

**2017-2018
SCHOOL COUNCIL CHARTER**



**OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL
CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**14596 Oak Ridge Road
Carmel, IN 46032**

School: 317-846-1118 Parish: 317-846-3475

School Fax: 317-582-2375

www.school.olmc1.org

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL CATHOLIC SCHOOL, A CHRIST-CENTERED COMMUNITY, PROVIDES EXCELLENCE
IN EDUCATION TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE WHOLE CHILD.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. DEFINITION, PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**
- II. MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF OFFICE**
- III. NOMINATION OF PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS**
- IV. VACANCIES AND REMOVAL**
- V. OFFICERS AND DUTIES**
- VI. MEETING FORMAT AND SCHEDULE**
- VII. CONFLICT RESOLUTION**
- VIII. COMMITTEES AND LEADERSHIP ROLES**
- IX. AMENDMENTS**
- X. PASTOR**
- XI. PRINCIPAL**

Appendix A: Our Lady of Mount Carmel School Governance and Goals

Appendix B: Recommended agendas for the transition meeting, second meeting and subsequent meetings

Appendix C: School Council Committees

SCHOOL COUNCIL CHARTER

I. Definition, Purpose and Responsibilities

- (A) Definition. The School Council (hereafter referenced as “Council”) is a consultative and advisory body whose purpose is to provide a service ministry to support the pastor and the principal of the parish school.
- (B) Mission. Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic School seeks to support the parish mission, “Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of time” Mt. 28:19. The school shares in the responsibility of making disciples through the education of children. Therefore, OLMC School Council assists the Pastor and Principal in matters with respect to the operation of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School, so that our students may be educated in a Catholic environment and encouraged to grow in faith, knowledge and character. (*Appendix A*)
- (C) Purpose: In the governance of the school, OLMC School Council shall use discernment and consensus in assisting and advising the principal in school related matters such as the development of short, medium and long range plans for the school, and the recommendation of school policies in accordance with diocesan policy.
- (D) Responsibilities: Responsibilities and tasks of a working school advisory council are to:
1. Witness to the educational mission of the school.
 2. Know and understand the purpose of the school in the parish.
 3. Review and provide feedback on school policies and the School Improvement Plan, at the request of the school administration.
 4. Provide a neutral conduit for parents and administrators to voice concerns, present new ideas and resolve differences with trust, confidence, and fairness.
 5. Designate school council members to serve as officers of the council.
 6. Recognize evangelization as a primary role of the council, students, faculty, and administration through living our faith in the parish and larger community.
 7. Aid in the recruitment of personnel and volunteers for the school when requested by the school administration.
 8. Conduct executive council meetings and additional meetings, as needed to include members outside the council, to address parent concerns.
 9. Conduct research as requested by the school administration.

Duties of the school council do not include involvement with individual staff members or taking action(s) with respect to personnel issues or issues regarding individual students.

(E) **Conduct:** In keeping with the OLMC School Mission and Philosophy, School Council members of OLMC will model the behaviors expected of its lay ministers including the following:

1. Serve as role models and advocates in the school community.
2. Set a positive example by abiding by all OLMC policies.
3. Honor this council and its purposes by handling all school matters with respect, consideration, open-mindedness, trustworthiness and compassion.
4. In order to foster candid discussions and open communication, Council members are expected to maintain confidentiality of sensitive or private information disclosed during a meeting or in a School Council capacity.

[*\(Return to Outline\)*](#)

II. Membership and Terms of Office

The council will consist of nine (9) or occasionally eight (8) [see Article V, Section B] voting members.

Requirements for eligibility to the council are:

- (A) Registered and tithing member of the parish.
- (B) Eighteen (18) years of age or older.
- (C) Not employed by the Parish.
- (D) Adheres to Stewardship Policy of OLMC.
- (E) Not currently an officer of another OLMC council

The term of office will be three (3) years, commencing at end of June meeting and ending at June meeting three years hence unless as otherwise provided in Article V, Section B. Terms of council members will be staggered with approximately three vacancies each year or as modified by the principal and pastor. New council members are expected to attend the regularly scheduled June meeting in a non-voting capacity.

The past president will serve in a consultative role to the president for the year following his/her role as president. If the past president's three-year term has expired, then one additional year will be added to their term as ex-officio, non-voting member.

[*\(Return to Outline\)*](#)

III. Nomination of Prospective Members

The School Council Nomination Committee ([Appendix C-1,b](#)) will submit names of candidates to be considered for council membership to the principal and the pastor by April 15th or sooner if directed by the principal and pastor. The principal and the pastor will consider these names to fill upcoming vacancies for the next school year.

IV. Vacancies and Removal

Any member of the council, who is absent for three regularly scheduled meetings without previous excuse submitted to the council president or the principal, will be considered inactive and may be replaced.

Any member of the council not completing his or her term may be replaced with an appropriately qualified candidate per the requirements noted in Article II. If the vacancy is to be filled the appointment will be made as soon as possible after the vacancy occurs in order to maintain a full council, and the term will either be for the remaining term of the replaced member, or a full three-year term as determined by the principal and pastor.

[\(Return to Outline\)](#)

V. Officers and Duties

The officers will consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, and the Past President. The terms of office will be one year. The council will elect a secretary and vice president at the June meeting. The vice president automatically assumes the office of president the following year. The president assumes the office of past president the following year as ex-officio, non-voting member.

Requirements for eligibility as an officer of the council:

- (A) Any current member is eligible to serve as an officer of the council. Any new council member in attendance at the June meeting may serve as secretary.
- (B) A council member elected to serve as vice president during the third year of their term will have their term extended to a fourth year as a full, voting member of the council. They will then serve a 5th year as ex-officio, non-voting member, as per Article II.

The duties of said officers include, but are not limited to:

- (A) The President
 - presides at all the meetings and assumes responsibility for setting the agenda with the principal
 - coordinate an orientation session for new members prior to the June meeting outlining responsibilities, the scope of the council charter, and current goals
 - supports the goals of the principal and the pastor, and leads the council toward this initiative
- (B) The Vice President assumes the responsibilities of the president in her/his absence and carries out additional duties as instructed by the president.
- (C) The Secretary will record and distribute the meeting minutes to the principal and the council members and will be responsible for sending correspondence on behalf of the council. The secretary will compile orientation materials for distribution to new council members at the council's June meeting. The secretary has responsibility of reminding the council of monthly tasks recommended in [Appendix B](#).
- (D) The Past President will
 - provide guidance and counsel to the presiding president
 - lead the Nominations Committee in selection of school council candidates
 - preside over the officer nominations during the June meeting
 - not have voting rights, unless this vote is needed to serve as a tie breaker.

[\(Return to Outline\)](#)

VI. Meeting Format and Schedule

There will be eleven (11) regular monthly council meetings annually. The schedule for those meetings will be determined by a majority vote of the members at the start of school year. That schedule will then be announced and promoted via the OLMC school council minutes. As directed by the Parish Pastoral Council, the following formats may be altered to support "All Council Meetings and Agendas."

Provisions are made for guests to address the council. Requests to be placed on the agenda and a description of the presentation are to be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled meeting. The Executive Committee shall accept or decline the request according to the item's relevancy, the item's consistency with the council's duties as established by this Charter, and the prioritization of other items already on the agenda. The pastor or principal may invite guests at their discretion.

A council retreat is held early in the council's school year for the spiritual and educational enrichment of council members as well as reflection on short, medium and long-term goals and development planning. Additional meetings for special purposes, and/or committee work may occur. Agendas will be distributed at least three days prior to the meetings along with any other pre-meeting material that members shall read in advance of the meetings.

New council members will be introduced at the June council meeting and these new council members are encouraged to attend the June meetings as non-voting members. New council members will receive a copy of this Charter and other orientation materials at the June meeting. This will assist them as they transition to full voting members at the August meeting.

The June meeting of each year will be devoted to approval of officers, identification of committee chairs, and initial discussion of current initiatives for the up-coming year.

The secretary or a duly appointed substitute will record meeting minutes at all meetings of the full council. For committee meetings, one member will be appointed to record meeting minutes for each meeting.

Suggested agendas for each meeting are found in [Appendix B](#).

[\(Return to Outline\)](#)

VII. Conflict Resolution

Per the Parish Policy Guide all parish councils shall attempt to handle conflicts and/or disagreements, which may arise in their respective councils, within their councils. As the parish staff is an extension of the pastor, the council will attempt to understand and support the staff in all matters.

Should a conflict arise between council members themselves, and/or between council members and the parish staff members, and the conflict cannot be worked out within the council, then the president of that council shall bring the conflict before the Parish Pastoral Council at its next scheduled meeting. The Parish Pastoral Council shall discuss the matter, consult with the relevant council members and/or staff members involved in the conflict if necessary, and make a recommendation to the pastor.

[\(Return to Outline\)](#)

VIII. Committees and Leadership Roles

The list of committees will be reviewed annually at the May council meeting, appended to the council charter and distributed via council minutes following the August meeting. New ad-hoc committees and other assignments will be communicated via council minutes.

All committees and roles will have a Statement of Purpose outlining the purpose, current membership, required reporting, and timelines, if appropriate. Each new committee chair will be responsible for updating or developing the Statement of Purpose and submitting for approval to the School Council. All committees will formally report to and update the council at least quarterly.

Membership for council committees can come from the council, administration, faculty, parents, and parishioners. The chair of each committee will be a council member or ad-hoc council member, who will chair that committee.

The list of committees is found in [Appendix C](#).

[\(Return to Outline\)](#)

IX. Amendments

The charter may be amended, supplemented, or repealed in whole or in part by a two-thirds vote of the members of the council. The council charter will be reviewed, at least yearly, by appointed members of the council; and recommended changes proposed to the council by the April council meeting with final approval at the May meeting.

[\(Return to Outline\)](#)

X. Pastor

The pastor is the director of the parish and the school. He is responsible for the co-operation of the school staff with the diocesan superintendent of schools. He is responsible to the bishop for the spiritual formation of all parishioners, inclusive of the children in our parish school. He has delegated his authority to guide the school council to the principal of the school.

[\(Return to Outline\)](#)

XI. Principal

The primary duties of the principal fall into three categories: instruction, operations, and spiritual enrichment. As the instructional leader, the principal's first and most important duty is the supervision and improvement of instruction. Goals for the improvement of instruction should be directly linked to the School Strategic Plan and the School Improvement Plan. The principal must be allowed sufficient time during the school day to accomplish this task.

The principal is the visible leader of the school. They are given the authority over all teachers and all phases of the school's program, and are charged with its day to day operation. The principal must run the school within the broad policy guidelines established by the diocese and assume the responsibility for decisions made within the established policy. The principal will strive to form, with all members of the faculty, a unified body of professionals dedicated to the education and formation of the pupils entrusted to their care. The principal will actively encourage full faculty participation in decision making and appropriately delegate certain administrative functions.

Lastly, the principal is responsible for spiritual enrichment of the school faculty and administration. In the event that the principal is unavailable, the Vice President will fill in where needed or requested.

- (A) The principal will Outline yearly goals for the council in coordination with the pastor's goals.
- (B) Share her or his vision of the school council for the coming year at the June meeting, setting the stage for development and/or review of 3-year council goals and development of annual goals.
- (C) Consult with the council president to set the monthly agenda for the council meeting.
- (D) Determine if agenda items are confidential in nature.
- (E) Share PTO report.

[\(Return to Outline\)](#)

Appendix A: Our Lady of Mount Carmel School Governance and Goals

I. School Mission Statement

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic School, a Christ centered community, provides excellence in education to meet the needs of the whole child.

II. School Vision Statement

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School is a vibrant Catholic learning environment where respect and responsibility are integral parts of the school culture. The school offers children a healthy and safe place to learn and grow. All students are actively engaged in challenging and diverse learning experiences. Well-planned curriculum integrates current technology with sound educational practices to prepare students for life-long learning. The entire community shares the responsibility for implementing the vision and goals of the school.

III. School Philosophy

At Our Lady of Mount Carmel School we believe our students deserve a quality education in a caring atmosphere with Christian and family values. To assist us in meeting this goal we must have varying educational techniques, active parental support and a strong Catholic identity.

IV. Educational Techniques

We hold high standards of academic excellence in which gospel values are integrated in everyday activities. School personnel address each child's spiritual, academic, social, emotional and physical well-being. All students are actively engaged in challenging and diverse learning experiences. Well-planned curriculum integrates current technology with empirically sound educational practices to prepare students for life-long learning.

V. Parental Support

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic School community recognizes parents as having the primary responsibility for the foundation and education of their children. Following the teachings of the Catholic Church, we will support, but are unable to assume, the role of parents. We expect parents to maintain communication with the school and support the school community.

VI. Catholic Identity

The students' growth in faith is the central purpose for Our Lady of Mount Carmel School. In an environment reflecting peace, mercy, justice and love, children are challenged to achieve their highest potential and become the next generation of Catholic leaders. Students are encouraged to live their faith in word and deed in their parish and larger community.

[*\(Return to Outline\)*](#)

Appendix B: Recommended agendas for the transition meeting, second meeting and subsequent meetings.

I. Transition Meeting Agenda

This meeting is the first council meeting scheduled after June 1st. The principal will share proposed goals and initiatives for the School and council for the coming school year. The president and principal may provide a recommended list of committees for the coming year. All members shall also express their personal objectives, skills, and interests. Officers will be nominated and approved.

- a) Opening prayer
- b) Introductions
- c) Role of individual council members
- d) Council management overview
 - i) Meetings (how often, when, where)
 - ii) Agenda & minute policy
 - iii) Meeting procedure
 - iv) Council self-assessment
- e) Information flow
 - i) Pre and post meeting mailings, telephone, email
 - ii) Additional meetings
- f) Final delivery and approval of revised council charter
- g) Recap of current initiatives and proposed goals for OLMC school and council
- h) Election of officers
- i) Review of recommendations for council committees and leadership roles
- j) Identification of committee chairs
- k) Establish date in August for council retreat
- l) Summary of issues, decisions, and actions
- m) Closing prayer

Prior to or at the June meeting, the current vice president will collaborate with the secretary to ensure that each member receives an orientation binder containing the following information:

- a) Updated council charter
- b) Current council officers, committees and leadership roles and principal's recommendation for committees for the coming year
- c) Updated member list with home addresses, home and work telephone numbers, email addresses, spouse's name, and member start and end term dates
- d) Current council goals and OLMC school goals
- e) Previous years agendas and minutes

[\(Return to Outline\)](#)

II. August Meeting Agenda| Council Retreat

The agenda for this meeting will devote time to answering any questions about the role of the council and its' members, identifying leadership roles and committee assignments (with membership recommendations), and continued discussion on council goals and objectives for the school year.

It is recommended that this meeting be longer than a normal meeting to accommodate the outlining of goals and objectives for the year.

The agenda for this meeting will include the following items:

- a) Opening prayer
- b) Approval of minutes from last meeting
- c) Standing reports from administration
- d) The current president shall lead the discussion explaining his/her expectations of the council members, the general objectives of the council, and the members' responsibilities as detailed by the charter
- e) Review/Discussion of council charter and members' roles
- f) Discuss proposed goals and process to finalize
- g) Council specific issues
- h) Summary of issues, decisions, and actions
- i) Closing prayer

III. Subsequent Meeting Agendas

Any subsequent meetings will be similar in structure, discussing current initiatives and council specific issues. The typical agenda for subsequent meetings may contain the following items:

- a) Opening prayer
- b) Approval of minutes of last meeting
- c) Standing reports from administration
- d) Discuss current initiatives including committee reports
- e) Council specific issues
- f) Summary of issues, decisions, and actions
- g) Closing prayer

IV. Timeline of Key Events

June

- Final recommendations for changes to school policy reviewed
- New council members attend June meeting in a non-voting capacity
- Principal reviews goals for the coming year
- Secretary and vice president officers elected
- New president and new past president assume their roles
Discuss recommended council adoration time.

August

- During August or September, a council retreat will be held for spiritual and educational enrichment and for reflection on long-term goals and development planning.

October

- Council goals and any new ad-hoc committees finalized
- PTO President invited to present goals and objectives to council

January

- Nominations Committee reviews priorities for new members with the council.
- First ½ of charter is reviewed.

February

- Nomination process communicated to parents and nomination forms available
- Second ½ of charter is reviewed and amendments are recommended.

March

- Assign second ½ of policy guidelines to review and recommend changes.

April

- Nominations Committee submits names of candidates for the council to the principal and pastor by April 15 and reviews progress with the council.
- Proposed changes to the school council charter presented to the council
- Potential school policy changes reviewed.

May

- New council members selected and notified. Nomination process and results reviewed at council
- Proposed changes to charter presented and approved.
- Orientation session for new members conducted prior to June meeting

[*\(Return to Outline\)*](#)

Appendix C: School Council Committees

I. Committees

The Council shall establish or retire standing committees as deemed appropriate to assist in the fulfillment of the Council’s purpose.

- a) Executive Committee
 - a. Comprised of president, vice-president, and principal
 - b. Formulates the agenda, may establish ad hoc committees to fulfill special needs of the Council.
- b) Nomination Committee
 - a. Comprised of president, past president, vice president, vice principal, and principal.
 - b. Implements the election or discernment process to maintain full council membership and provide opportunities for member training.

II. Ad-Hoc Committees

The principal and the council may charter Ad-Hoc Committees to address specific needs that cannot be covered by existing Committees.

[*\(Return to Outline\)*](#)