

Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks

5.3 The governing body, in collaboration with or through the actions of the leader/leadership team, maintains a relationship with the bishop marked by mutual trust, close cooperation, continuing dialogue, and respect for the bishop's legitimate authority.

I. What does this benchmark indicate for school performance?

Benchmark 5.3 is about the governing body/the board and the leader/leadership team understanding the clearly articulated norms of governance and administration that the bishop has set under his administration and respecting this authority of the bishop as he or those who report directly to him supervises and administers Catholic education in his diocese or territory. This benchmark underscores to the governing body the bishop's right to establish structures of governance and norms that guide his involvement with schools. Also under the bishop's discretion is when and why he will intervene and direct the affairs of the school when he sees it necessary.

This benchmark is positioned on the belief that a smooth and successful operation of Catholic schools will best result from an explicit understanding of which kinds of governance and administration roles the bishop will have in Catholic schools. Arriving at such an understanding depends on the quality of the relationship between a diocesan bishop and other church officials, school administrators and board members. Benchmark 5.3 reminds the governing body of its responsibility to be knowledgeable of and adhere to diocesan policies and procedures through which the bishop communicates his interventions and involvement. This benchmark calls the administration to keep the board informed of reports, policies, and procedures that the bishop has communicated to them at meetings or through various forms of communications.

II. As a review team member, what evidence do I look for?

These are some questions which will help to frame this item:

- Can the governing board and the leader or leadership team clearly articulate norms of governance and administration that the bishop has set under his administration?

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- Can the governing board and the leader or leadership team recount times when they demonstrated their respect for the bishop's authority as he or those who report directly to him, supervised and administered Catholic education in his diocese?
- Can the governing board and the leader or leadership team verbalize the structures of governance and norms that guide the bishop's involvement with regard to schools? Also can they give examples when and why the bishop will intervene and direct the affairs of the school when he sees it necessary?
- Does the governing board and the leader or leadership team know where to find these norms stating the bishop's level of involvement in the schools and under what circumstances will he intervene?
- Can the governing board and the leader or leadership team describe an occurrence when the board worked with or through the actions of the leadership/leadership team to maintain a relationship with the bishop?
- Are there samples of regular communication between the local school board and leader/leadership team and bishop to develop and maintain mutual trust?
- Can the governing board and the leader or leadership team describe the lines of communication between the local school board and leader/leadership team and bishop that are in place in order to be in close cooperation?
- Do the governing board and the leader or leadership team have in their possession documents that spell out the expectations, guidelines, and processes determined by the bishop to maintain a relationship with their local school?
- Can the governing board and the leader or leadership team articulate what the Code of Canon Law says about the bishop's legitimate authority?

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III. What are the key differences between the levels of the rubric?

At level **3-Fully Meets Benchmark**,

the governing body, in collaboration with or through the actions of the leader/leadership team, recognizes, understands and respects the reserved powers of the bishop or those who report directly to him, and can demonstrate how each – in their appropriate roles (board, leadership, bishop) – works to build and maintain a relationship with the bishop marked by mutual trust, close cooperation, continuing dialogue, and respect for the bishop's legitimate authority.

At level **4-Exceeds Benchmark**,

the school board, in collaboration with or through the actions of the leadership team, on regular and appropriate occasions publically articulates appreciation for the bishop's support of and involvement in the Catholic schools to ensure their academic excellence and commitment to their mission. The governing body and leadership team not only maintain a strong, positive and visible relationship with the bishop in the boardroom, but communicate their relationship to all stakeholders. They invite the bishop to not only celebrate mass but also to be present at significant school events; similarly, they fully support and attend events sponsored by the bishop and offices representing the bishop.

At level **2-Partially Meets Benchmark**,

the governing body is knowledgeable of and adheres to required diocesan policies and procedures through which the bishop communicates his role to execute interventions and his level of involvement in Catholic schools. The relationship is a limited relationship with the bishop and the offices representing the bishop marked by intermittent cooperation, occasional dialogue, and social distancing from the bishop's legitimate authority.

At level **1-Does Not Meet Benchmark**,

The governing body is not knowledgeable of and/or does not intentionally adhere to diocesan policies and procedures through which the bishop communicates his role to execute interventions and his level of involvement

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in the Catholic schools. They maintain a very weak relationship with the bishop or offices representing the bishop, if any. Relationships are awkward with little cooperation or dialogue, and the bishop's authority is ignored, overlooked or continually challenged.

IV. What are some key suggestions for improvement?

To move from level 1 to level 2,

- Become knowledgeable of and commit to adhering to diocesan policies and procedures through which the bishop communicates his role to execute interventions and his level of involvement in Catholic school(s).
- Appreciate the bishop's legitimate authority by demonstrating a commitment to board in-service and subsequent conversations that promote greater understanding of diocesan initiatives and requirements.
- Initiate a relationship with the bishop and the offices representing the bishop marked by cooperation and occasional dialogue around the topic of the bishop's legitimate authority and how it relates to, supports, and enhances the board's role in the governance of the school(s).
- Attend annual diocesan wide board in-services or meetings that provide an opportunity to interact with the bishop or his designate, seeking to develop a relationship that leads to understanding and mutual respect.

To move from level 2 to level 3,

- Ensure compliance with the diocesan constitution/bylaws. This is an opportunity for the board to contrast its responsibilities with the reserved powers of bishop and/or those who report directly to him.
- Provide reports to the appropriate diocesan office that demonstrate the board's commitment, through its operations and actions, to fulfilling their appropriate roles and responsibilities.
- Demonstrate how the board seeks and maintains a relationship with the bishop that is marked by mutual trust, close cooperation, continuing dialogue, and respect for the bishop's legitimate authority.

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To move from level 3 to 4,

- Accept and demonstrate in action that an explicit understanding of the governance model established by the bishop contributes positively to a smooth and successful operation of the school.
- Recognize and appreciate that the bishop's legitimate authority evolves through the quality of the relationship between a diocesan bishop and other church officials, school administrators and board members.
- Maintain a strong, positive and visible relationship with the bishop, communicating this relationship to all stakeholders of the school.
- Invite the bishop to not only celebrate mass but also to be present at significant school occasions.
- Support and attend the events sponsored by the bishop and offices representing the bishop.

V. What are key terms for common understanding? (Refer to the Glossary for the terms listed below.)

Governing body
Appropriate and legitimate authority
Authoritative
Consultative
Advisory
Leadership team