

## School Board Meeting – Visitor Protocols

### **WELCOME**

We would like to welcome everyone to the Saint Mary's School Board Meeting. The Board welcomes visitors to the meeting, including staff members, students, parents, and members of the Saint Mary's Community. We ask you to bear in mind that while our School Board Meetings are public they are not structured as open forum meetings. We would like to outline a few guidelines for observing the meeting. These guidelines have been developed in accordance with the Archdiocese of Hartford Office of Catholic Schools Leadership Manual. It is hoped that by utilizing these guidelines we will have highly functional meetings.

### **Meeting Structure**

The Saint Mary's School Board consists of 11 members and 2 Ex-officio members that include the Principal and Pastor. The term for our board members is 3 years. Our meetings include public business which includes the hearing of the principal/HSA/committee reports, review of old and new business and comments from the Pastor. Our meetings conclude with an executive session after every meeting. The executive session is not public. We follow Robert's "Rules of Order" for our meetings.

### **Addressing the Board during a board meeting**

We feel it is important for the Saint Mary's community to have the opportunity to express questions and concerns during a board meeting. It is also important for the Board to be aware of items that will be brought to their attention. Therefore, the Board has established the following protocol to be followed when individuals/groups would like to address the Board during a school board meeting.

1. The individual/group will e-mail the Board Chair one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
2. The individual/group will explain to the Board Chair the question/concern to be brought to the Board.
3. The Board Chair will place the individual/group on the agenda for the next board meeting if appropriate, unless the agenda does not provide the time for the topic to be fully addressed.

### **Visitor Participation**

During the meeting it is important to remember that visitors are there to observe the board while it is in session. They do not engage in the discussion nor do they actively participate in the agenda either through comments or by offering their opinions on the topic being discussed. No electronic devices of any kind should be accessed unless prior approval is received from the Chair. We will allow for limited questions to be asked during our meetings. The following guidelines should be followed after being recognized by the Board Chair:

1. Once the visitor is recognized, the visitor has one opportunity to express an opinion on the item approved for the agenda.
2. Each person will be limited to a maximum of 3 minutes to speak. There is no discussion or debate between the visitors and the members. Personnel issues and individual family or student's needs are not discussed.
4. Public comment should not be redundant and all comments should be directed to the Board and not the audience.
5. To provide accurate responses, detailed questions posed to the Board during public comment will be listened to and taken under advisement. The public is always welcome to meet with school officials to receive information, discuss ideas or express concerns.

*Our mission as a Catholic Parochial school is to foster spiritual and challenging academic growth in a nurturing, safe environment. The educational, physical and cultural experience supports the development of the child in a faith-based community. We strive to instill in our students the desire to know, love and serve God.*

*Faculty and administration, in partnership with each family, encourage students to excel in academics and effectively utilize technology. We aspire to graduate students who are spiritually alert, morally aware and ethically empowered young adults.*