dealing with delinquent tuition? (Mr. Carney)
8. Principal's report (Mrs. Baker)
9. President's report (Mr. Diehl)

Note enclosures: January minutes, preliminary budget and tuition proposal, principal's report, monthly financial report, Diocesan Board report, Enrollment Committee report.

Please suggest three reasons why Agenda 3 is more likely than Agenda 1 or Agenda 2 to bring about a productive and efficiently run meeting.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

SECTION B
Agenda Preparation

Hopefully, your study of Section A of this lesson plan gave you some insight into the role an agenda can play in helping the group's members prepare for and participate in a meeting and in controlling the length and direction of a meeting. A well done agenda becomes a blueprint for efficient use of a group's time.

Constructing an agenda like Agenda 3 does take a little more time, but it is well worth the effort.

Normally preparation of the agenda is the joint responsibility of the principal and the board president. However, as a group now build a preliminary, tentative agenda for your next meeting.

STEP 1: Make a group list of items that might be included in the next agenda. To prod your thinking, how about:

- Items carried over from this meeting.
- Committee reports due.
- Future events or deadlines coming.
- Pending policies or projects.
- Long range needs or plans.
- New programs or special events happening in the school.

STEP 2: Identify the items on the list which require neither discussion nor action by the board, but are merely intended to inform. These can be taken care of by written reports; delete them. Ask the president or principal to contact the people involved and request written reports.

STEP 3: Make a judgment: Can the rest of the items be reasonably handled in one meeting of a decent length? If there are too many, delete some. (Put them off until a later meeting or take care of them in another way.)

STEP 4: Arrange the remaining items in some logical order. Here are a few norms:

- Schedule participating guests early so they don't have to stay for "all your dull business" unless they choose to.
- Schedule the most difficult item late enough so the group has developed some momentum but early enough so that people are not too tired to give their best to it.
- Avoid putting two difficult or controversial items back to back.
- If the same person is doing two lengthy items, separate them on the agenda. This gives the person and the group a rest.
- Put expendable (or postponable) items at or near the end so they can be dropped if the meeting is going too long.
- Vary the order from your usual pattern. (Ever try putting the prepared prayer at the end?)

STEP 5: Assign responsibility for each item. (Also, of course, be sure the person assigned knows that he or she is responsible!)

STEP 6: What background information on each item would be helpful for board members to have ahead of time so that they can make a wiser, more expeditious decision? Who will get it ready? How will it be sent? (Notice that an agenda of this type, with supporting information, must be sent early so members will have time to read the materials.)

SECTION C
Analysis of an Agenda

Here are some observations about the "Agenda 3" model which you examined earlier.

Easy to take at the beginning. Not easy to put in writing. Builds enthusiasm. Lets the teacher (Ms. Jackson) go home early.

Agenda 3

1. Prayer
2. Report on the religion test taken in November by eighth grade students (Ms. Jackson)
3. Open session (20 minute limit)
4. Approval of January minutes
5. Review of preliminary budget; determination of tuition rates for next year. (See Finance Committee recommendations.) (Mr. Carney)
6. Second reading and vote on proposed policy P-17: "In situations of divorced or separated parents, the parent who does not have custody will, on request, be entitled to general information on the child's progress." (Mr. Lohr)
7. Discussion: Would we want to adopt a tuition prepayment policy as a possible means of dealing with delinquent tuition? (Mr. Carney)
8. Principal's report (Mrs. Baker)
9. President's report (Mr. Diehl)

Provides parents an opportunity to speak to their boards. (They also can go home early; compare to Agenda 2 where they got a chance but only at the end.) Time is controlled for the board's convenience.

Copies sent ahead. No need to read them at the meeting.

A "heavy." Information sent to board members in writing cuts down presentation time and helps them to formulate questions and preliminary judgment.

Note: Helpful information (reprint of the proposal) put right into the agenda sheet.

Wording an item as a question does wonders to clarify what the board is supposed to decide. (Compare this to item 4 in Agenda 2—"Tuition prepayment"—which gives no clue about what the board will be asked to do or why.)

Note enclosures: January minutes, preliminary budget and tuition proposal, principal's report, monthly financial report, Diocesan Board report, Enrollment Committee report.

May take an extra stamp, but makes for more productive, less boring, and shorter meetings! By contrast in "Agenda 2" items 6 through 11 were reports—potentially long and deadly—with no board involvement or decision needed after item 5.

I.e. whatever part can't put in writing ahead of time.

Note: Relatively little of the talking at this "Agenda 3" meeting will be done by the president or principal.

Is the agenda for your board meeting posted in a prominent place in the parish well ahead of the meeting?

Why would an agenda like "Agenda 3" be more likely than one like "Agenda 1" or "Agenda 2" to promote parish interests in school board meetings?

SECTION C
Analysis of an Agenda

Here are some observations about the "Agenda 3" model which you examined earlier.

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Is the agenda for your board meeting posted in a prominent place in the parish well ahead of the meeting?

Why would an agenda like "Agenda 3" be more likely than one like "Agenda 1" or "Agenda 2" to promote parish interests in school board meetings?

20-A

Lesson 4
GETTING THINGS DECIDED: THE CONSENSUS PROCESS

The purpose of this lesson is to give members an understanding of decision making by consensus and how it differs from the use of Robert's Rules of Order.

For Leader's Notes, see page 45.

SECTION A
Differences between Majority Rule and Consensus

Consensus decision making is the model in which decisions are made by the general consent of the group rather than by the majority rule used in parliamentary procedure. It is not difficult to make consensus work with relatively small and friendly groups.

In consensus decision making a good decision is one which each member of the group understands and recognizes as the best that can be made, given the divergent views of the members. It's a decision which is unlikely to please everyone totally, but one which each member of the group can support.

The group still begins with a recommendation, but this recommendation serves as *proposal* rather than a *motion*. Then, in the discussion that follows, board members work toward a decision which the whole group—not merely a majority of the group—can endorse.

Each member has some responsibility to help the chairperson find an acceptable decision. As the discussion goes along, the chairperson alters the proposal to incorporate suggestions which appear to bring the group closer together. This process replaces voting on amendments, the method following in parliamentary procedure for altering a motion.

Instead of the "order" prescribed by *Robert's Rules*, courtesy and common sense keep the group working in an efficient manner. The chairperson sees that members do not all speak at once or break into private conversation.

When the discussion seems to reach a conclusion, the chairperson says, "Is it everyone's judgment that, given the various concerns and suggestions we have heard, our decision should be (such and such)?" There may still be hold-outs, and if time has run out for that item, or if additional efforts have been fruitless, then the chairperson must say, "We've not been able to reach a consensus, so reluctantly, we will have to vote and the majority will rule."

Here are some differences between *Robert' Rules of Order* and consensus decision-making:

ROBERT's RULES	CONSENSUS
Majority Rules. There are winners and losers	The *group* "rules', altering the proposal to accommodate varying points of view.
Each member works for his/her own point of view.	Each member works for a decision all can buy into.
Changes are made by amendment (motion, second, discussion, question, vote.)	Changes are made by the chairperson's accommodating to the direction of the discussion.
Chairperson is a police officer monitoring the order of the discussion.	Chairperson is key listener and negotiator seeking accommodations that will move the group toward agreement.
Chairperson "recognizes" persons who wish to speak.	Chairperson actively involves even the quiet members in contributing to the discussion.

Here are some expressions that become characteristic of consensus decision making:

"How would we improve this proposal to reduce your reservations about it, Charlie?"
(. . .instead of, "Do you want to put an amendment in the form of a motion?")

"Do you all generally agree that you could support this with these accommodations. . .?"
(. . .instead of, "I call for the question.")

"Norma, what do you think? We haven't heard from you yet."
(. . .instead of, "Is there any further discussion?")

"Phil, wait until we're sure we understand Helen's point here."
(. . .instead of, "You're out of order.")

"Linda, what you're suggesting then is . . . Does the group see that as helpful?"
(. . .instead of, "The ayes have it; the motion to amend is carried.")

"Should we give this some more thought and see if, by next meeting, we can suggest something closer to what you can live with?"
(. . .instead of, "I move to table the motion.")

"May I see a show of hands? Does everyone feel that we have exhausted our options for altering this proposal, and that what we have now is the best we can agree upon to deal with the issue?"
(. . .instead of, "I call the question. Those in favor say, 'Aye' Opposed 'No.")

Because *Robert's Rules of Order* is dysfunctional for meetings of small groups such as school boards, most boards, in fact, tend to use some modification of consensus decision making. They may start with a motion but will discuss it informally using the consensus model until some agreement has been reached. Then the motion will be amended to reflect the changes which the group has made and the amended motion will be formally voted on.

If this variation works for your school board, go ahead with it.

SECTION B
Comparison between Majority Rule and Consensus

The principal has recommended to the board the adoption of a drug alcohol education program for grades 7 and 8. It is being offered by a local mental health center and consists of materials for class lessons plus sessions given by the center's staff. The cost is to be $550. $300 for student materials at $5 per student, plus teacher materials and staff time. (A portion of the real cost of staff time to the center is being paid by a community grant.) A problem is that the school budget has allowed only $400 in contingency funds—and it is only November.

Here are two sets of minutes for the discussion. One reports on the decision reached using *Robert's Rules of Order.* The other reports on the decision reached by consensus. Reflect on the difference of style and results.

Here are some questions to help your thinking:

1. How many people participate in each of the two processes?
2. What further issues are raised in the scenario which follows the consensus model? Why don't these come up in the scenario which uses parliamentary procedure?
3. Which process is more likely to contribute toward the building of "solidarity" among board members? Why?
4. Analyze the behavior of the chairperson in each scenario. what leadership skills are tapped in the parliamentary model? In the consensus model?

ROBERT's RULES

Mrs. A moved and Mr. B seconded that the principal be authorized to introduce the Mental Health Center's drugs/alcohol program at a cost of $550.

Mr. C spoke in favor of the program and praised the work of the Center's staff in this area.

Mrs. D objected that the program should have been in the budget and that it would be irresponsible for the board to accept it before the next budget year.

Mr. E moved and Mr. C seconded an amendment that the program be limited to grade 8 this year to bring its cost down to $400 maximum. Mr. B and Mrs. A spoke to the need for grade 7 and the added impact of doing this with both grades at once. The motion to amend failed 3-4 with 2 abstentions.

Mrs. A offered an amendment seconded by Mr. E that the board pay the $250 for Center staff costs and parents be charged $5 for the materials. Mr. B spoke to the impracticality of this. The motion failed 3-6.

Mrs. D called for the question and the original motion failed 4-5.

CONSENSUS

The board discussed the merits and feasibility of the Mental Health Center's drugs alcohol education program.

Mrs. A, Mr. B, and Mr. C spoke in favor of the program and praised the work of the Center's staff in this area.

Mrs. D objected that the program should have been in the budget and that it would be irresponsible for the board to accept it before the next budget year.

Mr. E suggested that the program be limited to grade 8 this year to bring its cost down to the $400 maximum. Mr. B and Mrs. A spoke to the need for including grade 7 and the added impact of doing this with both grades at once.

Mrs. A. suggested charging parents the $5 for student materials but others thought that impractical.

The chairperson asked whether everyone would be in favor of the idea if the funding problem could be solved. Mrs. G objected that the program did not effectively involve parents. Mr. H concurred.

CONSENSUS (continued)

Mr. **E** suggested that the Center staff would almost certainly include communications and meetings with parents as part of the program if the board asked.

Mrs. A wondered whether the board shouldn't just authorize the program and deal with the potential budget problem in February or March when other accounts might help balance it out.

Mr. **E** suggested that perhaps the Home-School Association would help with the cost.

The chairperon asked Mrs. J how she saw this and she agreed that the potential deficit amount was too small to deter a favorable decision.

The chairperson asked Mr. F how he felt about this. He said he wasn't sure the program was needed in this school but he could support the group and the principal if they thought it necessary.

The chairperson asked if there were consensus that the principal should go ahead with arrangements, asking the Center staff to include a parent component. The board will ask the Home-School for funding help and will revlew the financial implications in February. All concurred although Mrs. D expressed some anxiousness about going ahead before the financing arrangements were completely clear.

Here are a few observations on the drug/alcohol education decision making scenario.

1. Mr. **E** and Mrs. A were struggling for a compromise that would save the proposal in each scenario. The consensus format gave the opportunity to find the acceptable combination.
2. *Robert's Rules* enabled Mrs. D to bring the proposal to a vote before the board was able to discover a more satisfactory solution.
3. *Robert's Rules* created a series of negative notes. The consensus model created a joint struggle in a positive direction. Note also, however, that in the consensus process it took longer to find the position that all could support.
4. Mr. F and Mrs. J probably would never have spoken to this issue in the *Robert's Rules* model. In consensus, the chairperson asked what was going on in their minds. In a format where he was not obliged to speak, Mr. F might well have voted NO or abstained.
5. For fun: In the *Robert's Rules* format, the four votes in favor of the motion to adopt the policy were Mrs. A, Mr. B, Mr. C, and probably Mr. **E**. In the earlier vote on the amendment to drop grade 7, what is your guess on how each of the nine voting board members voted?

YES: Mr. E Mr. C _____ _____

NO: _____ _____

ABSTAIN:

SECTION C
Process in Arriving at Consensus

The leadership will have selected from the agenda for your meeting an item which requires a decision. Work on making the decision as a group, using the consensus process. Here are some things to remember:

1. Each person—not just the chairperson—is responsible for trying to achieve an acceptable decision.
2. To the extent that it's practical, *each person's* judgments and feelings should be heard and understood by the group.
3. As concerns arise, try to be thinking of new approaches or accommodations which will address them.
4. Don't use motions and votes in order to reach a decision. As the group moves toward consensus, the chairperson may ask for an informal vote simply as a way of testing the group's support for the position which appears to be emerging.
5. Be willing to accept a decision which, while not your first choice, seems to be the best decision the group can make after weighing the judgments and concerns of the individuals.
6. If no consensus decision can be reached, the chairperson will determine whether to continue the discussion at another meeting (perhaps with additional information and study) or whether to bring the matter to a regular parliamentary vote.

Lesson 5
CHURCH DOCUMENTS ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The purpose of this lesson is to familiarize board members with recent significant Church statements on Catholic education and to identify some of the important concepts in those statements.

For Leader's Notes, see page 45.

SECTION A
Review of Church Documents

In the past two decades there have been several Church documents of great significance for Catholic education and for Catholic schools. Below in chronological order is a very brief summary of these statements. Please read it in preparation for the next board meeting.

Declaration on Christian Education is one of the documents of the Vatican II Council. It was issued in 1965. The text reflects on the duties of parents, the civil society, and the church in education. It speaks to the Catholic school as being of "utmost importance" and urges "pastors and all the faithful to spare no sacrifice in helping Catholic schools fulfill their function in a continually more perfect way." Identified as the distinctive function of the Catholic school are these purposes: "to create for the school community an atmosphere enlivened by the gospel spirit of freedom and charity, . . . to help the student in such a way that the development of his own personality will be matched by the growth of that new creation he became by baptism, . . . [and] to relate all human culture eventually to the news of salvation." (art. 8) Teachers are especially challenged in their vocation which "demands special qualities of mind and heart, very careful preparation, and continuing readiness to renew and adapt." The declaration also has encouragement and advice for Catholic colleges and theological schools.

General Catechetical Directory was issued in 1971 by the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy in Rome. "The intent of this Directory," the foreword says, "is to provide the basic principles of pastoral theology . . . by which . . . the ministry of the word can be more fittingly directed and governed." The document was written for all those who have some responsibility for catechesis (i.e., "ecclesial action which leads both communities and individual members of the faithful to maturity of faith"). The **General Catechetical Directory** speaks about revelation (how God's word comes to us) and about the hierarchy of faith truths (the four basic mysteries being the triune God who creates, the incarnate Christ, the sanctifying Spirit, and the Church). It offers some insights regarding the catechetical approach appropriate for different age groups; it emphasizes the importance of formal preparation for catechists; and it addresses in a general way structures and tools for carrying out catechesis.

To Teach as Jesus Did is a pastoral message by the National Council of Catholic Bishops which was issued in 1972. It identified three main goals for all of Catholic education: to teach the gospel *message*, to help people grow in the fellowship that is Christian *community*, and to remind the Christian of the obligation to *service*. It offered specific counsel to various components of Catholic education: adult education, college campuses, Catholic schools, CCD, youth ministry, etc. On the Catholic school, it sounded a very up-beat note: "Of the educational programs available to the Catholic community, Catholic schools afford the fullest and best opportunity to realize the threefold purpose of Christian education among children and young people."

each Them is a statement specifically on Catholic schools which was released by the Bishops of the United States atholic Conference in 1976. It reaffirms the support of the American hierarchy for Catholic schools. "The reasons re compelling. Generally these schools are notably successful educational institutions which offer not only high uality academic programs but also instructions and formation in the beliefs, values and traditions of Catholic hristianity. . . They have a highly positive impact on adult religious behavior." The document encourages efforts sustain Catholic schools which serve poverty areas. It also complements and challenges parents, teachers, dministrators, and pastors.

he Catholic School was produced by the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education in Rome in 1977. The ocument is a ringing endorsement of the pastoral value of Catholic schools. They are seen as places where faith is art of the school's culture and where "all members of the school community share this Christian vision." The chools are called upon to integrate "all the different aspects of human knowledge through the subjects taught in the ght of the Gospel" and to help young people "grow towards maturity in faith." Teachers are particularly challenged "reveal the Christian message not only by word but also by every gesture of their behavior."

haring the Light of Faith is also called the *National Catechetical Directory* (NCD). It was written by the United States Catholic Conference for the American bishops and was approved by Rome in 1978. Our country's sequel to he *General Catechetical Directory*, this is now the most important document relating to our Catholic education.

t speaks first to some general principles on catechetics. For example, it defines the source of catechetics as "God's ord, fully revealed in Jesus Christ" and identifies the "signs" or manifestations of God's word as falling into four ategories: biblical, liturgical (Mass and sacraments), ecclesial (e.g. creeds) and natural (God's presence in the orld).

Next the *NCD* outlines the content of the catechetical message. This is a beautiful concise summary of Catholic aith. After this, there follow special chapters on catechesis for worship, for social ministry, and for faith maturity including sections on conscience formation and sexuality).

Finally the directory offers some insight and guidance in the very practical areas of personnel, organizations, and esources for catechesis.

In its guidelines for Catholic schools, the *NCD* advises schools "to have a set religion curriculum with established goals and objectives," to build and foster community among staff and students, to provide for "creative paraliturgies and sacramental celebrations," to introduce students to the practice of Christian service, and to develop in students "a social conscience sensitive to the needs of all." Of the Catholic schools' uniqueness the *NCD* says, "Growth in faith is central to their purpose." The schools are called upon to integrate their educational efforts with those of the parish(es), and teachers are charged with being witnesses to the Gospel and demonstrating commitment to community, service, and the teaching authority of the Church.

Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith was issued by the Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education in 1982. This document provides a theological rationale for the role of the lay person as educator. "The lay Catholic educator is a person who exercises a specific mission within the church by living in faith a secular vocation in the communitarian structure of the school." The statement calls the educator, by his/her example, instructional methods, and personal contacts with students, to show respect for the individual dignity of each student, to provide principles by which students can think and act both critically and creatively within their culture, to communicate information truthfully, and to encourage students toward social awareness and responsible decision making. The document stresses the importance of ongoing professional and religious education for educators. It asks "all believers [to] actively collaborate in the work of helping educators to reach the social status and the economic level that they must have if they are to accomplish their task." This includes "an adequate salary guaranteed by a well-defined contract." Finally, the document states that the lay educator "should participate authentically in the responsibility for the school."

SECTION B
School Philosophy Based on Documents

Below are the first few paragraphs of a Catholic school's statement of its philosophy Please discuss it in the light o your reading of Section A. Where do you see specific influence of Church documents on Catholic education?

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

(1) St. Gregory School is a Catholic school whose purpose is to nourish young people in faith and in development of their talent for their own growth and for service to others (2) The school sees itself as a complement to the parents in providing educatio to the children of this parish. (3) It accepts the Church's mandate to share the gospel message, to build community and to serv and teach service while providing a quality education.

(4) The faculty members of St. Gregory School understand their responsibility to give witness to their faith and to form community within the school. (5) Teachers are committed to encourage students by methods of positive reinforcement rathe than by corporal punishment or threats of failure. (6) They recognize also that all students do not work at the same rate of speed or on the same level. (7) They strive to create classroom climate in which students realize that the teacher is concerned abou their personal growth as well as for their education. (8) The school works to help students to be caring about others and to grow in awareness of their responsibility for peace and justice in the larger world community.

(9) St. Gregory School accepts the responsibility to provide students with a strong foundation in the basic skills, a well rounded program of religious education, and an integration of religion an values in other subjects such as social studies and language arts.

(10) St. Gregory School is a partner to the other religious education activities of the parish and, with them, seeks to "proclaim the good news of salvation to all. . . . and train them to live knowingly as children of God."

(Note: Were there elements you expected to find in the statement and did not? Are you familiar with any documents that give parallel philosophical direction to public schools or public school teachers?)

SECTION C
Projects Based on Document Readings

As a follow up to the board's review of the documents on Catholic education, please do one of these projects:

1. If you can obtain a copy of one of the documents studied, read it or at least page through it.
2. Read the statement of philosophy for your school. Look for signs of the directions suggested by the Church documents.
3. Review the past year's board minutes. Is there evidence of the board's involvement (through inservice or its business) in fostering the ideals in Church documents?

SECTION D
Test of Statements Contained in Documents

Please select the correct answers for completing these statements:

1. The 1972 document in which the American Catholic bishops outlined the purposes of Catholic education is
   ____ a) National Catechetical Directory
   ____ b) The Catholic School
   ____ c) To Teach as Jesus Did
   ____ d) Humanae Vitae
2. Sharing the gospel message was identified by the bishops in 1972 as only one of three major goals of Catholic education. The other two were
   ____ a) Providing an alternative to public schools
   ____ b) Teaching students to serve
   ____ c) Giving instruction for first sacraments
   ____ d) Involving students in a faith community
   ____ e) Preparing leaders for the Church's future
   ____ f) Developing a well rounded person
3. Specific content goals for religious education are spelled out in a 1978 document whose title is
   ____ a) Catechesi Tradendae
   ____ b) Sharing the Light of Faith
   ____ c) Teach Them
   ____ d) Ascent to Excellence in Catholic Education
4. The document which speaks to the roles of parents, civil authority, and the Church in education is:
   ____ a) Vatican II's Declaration on Christian Education
   ____ b) Basic Teachings for Catholic Religious Education
   ____ c) To Teach as Jesus Did
   ____ d) General Catechetical Directory
5. The National Catechetical Directory addresses some special issues that require the attention of catechists. Among them:
   ____ a) conscience formation
   ____ b) facing contemporary social issues
   ____ c) sexuality
   ____ d) all of the above

Answers:

Q. 1—"c" (*To Teach as Jesus Did*) is the answer

"a" The National Catechetical Directory (or Sharing the Light of Faith) is the 1978 document that speaks about th principles and content of catechetics.

"b" The Catholic School is the 1977 Roman document which underlines the continuing merit of Catholic schools

"d" Humanae Vitae is Pope Paul VI's encyclical on human life and contraception.

Q. 2—"b" and "d" are correct.

The others are all valid goals for a Catholic school but aren't the message—community—service goals identifie in *To Teach as Jesus Did*.

Q. 3—"b" Sharing the Light of Faith (or the National Catechetical Directory) is the answer.

"a" Catechesi Tradendae is an apostolic exhortation by Pope John Paul II (1979) which reflects on the crucial rol of catechetics in the history and life of the Church.

"c" *Teach Them* is the 1976 American bishops' statement in support of Catholic schools.

"d" Ascent to Excellence in Catholic Education is the book on Catholic school boards by Dr. Mary-Angela Harpe

Q. 4—"a" Vatican II's Declaration on Christian Education.

"b" Basic Teachings for Catholic Religious Education is a 1973 statement by the American bishops which "specifies the doctrinal basics which the bishops expect in teaching Catholic doctrine." It has been replaced now by the *National Catechetical Directory*.

Note also that *Teach Them* is also quite explicit on the topic of the roles of parents, civil authority, and Church education.

Q. 5—"d".

Lesson 6
EVALUATING THE BOARD'S PERFORMANCE

The purpose of this lesson is to provide the board with information and skills to help it in evaluating its activity as a board.

For Leader's Notes, see page 46.

SECTION A
Perspective on Evaluations

Evaluation of the board's performance will constitute the topic of the next board study lesson. Evaluation is intended to help the board become more effective in its service to the school. Evaluation can also point out ways for making participation on the board a more satisfying experience for board members.

The main purpose of evaluation is not to be negative or critical, but to provide the board some perspective on how it operates. It's like a Monday screening of the films of the big game. (What made this play work? What prevented that play from working? What should we change before next weekend's game?) This genre of evaluation is not in the category of let's-see-what-we-can-catch-somebody-at! It is an important, even essential, component of the board's responsibility. It must be routinely included in the annual program of the board. Evaluation should be done formally: thought should be given to the format for it and a block of the board's time should provide review and feedback on each of the board's responsibilities, and also on the mechanics of the board's operating style.

Ideally, the evaluation format should include both a formal, fact-based review of the board's functions and goals and an informal, open-ended component which allows respondents to think creatively and to express their personal reactions to the experience of serving as board members.

The potential usefulness of the information that comes from an evaluation, then, is two-fold. First, it provides board members with a reaffirming view of the value of their contribution to the school. Second, it gives direction to the changes which the board might make to improve its performance.

In preparation for this lesson, please give some thought to this question:

WHAT THREE OR FOUR THINGS WOULD YOU NAME AS THE BOARD'S MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS?

Please list the items below. Discuss the questions with some of your constituents if you have the opportunity.

SECTION B
Effectiveness of Performance

One of the responsibilities of a school board is to evaluate the effectiveness of its work.

I. Please rate the effectiveness of the board this year in each of the following areas:

POLICY MAKING	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NO ACTIVITY
1. The board set goals for the school and worked toward the achievement of those goals.	____	____	____	____
2. The board set policies for the school to meet school needs.	____	____	____	____
3. The board used opportunities for input into the policy making process of the diocesan school board.	____	____	____	____
EVALUATION				
4. The board has monitored its policies to evaluate their effectiveness.	____	____	____	____
5. The board has participated in the evaluation of the principal.	____	____	____	____
6. The board has evaluated its own performance.	____	____	____	____
OTHER				
7. The board reviewed and approved the school budget.	____	____	____	____
8. The board accomplished the activities for which it had assumed responsibility in the goal-setting.	____	____	____	____
9. The board was active in promoting Catholic education in the community.	____	____	____	____
10. The board offered advice upon the request of the principal (pastor).	____	____	____	____

Please rate the effectiveness of the board's operation this year:

	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NO ACTIVITY
HE BOARD. . .				
1. Was representative of the community whom the school serves.	___	___	___	___
2. Developed or reviewed its constitution.	___	___	___	___
3. Met regularly.	___	___	___	___
HE AGENDA. . .				
4. Was prepared by the principal in collaboration with the board's president.	___	___	___	___
5. Was distributed well in advance of the meetings.	___	___	___	___
6. Made clear what action was expected on each item (e.g., a vote, discussion, listening/receiving information).	___	___	___	___
7. Was accompanied by appropriate background data.	___	___	___	___
HE BOARD MEETING. . .				
8. Was faithful to the agenda, moving through items in a deliberate and orderly fashion.	___	___	___	___
OMMITTEES OF THE BOARD. . .				
9. Had clearly defined tasks.	___	___	___	___
0. Reported regularly to the board about their progress on assigned tasks.	___	___	___	___
1. Upon completion of their tasks, made specific recommendations to the board for its consideration.	___	___	___	___

SECTION C
Assessing Board Effectiveness

The exercise presented in Section B represents one approach to evaluation of the board. There are other ways attempting to assess the board's effectiveness. Here are some ideas. Your board might give thought to these f future occasions.

1. Make a list of the board's accomplishments for the year. (This can be done at a meeting so that all of the grou contributes, or it can be reconstructed from the minutes by the principal or president.) The board the constructs a similar list of things that the members had hoped to accomplish but had not, and of things that ha been only partially accomplished. It is not necessary to give a "rating". Remember that the whole purpose the evaluation is to help the board grow in effectiveness. Seeing what was done and what wasn't done shoul help the members to gain some insights regarding what works and what doesn't work. "Why were w successful in these things? Why were we unsuccessful in those things? How might we operate differently ne year to fulfill our purposes better?"

2. There is value in getting the assistance of a consultant from outside of the board organization to help with th evaluation. A consultant is in a position to bring a degree of objectivity which the board members would n have. A consultant can compare the board's activities and accomplishments with the purposes and goal which it is supposed to be addressing. A consultant will probably use several tools: for example, he or she ma review the constitution and minutes, discuss the board with the principal, board officers, and pastor, conduct survey of parents and teachers to generate data, sit in as an observer at a board meeting or two. Th consultant will then be in a position to offer observations and recommendations regarding the board' operation and effectiveness. This approach is time consuming and can be expensive. Perhaps the diocesa education office or some other department of diocese has someone able to help in this capacity. Perhap someone in the parish has the skill and would be willing to make this contribution to the school. Of course it i also possible simply to hire this service; it would be legitimate for a board to build this item into its budget, a least periodically.

3. A board-conducted survey of parents would also give the board some objective data for evaluation. Th problem is that while surveys look easy, they are actually deceptively difficult to design and interpret. You mus begin with very definite ideas about what data you need. You must also have skill in designing the instrumen to obtain that information. It is important to get knowledgeable assistance if the board plans to go this rou

4. If the board has done goal setting and has objectives and projects which are clearly stated and accompanie by performance standards, then it is relatively easy for either the board or a consultant to evaluate the board' performance. The standards have been met, or they have not been met. In either case, there is merit in usin some board time to reflect on why some were met and others not, on approaches that worked and those tha didn't work, and on ideas that might make the board's work easier or more productive next year. Even if the board does not do formal goal setting, it is ultimately helpful to the evaluation process if the board begins each year with a few informal goals: "This year we hope, as a minimum, to accomplish these things: . . ."

Having reviewed the board's performance in the exercise in Section B, please list below 3 or 4 goals which you would like the board to pursue during the next 12 months. These may be projects for the board, projects for the school, and/or things that will make the board function better.

Lesson 7
SETTING GOALS FOR THE BOARD

The purpose of this lesson is to give the members a familiarity with the value, purpose, and process of formal goal setting.

For Leader's Notes, see page 47.

SECTION A
Planning: Goals and Objectives

Please read this background sheet before the next board meeting.

Planning is an organization's way of making sure it knows where it is going and how it will get there. Board planning enables you to project some vision of what you would like for the school and it helps you to pursue that vision systematically. It gives some guarantee that the time and energy you invest in the board will not be wasted or dissipated.

There are different models for going about planning. The one described here is a simplified variation of the planning by objectives approach. In brief, the theory is that you start with long-range goals, narrow those down to a series of short-range objectives, and then decide on projects that will accomplish the objectives.

A "goal" is something you want to accomplish over a long period of time, over five years for example An "objective" is a portion of the goal which can be achieved in a shorter period of time, in one year for example. Suppose your school is serving 50% of the parish's students and you set as a five-year goal increasing that percentage to 75%. A first year objective could be to increase enrollment to 55% of the parish children; that could be followed by subsequent objectives of 60%, 65%, 70% and 75%. Other objectives—and these probably would be more constructive and helpful—might be:

- Open a kindergarten for recruitment purposes.
- Establish a tuition supplement fund to reduce the chances that parents will decide not to send their children to the parish school simply because they cannot afford the cost of tuition.
- Establish a parent-to-parent recruitment program.
- Add a curriculum enrichment component to the school's academic program to make it more attractive.
- Survey the reasons why 50% of parents do not choose the school.

These are all "objectives," each one of which will contribute to achieving the goal of increased enrollment. They can be accomplished in a relatively short time (like a year).

One more step is required before the planning is complete. Specific "projects" or programs have to be designed which will achieve (or help to achieve) each objective. For each of these projects you need to identify exactly *what* is to be done, *who* is to be responsible for it, *when* it is to be completed, and by what *standards* its success will be measured.

To build on the examples used above, a project or projects need to be identified which will accomplish the objective of providing a tuition supplement fund. The board might decide as a project to inaugurate the adopt-a-student concept. Mr. Jones agrees to take responsibility for this project. By way of timetable, the board sets two dates: the planning is to be done by March 31, and the appeal to the parishioners is to be completed by May 15. The board sets $10,000 as a goal, but agrees that it will consider the project a success if it realizes $6,000.

Obviously, it will take a galaxy of projects to pursue effectively each of the objectives that might be identified. Care must be taken not to overload the people involved. If time or resources aren't sufficient to do everything, then some priority judgments must be made, and something less than the perfect plan must be adopted.

Here are some qualities that characterize both a good goal and a good objective:

- It should be relevant. This means that it is clearly a part of the school board's business and clearly a part of the school's function.
- It should be visionary. It should represent some worthwhile hope for the school's future.
- It should be possible. This means it's within the capabilities of the board. There's a difference between planning and wishful thinking.
- It should be measurable. You should be able to see in some way whether you've made progress or not. (Of course, as you move along, you'll want to be sure also that the goal is still as relevant, worthwhile, and possible as the board originally envisioned.)

So, in summary, a plan in this format consists of a collection of long range targets to be reached (goals), broken down into manageable short term segments (objectives), and accomplished by specific activities (projects).

SECTION B
Role Playing Exercise

This will be a brief role play. Assume that your board has done a session already to identify needs and has decided on its first goal—a parish awareness goal. An initial objective has been formulated and one project has been agreed to. As you pick up now, try to add another project and (if there is time) another objective.

Remember the definitions:

A *goal* is something you wish to accomplish over a long period of time (e.g., five years). An *objective* is a part of a goal or a step toward a goal which can be accomplished in a short period of time (e.g., one year). A *project* is an activity which will help to achieve an objective; it tells what will be done, by whom, by when, and by what standards its success will be measured.

GOAL 1: One of our goals is to make the parish more aware of the quality of our school program.

Objective A: One of our objectives to accomplish Goal 1 is to provide opportunities for parishioners to visit the building and see the school in action. (To evaluate this, we will look at questions like: How many opportunities did we offer? How many non-school families visited the building? What did the visitors say about the instructional program, the religion program, the cost, etc.)

Project 1. One of our projects to accomplish Objective 1A is to sponsor an open house after the Masses on Sunday in Catholic Schools Week to let the parish see the children's work. Maryann Thompson will be responsible; it will be held on February 4 with publicity out by January 10. (We will consider it a success if it is publicized and conducted smoothly, gets a reasonable number of non-school families to tour the school, and produces a generally favorable evaluation.)

Project 2: Another of our projects to accomplish Objective A is _____

_____

_____

_____

The person responsible will be _____.

It will be accomplished by _____. (We will determine

its success by _____

_____.)

Objective B: Our second *objective* for accomplishing Goal 1 is to _____

_____

_____

_____

(We expect to evaluate our success by _____

_____.)

SECTION C
Goal Setting Exercise

Call three or four of your friends or neighbors who have children in your school. Ask them what they consider to be the school needs or what concerns .hey think the school board should be thinking about. Another way to get at this is to ask what they would like to see in the future of the school, what dreams they have for the students which the school might someday address. Don't argue or alibi if they say critical things. Ask questions for more or clearer information if that seems appropriate. Thank them for their help.

Jot down the kinds of things you heard from them:

Please be prepared to discuss your list at a future meeting. The total collection will reflect some grass roots ideas for the board when it does goal setting or thinks about its program for next year.

Lesson 8
PRINCIPAL, PASTOR, AND BOARD: THE KEY RELATIONSHIPS

The purpose of this lesson is to give board members an understanding of the board's relationships with others, especially with the pastor and principal.

For Leader's Notes, see page 48.

SECTION A
Components of Relationships

The two key relationships in the life of a Catholic school board are its relationship with the pastor and its relationship with the principal. A relationship is an interaction in which each side gives something to the other and receives something back. Summarized below are the main components of those two board relationships.

The School Board Gives to the Principal:

1. **Vision.** The board communicates to the principal its expectations for the school in terms of goals and objectives.
2. **Policy direction.** The board adopts policy to indicate to the administrator, how, in general, it wants the school to function.
3. **Evaluation.** The board assists the principal by reflecting on the effectiveness of his or her service to them.
4. **Trust.** The board as a whole and its members individually do not intrude into the school administration nor attempt to influence or reverse the professional judgment of the administrator. While they are unlikely to agree with every decision that the principal makes, board members owe the principal their public support and the "benefit of the doubt" when the principal's judgment is challenged by individuals in the parish or in the greater community.
5. **Information.** On an informal basis, board members should provide the principal with any grass roots information from their constituents which may help the principal to better respond to needs and problems.
6. **Work.** This means that school board members should be willing to pitch in on request of the principal to help with projects, whether they are board-initiated or principal-initiated.

Here are the things that the board should expect to get from the principal:

1. **Direction.** This means that the principal identifies school needs for the board's attention. As the board responds to these, the principal makes policy recommendations for the board's consideration. The principal also assists in building the board's agenda (which orchestrates its activity and contribution). The initial budget draft is prepared by the principal for the board's consideration. The principal also should offer ideas, suggestions, and encouragement for the inservice development of the board members.
2. **Information.** The principal should provide the board with data that will help them make policy decisions and evalute the effectiveness of the decisions which they have made. The principal should also provide them with

general information about the school, its curricular programs, its staffing, its ongoing financial status, and any special activities which are taking place. If there are special problems occurring or anticipated, it is a normal courtesy for the principal to inform the board members. The principal should also pass along to the board general information about diocesan educational policies and activities as well as national trends and research highlights.

3. **Accountability.** The principal owes to the board the best effort as principal that he or she can give. The principal has a responsibility to implement the policies adopted by the board, as well as to heed the regulations which come from the diocesan or state level.

4. **Cooperation.** The principal needs to give to the board whatever cooperation and support it needs to function as a group. The principal provides the secretarial help to get agendas, minutes, and announcements duplicated and distributed. If the committees need assistance in getting together and accomplishing their tasks, the principal offers assistance. While there is room for private and professional differences of opinion, the principal owes the board as a whole and its individual members a public respect and loyalty. The principal should also be alert to recruiting potential new members for the board.

he school board is advisory to both the principal and the pastor. The board's advice is asked because the corporate wisdom and insight of its members are desired and appreciated. The relationshio between pastor and the school board is characterized by these responsibilities:

The **School Board Gives to the Pastor:**

1. **Cooperation.** They listen to the needs of the school and the parish as presented by the pastor (and the principal) and attempt to respond with their best advice and direction.

2. **Information.** Whether or not the pastor is a member of the board, and whether or not he attends the meetings, the board keeps him informed about its concerns, activities and plans. The board should see that the pastor gets information early when it is contemplating some significant decision; there should be no surprises for the pastor either at board meetings or in casual conversation with parishioners between board meetings!

3. **Accountability.** The board should do its job in the best way it can take responsibility for its decisions, and be willing to accept the pastor's veto if that should ever happen.

4. **Loyalty.** The board should be supportive of the pastor and his educational programs. If at all possible, differences should be worked out amicably. If the board judges that confrontation is necessary, the board should confront the pastor privately, if at all possible.

Here are the things which the school board should expect from the pastor:

1. **Confidence.** The school board is always advisory, but when a parish asks for its advice, that advice should be weighed seriously.

2. **Pastoral leadership.** The pastor should share with the school board his vision and hopes for the future of the parish, particularly its educational mission. He should assist board members to fit the school's contribution into the overall parish program. The pastor should also help board members to understand the educational mission of the Church and their own role in that ministry.

3. **Participation.** The pastor should take an interest in and be supportive of the school board and its activities. There are two schools of thought about whether the pastor should be a member of the board. One approach says that, since the school is such a major part of the parish program and budget, and since the decisions of the board should be made in a collegial fashion and honored by the pastor, he should, of course, participate as an active member in those decisions. The other school of thought says that, since the board is advisory to the pastor, it is, in effect, silly to have him give advice to himself. Either way will work provided that the pastor takes an active interest in the board's work, makes sure the board understands his position on key issues, takes their advice whenever he can, and accounts back to them if ever for some reason he cannot accept a decision they have made.
4. **Pastoral guidance.** Service on the school board should be an occasion of personal growth for the board members. The pastor should take responsibility for seeing that board members have the opportunity to pray together, and to grow in their understanding both of Church and of the Lord it celebrates.
5. **Operating help.** The board will need the pastor's help regularly for a variety of operating needs: access to the parish bulletin, the finance committee or parish council, etc. The board will also count on the pastor to help in recruiting members for the board.

SECTION B
Relationship of Board President and Principal

AGENDA DRAFT
School Board Meeting—October 14

1. Prayer
2. Approval of minutes from September 17 meeting
3. Committee reports
   a. Student welfare
   b. Public relations
   c. Home-School liaison
4. Principal's report
   a. Religion textbooks
5. Other
6. Old business
   a. Playground equipment
7. New business
   a. Discipline policy
   b. Student insurance
8. Other

The board president (Mrs B. P.) and the school principal (Mr. S. P.) are meeting the week before the board meeting to review the draft of the agenda which Mr S. P. has prepared. The substance of their conversation goes like this:

Mrs. B. P.: Do you suppose Father McAroy will do the prayer? The old goat hasn't been around for the last two meetings. We really shook him up with that policy on admissions criteria didn't we?

Mr. S. P.: I haven't seen him lately. Do you have the minutes for item 2?

Mrs. B. P.: Not yet but I expect Mrs. Wilson (board secretary) will bring them.

Mr. S. P.: On item 3, I don't think the Student Welfare committee has met. I asked the Public Relations Committee to revise our brochure and they've done a wonderful job. Mr. Thompson showed me the proofs and he'll have copies for the meeting.

Mrs. B. P.: That's great. What does the Home-School liaison have?

Mr. S. P.: Probably nothing. I think the Goggins are headed for a divorce; at any rate, Mrs. Goggin has been a scatter-brain lately.

Mrs. B. P.: What do you have for the principal's report?

Mr. S. P.: Not too much. We got new religion books for the fourth and fifth grades. They weren't in the budget but the teachers wanted them and are really pleased.

Mrs. B. P.: (very agitated): You allowed that? Why weren't religion books in the budget you proposed to us? How much did they cost?

Mr. S. P.: They were $546. We hadn't seen how good these were when I drafted the budget.

Mrs. B. P.: How are we going to sustain our credibility with the pastor and the parish council if we can't live within our budget? Well, we'll certainly need to discuss that.

Mr. S. P.: I'll probably have some other items in my report but nothing else controversial, I hope.

Mrs. B. P.: You have the playground equipment on here. I notice the new things have been installed. Is our policy about using it outside of P.E. classes working?

Mr. S. P.: I'd say so. Playground activity seems to be safe and orderly. I thought I'd tell the board that. The playground has been especially busy during lunch; the kids have more time since I discontinued the hot lunch program.

Mrs. B. P.: (angry again): Yes, I didn't know that was happening until Mrs. Lovecchio called me. Her mail comes earlier than mine. How could you do that without checking with the board? Dr you realize we worked for two years before you came to get that lunch program started?

Mr. S. P.: It was creating a mess. Besides, it tied up the cafeteria almost all day and I wanted the space for some of our study groups.

Mrs. B. P.: Well, add that to the agenda. I expect we'll want to think about that.

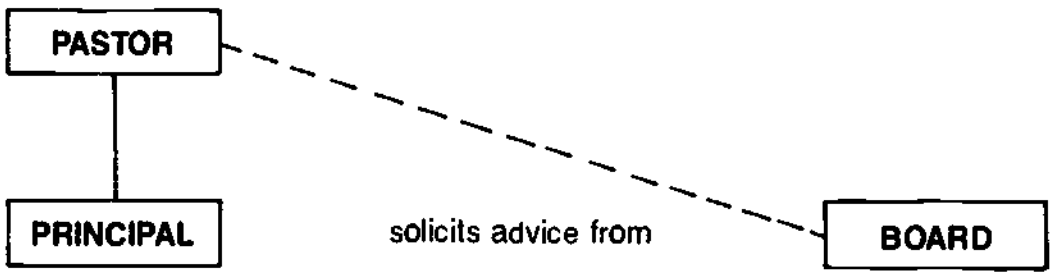
Mr. S. P.: Under new business, I have two policy items. I'd like to propose some new wording for our discipline policy. The present policy isn't working just right. I also got an ad for student insurance from Trundell Company and it sounds like a good idea.

Mrs. B. P.: I have one other item to add. Mrs. Spencer called me yesterday to complain about Johnnie's homework assignments from that Miss Glick. I think we should do someting about that Miss Glick.

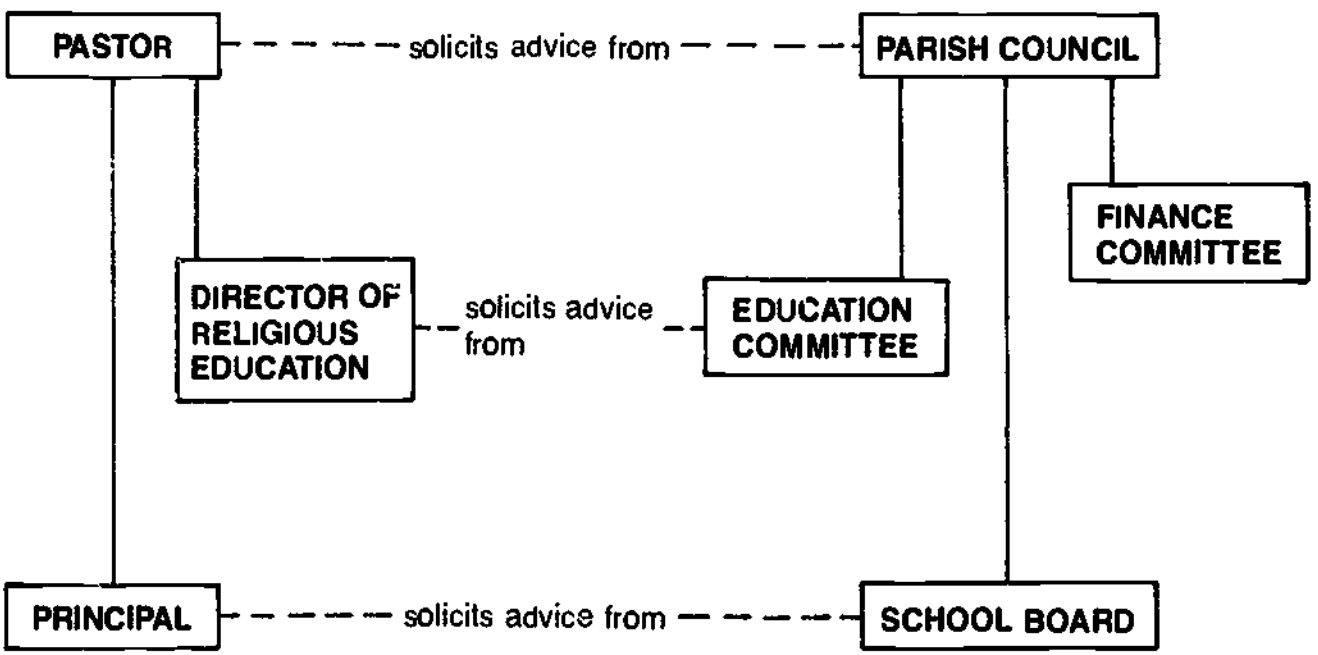
Mr. S. P.: Fine. I'll include that on the agenda and get this retyped for next week. Thanks for stopping by.

SECTION C
Relationships and Organizational Implications

The key relationships for a parish school board are those with the pastor and with the principal. The organization chart might look quite simple, like this:



These, however, are not ordinarily the only relationships that must be sustained by the board. Parish organizations these days can become somewhat complex and a number of other people and groups get involved. A parish organizational chart might look like this:



There are other variations of this. the School Board may operate as a committee of the Education Committee, for example.

The chart gets larger, even three dimensional. as it grows to include the bishop (and his advisory Diocesan Pastoral Council). the Superintendent of Schools (and his or her Diocesan School Board), vicariate councils, state education department. etc.

There are three controlling principles that apply in general to the whole organizational structure.

1. All of the councils, boards and committees are advisory. They are brought into existence, however, because their advice is seen as necessary and valuable.
2. The larger missions of the Church are preeminent. This means, for example, that the school's place is always within the larger context of the Church's teaching mission and never can be considered more important than that.
3. The activity and the decision making are done at the "lowest" feasible level. This is the principle of subsidiarity. It means that the diocese doesn't do what the parish can reasonably do, etc. (Note: the word "lowest" is in quotes because it implies a line and staff organizational structure which is more appropriate to big business than it is to a church where the Master washed the feet of his disciples.)

In all of the dealings among these people and groups, loyalty, respectful candor, and open communications must characterize the interrelationships.

Here are some implications for board relationships:

PARISH COUNCIL. The school board gives to the council acceptance and support for parish priorities, cooperation with financial arrangements, and accountability as required. The board receives back trust to do its job (subsidiarity) and perhaps some goal directions.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE. This is normally a committee of the parish council and the relationships are the same: the board gives cooperation, support, and accountability. It gets trust and sometimes goals to address.

PARISH FINANCE COMMITTEE. The board gives this group budget and financial reports. The board receives from this committee financial guidelines, approval of a parish subsidy figure for the school and financial advice on request. Note that the parish finance committee may reject a subsidy request figure but may not veto a budget line item or a tuition scale. (The school board often has its own finance committee which answers only to the board and is quite separate from the *parish* finance committee.)

DIOCESAN OFFICE. The board gives the diocesan schools department (and the diocesan board) compliance with diocesan policies, regulations, and procedures, cooperation with its programs, and information, advice, and evaluation for the development of diocesan policies. The parish school board should get from the diocese general policy direction, information for its planning, board member training opportunities, and counsel on request.

PARENTS. The board members give their constituents wise representation. This means they listen, study, contribute. The board members have a right to expect from the parents information, interest, and support.

Leader's Notes

Leader's Notes—Lesson 1
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

The purpose of this lesson is to clarify board members' understanding of the board's role and responsibilities.

A. Ask the members to read Section A before the meeting.

B. At the meeting ask the board members to read the directions for Section B and complete it individually. They will have a chance to "correct" their answers later. Allow about 5 minutes for this task.

Ask the group to follow as you read the comments given below for each answer (This will take only 5 minutes. It will be better if you can allow additional time for some discussion on each item as you go through. Do be careful to pace the group so you don't use more time than you wished to allocate to this lesson.)

1. O.K. This is an accountability function flowing from the board's budget.
2. O.K. This could be justified as an accountability function also. Even if it's not, the board is entitled to know major things going on in school; it's a courtesy the principal owes them and can be included in the principal's monthly report to the board. Had board members been asked to vote on the selection of a specific publisher, their involvement would have been inappropriate.
3. O.K. Again, this is important accountability information. It can be hoped the principal put most of this in his or her written summary report and didn't waste time reading figures or giving a course in tests and measurements.
4. O.K. Right on! You can like or dislike the decision the board made, but it is a clear policy that will give direction to the principal. Notice that the word "normally" provides room for the principal to use some discretion in making an exception.
5. O.K., if it simply means creating and financing a position. If it means they wanted the principal to hire *this* aide whom they had selected, that's a "NO."
6. "?" If the problem pointed out a need that required a policy solution, the hearing was appropriate for the board. (Maybe it led to a policy that said, "Teacher breaks will be scheduled in such a way that some faculty members can be with students when they are outside during lunch.") If the parents had come to complain that a teacher wasn't keeping control of his students during lunch time, then the board was in error if it did anything else than refer the parents back to the teacher and principal.
7. O.K. The board might also have selected an open house as an objective for the year and asked the principal to implement it but it's nice for the staff to know that board members are also willing to pitch in.
8. NO. This is really a regulation. If the board had a policy that said, "Students are to be encouraged to attend liturgical opportunities in the parish," the principal might make a regulation requiring attendance at *this* Mass.
9. O.K. Perfect. Nice going.
10. NO. Too specific. The board might say as a policy, "The school calendar should take into account the holy days and otherwise should follow the local public school schedule as closely as possible." However, this might be an occasion where the board's advice is sought on an item not in their regular "job description."

C. Select one of the two projects in Section C for the group's follow-up study.

D. If the school is a consolidated school, board members should be asked to read Section D of Lesson 1 before the meeting.

At the meeting, having dealt with Section B, you may wish to ask the group to address these questions:

1. Does Section D accurately reflect the status of our board? If not, in what ways do we differ?
2. Are the differences clear to everyone (pastors, principal, board members)?
3. Are there any changes in our operation that we should consider in the light of these reflections?

Leader's Notes—Lesson 2
BOARD POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION

The purpose of this lesson is to give board members an understanding of the distinction between policy and regulation as well as some skill in constructing policy.

A. Ask board members to read Section A before the meeting.

B. At the meeting, complete Section B. The "policy drafts" do not need to be considered in order: you may begin with anyone you wish. Invite the group to identify the weaknesses in each policy discussed. Then try to rework the wording to help the draft conform to the definition of a policy. (A policy is a guide for discretionary action.) Try not to allow the discussion to bog down over the potential value of the sample policy to a real school! It's the *concept* of policy that you want the group to deal with.

There is not necessarily one "correct" way of wording each of the policy drafts. Here are some comments and a suggested rewording for each one. This might prove useful in your discussion.

Policy Proposal 1. As it stands, this is a regulation. If the board's purpose is to provide for the security of the building and the safety of students when they are in the building, the policy might say: "The principal will inform students and parents of the hours during which the school building is open. For reasons of safety and security, students are not permitted in the school at other times without the principal's approval or unless they are accompanied by a member of the school staff or are participating in a school or parish supervised activity."

Policy Proposal 2. This may be a statement of fact but it doesn't give direction to the principal. Maybe what the board means to say is, "Corporal punishment will be allowed as long as it is administered in moderation and for good cause."

Policy Proposal 3. This is the "trick question." Actually it's a perfectly good policy as it stands. You might want to expand it a bit for clarity: "Field trips and other uses of community resources are encouraged. The principal and staff members should be scrupulous about taking precautions for students' supervision and safety when activities take place off of the school grounds."

Policy Proposal 4. The first sentence is a regulation: it is very specific and it leaves no room for the principal's professional judgment. It might be changed to read, "Faculty meetings are to be held regularly." The second sentence is satisfactory as a policy directive.

Policy Proposal 5. This is passable as a policy. It communicates the board's mind and gives general direction to the school. It leaves room for the administrator to spell out specific programs and regulations. It is weak in its verbose wording. It mixes rationale and apology with policy direction. Here is a brief statement which accomplishes the same thing. "The school program should use a variety of resources to reach out to the indivdual needs of students as far as is practicable. Parent volunteers should be enlisted to assist."

Terminate the discussion at the end of the time you have budgeted for this exercise.

C. Ask board members to do the "test" contained in Section C at their own leisure.

If you get any challenges to the answers, there are two that are close calls. Number 9 is given as a policy. It actually leaves little room for the principal's use of discretion, but it is considered a general guideline for fundraising rather than a specific rule. Number 15, on the other hand, does allow for some discretion but still comes in as a rule rather than as a general guideline.

Leader's Notes—Lesson 3
DEVELOPING AN AGENDA FOR THE BOARD MEETING

The purpose of this lesson is to give the group some new insights and skills in building agendas which better focus meetings and make them more productive.

A. Ask board members to read Section A before the meeting.

Schedule the board's study time *at the end of the meeting* for this lesson.

B. At the board meeting, give the members a moment to read the introductory paragraphs of section B. Then begin to build the next meeting's agenda using the steps outlined. Use newsprint or chalkboard to list the ideas offered in step 1. Draw a line through each item identified in step 2. Put parentheses around any item which the group (at step 3) says should be postponed.

Number the items by the order the group suggests at step 4. Write after each of the numbered items the name of the person who will be responsible for it. (step 5).

Use a new sheet to list the background information that is asked for at step 6. Add the name of the person who will get it ready. Add a short note on how it will be sent (e.g., "with agenda.")

Remind the group that this has been an exercise in learning to build more effective agendas and that the president (or principal, or agenda committee) still has the option of making changes in the group's agenda for the next meeting. (New needs may arise in the meantime, for example.)

C. Urge the members to read Section C following the meeting.

Leader's Notes—Lesson 4
GETTING THINGS DECIDED: THE CONSENSUS PROCESS

The purpose of this lesson is to give members an understanding of decision making by consensus and how it differs from the use of *Robert's Rules of Order.*

A. Ask board members to read Section A before the meeting.

Identify one item on the meeting agenda which would lend itself to the consensus decision making process. Have a proposal ready to serve as a starting point for the discussion. (If you're the cautious type, you might prepare two items to allow two opportunities for seeing the process in action.)

B. When you get to that item, have board members read Section C. Then deal with the agenda item using the process. Remember, no motions and no voting. (You may ask for an informal show of hands occasionally if you need to measure the strength of consensus that seems to be emerging.)

Make sure everyone is heard. If someone has an objection to the proposal, make sure everyone understands the objection. Ask questions if necessary to clarify the problem.

If the effort at consensus fails, return to *Robert's Rules* and vote. This too is part of the process: majority rules when consensus can't be reached.

Take a few minutes to reflect on the experience. Was it useful? Successful? In what ways, if any, did it differ from the normal pattern of the board's discussions? In what ways was it more difficult? Did it break down anywhere? Does the group want to use the concensus process regularly? On sensitive issues? In some modified form?

C. Ask the members to read Section B following the meeting.

ALTERNATE PROCESS

If you feel that the board is not ready to do the Section C exercise after reading Section A, you might wish to use the assigned meeting time to study Section B together.

The Section C exercise could then be done at the subsequent meeting.

Leader's Notes—Lesson 5
CHURCH DOCUMENTS ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The purpose of this lesson is to familiarize board members with recent significant Church statements on Catholic education and to identify some of the important concepts in those statements.

A. Ask board members to read Section A prior to the meeting.

B. At the meeting have the members read the Section B paragraphs silently. Then ask them to identify in the philosophy statement specific influences of Church documents on Catholic education.

C. Select one of the projects from Section C as a follow-up activity for the board. You might consider ordering copies of the documents ahead of time so that board members could borrow one to read. An alternate possibility is to order copies of *Teach Them* for all your board members, it is very brief—11 pages. Order from: Office of Publishing Services, U.S.C.C., 1312 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Note. If none of the three activities given in Section C is feasible for your board, an alternate section with a "test" on the documents has been provided. It is self-correcting; answers are given at the end of the test.

D. Here is a "key" to some of the references in Section D.

Sentence

1. While all of the documents imply that development of faith is the distinctive purpose of the Catholic school, the *General Catechetical Directory* (#79), *Teach Them* (p. 3), *The Catholic School* (#9) and the *NCD* (#232) do so explicitly.
2. *The Declaration on Christian Education* (#3) makes a point of referring to the responsibility parents have for the education of their children. *Teach Them* (p. 7) addresses the importance of parent-school collaboration.
3. The tripartite goal of message, community, and service was clearly mandated in *To Teach as Jesus Did* (#14) and reinforced in the *NCD* (#232).
4. All of the documents speak to the special characteristics of those who teach (or catechize). *Lay Catholics in Schools* addresses this extensively. *The Catholic School* (#43), the *NCD* (#232), and *Teach Them* (p. 7) emphasize the particular responsibilities of Catholic school teachers to witness to faith and to foster community.
5., 6 and 7. *Lay Catholics in Schools* speaks to the specific responsibilities teachers have to their students. *Teach Them* (p. 7) also calls for a personalized learning environment.
8. *To Teach as Jesus Did* (#7) and the *NCD* (#232) call upon the school to educate students in social justice.
9. The *NCD* (#232) calls for an established religion curriculum. *The Catholic School* (#8) and *Teach Them* (p. 3) acknowledge the opportunity and the responsibility the Catholic school has to integrate faith and human knowledge within the curriculum and to consider academic issues from a religious perspective.
10. The last sentence is a quote from *The Catholic School* (#7). The *NCD* (#232) asks that the school work with the parish(es) in providing for the education of children.

Leader's Notes—Lesson 6
EVALUATING THE BOARD'S PERFORMANCE

The purpose of this lesson is to provide the board with information and skills to help it in evaluating its activity as a board.

A. Ask board members to read and complete Section A prior to the meeting.

B. At the meeting, briefly discuss each item in Section B to see if there is a consensus on any (or all!) of the items regarding the quality of the board's contribution. Use a sheet to record items with a consensus score. Vote and record the results on items that don't quickly yield consensus. After five or 10 minutes, discontinue the discussion and move on to the next point below.

Discuss briefly the merits of such an evaluation. ("In what ways do you think a review like this may help us to be more effective?") Allow about five minutes.

Ask each member to share with the group one of the accomplishments he or she listed in Section A.

C. Ask the members to read and complete Section C. You may wish to provide some agenda time for sharing these ideas at a subsequent meeting.

The information from the B and C sections may be helpful to the board in setting goals for itself. If in the discussion (point B, above), the board did not get to very many items, you may want to provide the members with blank copies of Section B for them to fill in. Collect and tabulate it, and discuss the "evaluation results" as an agenda item at a future meeting.

Leader's Notes—Lesson 7
SETTING GOALS FOR THE BOARD

The purpose of this lesson is to give the members a familiarity with the value, purpose, and process of formal goal setting.

A. Ask board members to read Section A prior to the meeting.

B. At the meeting, give the group a moment to read the introduction to Section B. Then play the role of facilitator for the practice goal setting session.

1. "In front of you is the summary of what we were able to finish at our last planning session. We need now to move on to what other project(s) we want to adopt to help us accomplish our objective on getting people into the school. What further ideas would you like to suggest as possibilities?"
2. Write down on newsprint or chalkboard the ideas they suggest. (It's "brainstorming" time. Don't delay to discuss or critique the ideas; just write them down.) Their list might include things like:
   - Have a coffee with the principal: "Bring a Friend" (a non-school parent preferably) for coffee, a chat, and a tour.
   - Have a party for pre-schoolers. (They'll bring a parent.)
   - Put school activity displays where people will need to walk past them going to parish functions or to bingo in the parish hall.
   - Sponsor a professional day for teachers and invite public school teachers, CCD teachers, and interested parishioners.
   - Ask the pastor to schedule some of the smaller parish group meetings in a classroom.
3. When you have a few promising ideas, ask the group to identify which one or ones have the most interesting potential. Ask the group's help (or at least their approval) in wording the ideas as projects in the format given in Section B.
4. Solicit the name of someone who will be responsible for each project. Remember that person doesn't have to *do* the whole project. He or she just needs to assume the responsibility for seeing that it gets *done*. Ask the group (or the responsible person) to suggest a date by which it can be done.
5. Add some ideas on how the board might evaluate its success.
6. Stop when time has run out. If there is time to do an "Objective B" proceed in the same fashion. Brainstorm ideas on how to make the parish aware of the school's quality, select the most promising idea, word it as an objective, and think about how you might measure its success.

C. Ask the members to make the contacts suggested in Section C.

Note: There are other goal setting formats. One of them is force-field planning. In this approach, the group identifies a goal and then examines what factors are contributing to its accomplishment and what factors are hindering it. The planning works toward projects which enhance the helping factors, and projects which overcome or diminish the hindering factors. This system is described in *Pastoral Planning Book* by Charles J. Keating (Paulist Press, 1981).

Leader's Notes—Lesson 8
PRINCIPAL, PASTOR, AND BOARD: THE KEY RELATIONSHIPS

The purpose of this lesson is to give board members an understanding of the board's relationship with others, especially with the pastor and principal.

A. Ask board members to read Section A before the meeting.

B. At the board meeting, have board members read Section B silently. (As an alternative, you might ask two members to read the parts.)

After the reading ask the members to help you create on newsprint or chalkboard two lists: one showing signs of good relationships between the board and the principal/pastor, and the other listing problems in the relationships.

These are things that might appear on your list of signs of good relationships:

- The agenda is being discussed beforehand. The principal has provided the draft.
- The Public Relations Committee has responded to the need for a brochure expressed by the principal.
- President is holding the principal accountable for the budget.
- President and principal are both sensitive to reporting back on how the policy on the playground equipment is working.
- Principal has identified two needs which he is bringing with recommendations to the board (discipline and insurance).

In the Section B dialogue, here are some signs of poor board relationships. (It happens that the principal is the villain in most of these; no message intended!)

- The agenda itself is prepared in a very weak format. It is unclear what the board is to do with each item; there are several "reports" which perhaps might be given in writing to save board energy. The principal has poorly served the board in the agenda format.
- The president betrays a lack of loyalty to the pastor in the remark about opening prayer.
- Apparently the board adopted a policy on admissions without adequate communications with the pastor.
- Neither the principal nor the board president took initiative in getting a prayer planned.
- The principal did not take initiative to help produce and distribute the minutes.
- The Student Welfare Committee and the Home School liaison didn't get any help from the principal nor did the president contact them for accountability.
- The principal was imprudent and disloyal in discussing Mrs. Goggin.
- The budget was not followed by the principal.
- The principal does not provide the board president with sufficient information about the content of the principal's report. This may hinder the progress and ultimate effectiveness of the board meeting.
- The principal discontinued a major program (hot lunch) without consulting the board—or even notifying them! (The president found out from another parent.)
- The board president should not expect the principal to permit the board to discuss complaints about individual teachers. (Parents should take such complaints directly to the principal.) Likewise, the principal should not leave the board president with the impression that it is "fine" for the board to discuss Mrs. Spencer's complaint at the meeting.

As time allows, discuss the two lists. Are there parallels in your own board's relationships with the principal and pastor?

C. Ask board members to read Section C after the meeting.

Food for Thought (optional). This series contains a lesson on developing agendas. If your board has studied that lesson, you might ask them to do this activity. Rewrite the agenda in Part B of this lesson according to the format presented in the lesson on developing agendas. If the principal had come to his meeting with the board president with an agenda prepared according to this format, how might their meeting have been different? In what ways would regular use of that format for writing agendas contribute toward the building of a positive relationship between the principal and the board?

National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA)
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NCEA Publication Sales
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Washington, D.C. 20007
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Price: $5.00

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