



## GOVERNANCE

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### ROLE OF THE PASTOR 113

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#### **Rationale**

By virtue of the by-laws of CISVA, the Pastor of every parish with a school as well as the Archbishop's representative of every regional school are members of CISVA. The Pastor is an ex-officio member of the Education Committee as well as any sub-committees that may be formed. The Pastor, along with the Education Committee, receives his mandate from the CISVA Society.

#### **Policy**

Since the school is part of the parish, the Pastor's role in the school flows from his canonical role in the parish. In the case of a regional school, the Archbishop's representative fulfills the same role. This role is clearly defined in the 1983 Code of Canon Law:

The parish priest is the proper Pastor of the parish entrusted to him. He exercises the pastoral care of the community entrusted to him under the authority of the diocesan Bishop, whose ministry of Christ he is called to share, so that for this community he may carry out the offices of teaching, sanctifying and ruling with the cooperation of other priests or deacons and with the assistance of lay members of Christ's faithful, in accordance with the law. (Can. 519)

#### **Procedure**

- 1. TEMPORAL ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOOL PROPERTY:** Since school facilities are Church property belonging to the parish, the Pastor, assisted by the parish finance council, has the responsibility of administering these temporal goods.

In all juridical matters, the parish priest acts in the person of the parish, in accordance with the law. He is to ensure that the parish goods are administered in accordance with Can. 1281-1288. (Can. 531)

In each parish there is to be a finance committee to help the parish priest in the administration of the goods of the parish, without prejudice to can. 532. It is ruled by the universal law and by the norms laid down by the diocesan Bishop, and it is comprised of members of the faithful selected according to these norms. (Can. 537)

- 2. CATHOLIC FORMATION OF STUDENTS:** Flowing from the pastor's obligation that the word of God be "proclaimed in its entirety to those living in the parish", he has an important responsibility for the spiritual formation of the young. "He is to have special care for the catholic education of children and young people." (Can. 528 1)

"The parish priest is to recognize and promote the specific role which lay members of Christ's faithful have in the mission of the Church." (Can. 529 2) This means that he must recognize the gifts, talents and expertise of the faithful and solicit and welcome their collaboration in the formation and education of the young.



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3. **THE SCHOOL AS PART OF THE PARISH:** Since the school is part of the parish community, it is essential that it play an active part in it. The Pastor, as shepherd of the whole flock, must take special care that the school does not become a separate community, but is fully integrated into the liturgical, apostolic and social life of the parish. This does not only benefit the school community but the parish as a whole.
4. **FAITH COMMITMENT OF STAFF:** Since the quality of a Catholic school as a faith community depends in large measure on the faith commitment and witness of its staff, the Pastor should provide special pastoral care for the members. As their leader and inspiration, he supports their growth in faith and leads them to an integration of faith and life so that their witness will radiate in the classroom and the parish community.
5. **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM:** The most important aspect of the school is the religious education program; through it the Church's teaching on faith and morals is passed on. The actual presence of the pastor himself in the school is a sign that religious education is at the center of the school's life and curriculum, but his active role in the religious formation of the students is of paramount importance.

This active role requires that the Pastor take a keen interest in the program, participating in it and ensuring that the instruction given is faithful to the Magisterium of the Church. He should encourage the teaching staff to participate in professional development so that they are better formed in the spiritual life and in understanding the Church's teaching in areas of faith and morality. At all times it is the Pastor who has the responsibility for the implementation of the religious education program and activities of the school in accordance with the directives of the Archbishop. He should also provide celebrations of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly.

6. **PROMOTION OF THE SCHOOL:** There is no substitute for the school in its role of fulfilling the Church's mission to educate and form the young. Therefore the Pastor must always promote the school and cultivate parishioners' support for the school.
7. **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE:** The Pastor and Education Committee should work together, the ordinary day-to-day operation of the school being overseen by the Education Committee, in keeping with the principle of subsidiarity. However, the Pastor's canonical role and his position of trust and subsequent confidentiality may require that there be occasions when he has to exercise his authority outside the confidence of the Committee.

The Pastor and the Education Committee should recognize the spiritual dimension of



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their work as a participation in the Church's evangelizing mission.

- 8. BUDGET AND FINANCES:** The Education Committee has the responsibility to prepare the annual operating budget of the school; however, it is the Pastor who has the right of final approval. All capital and extraordinary expenditures are the sole responsibility of the parish(es) according to Archdiocesan guidelines and policies.
- 9. HIRING AND DISMISSAL OF STAFF:** "In his own diocese, the local Ordinary has the right to appoint or to approve teachers of religion and, if religious or moral considerations require it, the right to remove them or to demand that they be removed." (Can. 805) Thus, as the representative of the local Ordinary at the parish level, the Pastor plays an important and singular role in the hiring and dismissal of staff. Although both he and the Education Committee are responsible in the area, all hiring and dismissals require his approval, as he must ensure the faith commitment of the teaching and support staff. This responsibility of the Pastor should be exercised prudently and occasions may arise when he may have to exercise his authority independently.

In his role as Pastor, he will observe all policies and procedures as outlined in the policy manual of the Catholic Independent Schools of Vancouver Archdiocese. Likewise, he must ensure that the Education Committee abides by the same policies and procedures.

- 10. ADMISSION OR DISMISSAL OF STUDENTS:** Based on religious, moral and/or charitable grounds, the Pastor has the right and responsibility, and in certain cases the duty, to admit and dismiss students. By virtue of his canonical role as Pastor and the unique position he holds with regard to confidential information, his decisions should be respected. Therefore the Pastor must be involved in processing admissions and dismissals of students in accordance with CISVA policy.

Reference:	Approved: Board of Directors
	Date Approved: Pre - 1996
Cross-reference:	Date(s) Revised: