

**BYLAWS**  
**OF**  
**ST. THOMAS AQUINAS SCHOOL**  
**ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**ARTICLE I – TITLE**

The title of this body shall be the St. Thomas Aquinas School Advisory Council.

**ARTICLE II. –PURPOSE AND FUNCTION**

SECTION I. Purpose.

The St. Thomas Aquinas School Advisory Council is a body appointed by the Pastor to provide advice and assistance to the Pastor and Principal in establishing goals which shall direct the operation and planning of St. Thomas Aquinas School, subject to such rules and regulations that precede from the Archbishop through Canon Law and the corporate structures of the Archdiocese and the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools. The St. Thomas Aquinas Advisory Council can be discontinued at any time at the prudent wisdom of such authority.

SECTION 2. Function.

The St. Thomas Aquinas School Advisory Council is a consultative body called to work closely with the Pastor and Principal for the purpose of promoting and supporting quality Catholic education.

SECTION 3. Major Responsibilities.

The major responsibilities of the St. Thomas Aquinas School Advisory Council include, but are not limited to the following:

- to recommend goals that accentuate and strengthen the school's mission, identity and responsibilities as a Catholic school

- to recommend goals to the Pastor and Principal governing the long-term operation and planning of the school;
- to create a better understanding of Catholic education in the community by fostering a relationship between the school and the parish, the entire community, both civic and cultural groups, and the public schools of the area;
- to generate an effective marketing strategy to reflect the mission of the school in a variety of mediums;
- to assess the needs of the physical plant and grounds in order to direct a plan for capital improvement;
- to consult with the Principal in the development of educational programs that are in accord with the ideals of Catholic education – including proclaiming the Christian message, fostering Christian community, worship and service;
- to participate in the process for development and/or revision of the St. Thomas Aquinas School mission, goals, and strategic plan;
- to consult with the Pastor and Principal regarding the marketing, public relations and advancement efforts of the school;
- to consult with the Pastor and Principal regarding facilities, maintenance and capital improvements to the school;
- to consult with the Pastor and Principal and carry out communication plans in the marketing and strategic planning for the school;
- to advise or consult with the Pastor and Principal regarding any other topics they may bring to the council; and
- to provide leadership for the committees of the Council.

The administration, authority, and management of decisions of the school are the domain of the Pastor and Principal.

## ARTICLE III. – MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Members of the Council shall consist of the Pastor (or his representative) of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, the Principal of St. Thomas Aquinas School (or his/her representative) and 4 members from the school, parish, and local community.

Number and Composition. Appointment shall be based on skill and expertise needed on the Council.

- A. Voting members shall be appointed members.
- B. Ex-officio non-voting members shall be the Pastor and Principal.
- C. No member shall have a legal right or authority to represent the Consultative Council

### SECTION 2. Eligibility.

The St. Thomas Aquinas School Advisory Council members must meet the following criteria:

- Commitment to Catholic education and the mission of St. Thomas Aquinas School; *Empowering each other as educated Catholics to build the Kingdom of God today and forever.*
- Honesty, integrity and confidentiality

### SECTION 3. Ineligibility.

St. Thomas Aquinas School Council members may not be employees of the school or their spouse, or anyone with a pending lawsuit against St. Thomas Aquinas School, Parish or the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

### SECTION 4. Terms.

Members of the St. Thomas Aquinas School Council serve a two-year term, and may be asked to serve successive terms at the discretion of the Pastor and Principal.

- Ex-officio members shall serve so long as they hold the position they represent.

SECTION 5. Selection Process.

For end of term Council vacancies, the Pastor, Principal and Council will review nominations from the school, parish, and school's ministries. Interested candidates will be reviewed by the Pastor and Principal in regards to qualifications and skillset. New members will be officially appointed to the Council by the Pastor prior to August.

- If a vacancy occurs in mid-term, the Pastor and Principal will appoint a replacement representative to complete the term.

SECTION 6. Vacancy of Unexpired Terms.

If a member vacates an unexpired term, whether due to a resignation or other termination, the Pastor will appoint a replacement member to complete the term.

SECTION 7. Removal of Members. Any voting member may be removed with or without cause by the Pastor.

**ARTICLE V. – OFFICERS**

SECTION 1. Election of Officers.

The officers of the St. Thomas Aquinas School Council shall consist of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary. Authority and decision making is the sole responsibility of the Pastor and Principal.

Any officer may be removed from office with or without cause by the Pastor. An officer may resign at any time by submitting a written resignation to the Principal.

SECTION 2. Chairperson.

The chair shall preside at all regular and special meetings of the Council. In consultation with the Principal, s/he shall plan the agenda, ensure that all committees are functioning effectively, ascertain that Council policies are implemented and make an annual report to the school and parish.

SECTION 3. Vice-Chairperson.

In the event of the absence of the Chairperson or the inability from any cause to act, the Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of that office. The Vice-Chairperson shall perform such other duties as delegated by the Chairperson. In the event that the Chairperson is unable to complete the term of his/her office, the Vice-Chairperson shall become the Chairperson for the remainder of the current term.

SECTION 4. Secretary.

The Secretary shall sign, distribute and archive the minutes of meetings, see that all notices are given, keep a register of the addresses of the members of the Council, and shall perform all duties incidental to the office. The Secretary shall track Council member attendance and advise the Principal and Chairperson when a member is no longer eligible to serve. In case of absence or disability of the Secretary, the Chairperson may appoint a Secretary pro tem with the approval of the Principal.

**ARTICLE VI. – MEETINGS**

SECTION 1. Meetings.

The St. Thomas Aquinas School Advisory Council shall meet quarterly. In order to facilitate the work of the Council, all meetings will be closed to the public. When the Council deems appropriate, guests may be invited to provide the Council with pertinent information or reports.

SECTION 2. Time and Place of Meetings.

Meetings will be held at a time and place mutually agreed upon by the Council members and the Pastor and Principal.

SECTION 3. Quorum.

Twenty five percent (25%) of the voting members of the Council shall constitute a quorum. A quorum is required to hold a meeting. If less than such a number is present at a meeting, discussions may take place; however, no binding decisions may be made. The members

present shall then adjourn the meeting and shall provide notice of adjournment to the other members. No meeting may be held without the presence of the Principal or his/her designee.

SECTION 4. Special Meetings.

At the request of the Principal, Chairperson and/or a majority of the members of the Council a special meeting may be called with the approval of the Pastor/Rector and Principal. No special meetings shall be called without the knowledge of the Pastor/Rector and Principal.

SECTION 5. Executive Session.

A designation of all or part of any meeting as an executive session to allow the Council to discuss confidential or sensitive issues may be made by the Pastor, Principal and/or at the request of the Chairperson of the Council with the concurrence of a majority of the voting members of the Council. Executive sessions will consist of all voting and ex-officio members of the Council only. Discussions at all executive sessions are considered confidential and shall not be recorded in the minutes, or discussed outside the meeting.

SECTION 6. Rules of Procedure.

The Advisory Council shall endeavor to make all decisions on a consensus basis, eliciting the endorsement of all members present. Should the Council be unable to reach consensus, and, in the judgment of the Pastor, Principal or Chair, a decision must be made, a simple majority of the Council members present and voting shall carry a motion.

SECTION 7. The right of non-members to address the Council shall be limited to those whose petition has been approved for the agenda in advance of the meeting, or at the discretion of the Chair, Principal or Pastor.

SECTION 8. Agenda.

Prior to each meeting, an agenda shall be prepared by the Principal and the Chairperson. The Principal reserves the right to determine whether an item submitted for the agenda is appropriate or within the purview of the Council.

**ARTICLE VII. – COMMITTEES**

SECTION 1. Standing Committees.

There shall be the following standing consultative committees: *Mission and Catholic Identity, Governance and Leadership, Academic Excellence, and Operational Vitality.* Financial matters are at the sole discretion of the Pastor under the advisement of the Parish Finance Council.

SECTION 2. Ad-Hoc Committees.

The Chairperson and Principal with the approval of the Pastor and consent of the members of the St. Thomas Aquinas School Council, may appoint such other committees on an ad-hoc basis as may be necessary and consistent with the Bylaws.

SECTION 3. Committee Membership.

A voting member of the Council will serve as the chair of each committee. The Chair of the Council shall appoint the members of each committee after consultation with the Pastor and Principal. Persons other than Council members may be appointed and welcomed to serve on any

of the standing or ad-hoc committees by the Chairperson of the Council after consultation with the Pastor and Principal.

SECTION 4. Role of the Principal.

The principal is responsible for the daily administration of the school. S/he exercises leadership in all phases of the educational program and administers the school in accordance with Archdiocesan policies.

**ARTICLE VIII – COMMUNICATION**

SECTION 1. Communication.

The Principal or his/her designee may post a summary of the Council meeting minutes on the school's communication site as deemed appropriate.

**ARTICLE IX. – AMENDMENTS**

SECTION 1. Amendments.

These Bylaws may be amended, supplemented, or repealed in whole or in part by a two-thirds vote of the full St. Thomas Aquinas Council. Such changes must be provided in writing to the St. Thomas Aquinas School Advisory Council members at least two weeks prior to the vote and subsequently must be approved by the Principal and Pastor/Rector.



Approved by:

Douglas A. Ramm  
Name  
Pastor/Rector

8-28-23  
Date

Sr. Anne Louise Abascal  
Name  
Principal

8/28/23  
Date

Enacted this 28 day of August, 2023

Douglas A. Ramm  
Name  
Pastor/Rector

8-28-23  
Date

Sr. Anne Louise Abascal  
Name  
Principal

8/28/23  
Date

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