

## **Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks**

**5.1** *The governing body, representing the diversity of stakeholders, functions according to its approved constitution and bylaws.*

### **I. What does this benchmark indicate for school performance?**

Benchmark 5.1 addresses two aspects of governance: namely, membership diversity and adherence to constitution and bylaws or other governing documents. First, this benchmark challenges administrators to recruit and select board members keeping in mind gender, cultural and ethnic diversity, and needed skillsets. Second, the benchmark raises the importance of the board's governing document (usually called a constitution and bylaws) that specifies how the board is structured, the rights of members, and the procedures by which rights can be exercised.

Outstanding boards are populated by diverse membership, focused on their appropriate role, engaged in their assigned committee work, and committed to respond to the needs of the school. A productive board establishes committees according to the bylaws and is made up of members with the needed skills who can set goals and expectations in their committee area to significantly benefit the school the board serves.

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

The following are guiding questions for school leaders and the governing body to ask to ascertain if this benchmark is being implemented:

- Is there a roster listing membership on the governing body that includes areas of expertise, gender, race/ethnic background, geographical location, community connections, service on board committees, and number of years on the board (Terms of Office)?
- Is there a matrix used by the Nominating Committee to determine whom to recruit for board membership based on the needed diversity?
- Does the Nominating Form ask for information to ensure the needed diversity keeping in mind gender, cultural and ethnic diversity, and required skillsets?

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- Does each member's packet or binder include a current copy of the constitution/bylaws including the date of implementation and references to updates?
- Is there a board meeting agenda showing the annual review of the constitution/bylaws?
- Does the agenda for the orientation meeting with new members include time to present the constitution/bylaws?
- Is there a copy of the annual board self-assessment which is conducted at the conclusion of the school year with attention to bylaws compliance?
- Is the constitution/bylaws in a highly visible and easily accessible place on the school's website that is organized with other school board material?
- Are minutes of meetings and records of decisions in keeping with constitution/ bylaws filed in a safe and convenient place?
- Are non-confidential versions of the minutes (or a summary) available to the public or school stakeholders?
- Are parent newsletters available that show board members' attendance at parent meetings, board updates at meetings, etc. in order for stakeholders to get an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the board?

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

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

the governing body membership represents the gender, cultural and ethnic diversity of the school community and the needed skillsets to carry on the work of the board for the good of the school. This diversity, coupled with the board's adherence to its governing document, results in a board that contributes greatly to the success of the school and its vitality, as evidenced by their impact on the quality of the school's performance and operational viability.

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### At level **4-Exceeds Benchmark**,

the administrators, in collaboration with the Nominating Committee/Governance Committee, work year-round to identify and recruit prospective members that ensure the targeted representation of gender, cultural and ethnic diversity, and skillsets needed to carry on board work in order to sustain a vibrant school into the future. This is evidenced by the Nomination Committee/Governance Committee's reports to the full board. Furthermore, the committee is charged with creating succession plans for each board position to ensure continued diversity. This is evidenced by the documented succession plan and board's faithful adherence to it.

At level 4, the administrators and board ensure that the governing document is kept updated and relevant as needed. More importantly, the administrator(s) and board chair continually monitor the board's execution of the framework for effective governance. The governing body has a state of the art constitution and bylaws, and both are posted and shared with the full community. The governing body intentionally monitors itself to ensure consistency of practice as approved by the bylaws.

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

the administrators, in collaboration with the board, attempt to recruit prospective members representing the targeted gender, cultural and ethnic diversity, and needed skillsets with some success but not consistently, as evidenced by the reports from the Nominating/Governance Committee and the current roster. From observable evidence of both attendance at a meeting and board minutes, the governing body appears to function according to its approved constitution and bylaws, but is not held accountable for carrying out its responsibilities as listed in the governing document. In particular, committees are not held accountable to the administrators and board chair for completing their assigned goals or tasks.

At this level, the administrators and board members have limited knowledge about the content of the governing documents. This is evidenced through conversations with both the administrators and board members.

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

the administrators and governing body have not systematically recruited and selected board members to represent the appropriate gender, cultural and ethnic diversity, and needed skillsets. This is evidenced by board roster and

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attendance at a board meeting. The board does not have a constitution or bylaws, or the current constitution and bylaws are outdated or ignored.

### IV. What are some key suggestions for improvement?

#### **To move from level 1 to level 2,**

- Determine the kind of diversity and skillsets that represent the school community and can address the needs of the school.
- Assess the gender, cultural and ethnic diversity, and skillsets of the current board membership. A matrix is a useful tool to do this.
- Appoint a nominating committee/governance committee of the board to be tasked with this effort. This committee would be responsible for updating the matrix and report to the full board the area/s of diversity that the recruitment process should focus on.
- Form a task force to create a constitution or bylaws if one does not exist. The archdiocese or diocese is a great resource that can provide policies and guidelines for the development of a governing document.
- Establish and act on a plan to provide an in-service training for the entire board and the school's administrator on the implementation of the newly developed constitution and by-laws. A similar in-service for boards with an existing constitution and by-laws will be an opportunity to identify outdated articles or sections. Once revised or updated the administrator and chair move the document for final approval to the appropriate approving agent.

#### **To move from level 2 to level 3,**

- Recruit new members to maximize the gender, cultural, ethnic, and skillset diversity to advance the goals of the board, aligned to the mission and needs of the school
- Understand and commit to the role and responsibilities defined in constitution and bylaws. The board conducts regularly scheduled meetings and organizes its committees to optimize its productivity for the benefit of the school's performance and operational viability.
- Schedule a board planning retreat and short mini in-service trainings to provide the board time to better understand its purpose as well as to identify goals/activities for the coming year.

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### **To move from level 3 to 4,**

- Identify and recruit prospective members that ensure the representation of gender, cultural and ethnic diversity, and needed skillsets on regular schedule to replace termed out board members.
- Create succession plans for each of the board positions to ensure continual diversity.
- Ensure that the governing document is kept updated and relevant as needed.
- Continually monitor and assess the board's implementation of the framework for effective governance.
- Post and share with the school and broader community the board's state of the art constitution and bylaws on an annual schedule.

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

Governance  
Governing body  
Catholic education stakeholders  
State of the Art Constitution and bylaws  
Framework for effective governance

## **Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks**

*5.2 The governing body systematizes the policies of the school's operations to ensure fidelity to mission, and continuity and sustainability through leadership successions.*

### **I. What does this benchmark indicate for school performance?**

Benchmark 5.2 is about systematizing and sharing the policies of the school's operations in order to bring all stakeholders to a position of faithfulness to the school's mission. The importance of this task is to ensure that the school's mission, acted upon through policies, is sustainable despite leadership change. Therefore, it is critical to educate and train all stakeholders in the intention and implementation of school policy. This education and training is to be a dynamic process that assists new and existing stakeholders in understanding policy formation and implementation in alignment with the school's mission. Equally critical is the establishment and implementation of accountability measures to ensure ongoing evidence of policy alignment with the program and operations. Accountability is a direct function of the school's leadership in collaboration with the school's governance. Included in the process of systematizing policy is the need for developing leadership succession plans for the governing board, leadership team, and all other leadership positions associated with school operations, such as advisory boards, parent groups, volunteer groups, affiliated clubs, and others. In doing so, the school seeks to ensure the continuity and sustainability of policies and programs aligned with the mission through carefully planned and executed leadership successions.

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

Here are some fundamental guiding questions for school leaders and the governing body to ask in order to be able to determine the extent to which the systematizing of school policies described above is taking place at the school:

- Is there evidence in meeting minutes that the governing body addresses an ongoing process of policy review as it pertains to connection to mission?
- Is there an orientation program and on-going training of governing body members focusing on the alignment of the school's mission with policy, operations, and programs?

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- How does communication occur to all stakeholder groups regarding policy formation, implementation, and accountability?
- How are positions posted for professional and non-certified staff?
- Is there a listing of board members specifying terms and history of change in membership according to term limits?
- How does communication occur within the school community regarding leadership change, the leadership succession process, and identification of new leadership?
- Do the school's governing body and leadership work together to oversee the alignment of mission with policy, operations, and programs?
- Does the school have an updated policy manual that includes instructions and processes for implementation?
- Do the school's governing body and leadership have stated measures of accountability for policy implementation?
- Are there reports documenting assessment of policy implementation for the school's operations and programs?
- Are there leadership succession plans for the governing board, leadership team, and all other leadership associated with school operations, such as advisory boards, parent groups, volunteer groups, or affiliated clubs?

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

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

the governing body and school leadership develop and communicate policies, structures, and procedures to direct the school's operations with fidelity to the mission. *These systems are present, functional, and provided to all stakeholders to ensure the ability of the school to operate as a vibrant entity.* There is evidence of leadership succession planning on all levels of the school's governance, leadership, operations, and program.

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### At level **4-Exceeds Benchmark**,

the governing body and school leadership have put systems in place that ensure the ability of the school to operationalize the school's mission through its policies. *These systems are present, functional, provided to all stakeholders and furnish ongoing training and accountability measures for successful implementation of policies and mission alignment.* Continuity and sustainability of policies and programs is present through successful execution of leadership succession plans for the governing body, school leadership team, all other leadership associated with school operations, other advisory boards, parent groups, volunteer groups, affiliated clubs, and others. The governing body and the leader/leadership team hold themselves and the school accountable for adhering to policies and engage in regular policy review.

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

the governing body and school leadership have put some systems in place that attempt to ensure the ability of the school to operationalize the school's mission through its policies. *Only some of the needed systems are present, functional, and provided to all stakeholders.* There is clear evidence that some policies are not implemented in the school's operations and program. The school's governing body and leadership have started the process for measuring policy implementation and alignment to mission but are still in the formative stages. Leadership succession planning is not a priority.

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

the governing body and school leadership have not systematized the policies of the school's operations. As yet, there is no commitment through observable evidence that consistent fidelity to the mission is a priority. There exists a misunderstanding as to the role of the governing body and leadership in relationship to policy and operations. The governing body and leadership appear to be working independently from one another.

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### **IV. What are some key suggestions for improvement?**

#### **To move from level 1 to level 2,**

- Begin a process of recognizing that fidelity to the school's mission is fundamental to the design and implementation of an instructional program that embraces continuous improvement.
- Begin a review process for existing policies to determine alignment with the school's mission after reaching a point of understanding of fidelity to mission; engaging the stakeholders in this review process is a critical element in achieving mission awareness in the implementation of all policies.
- Begin working on updating and revising existing policies and determining creation of new policies.
- Communicate the process of revision and new policy formation to all stakeholders. This action is critical in taking the steps to ensure fidelity to mission through systematized policies.

#### **To move from level 2 to level 3,**

- Operationalize and systematize all policies in alignment with the school's mission.
- Establish a process for accountability of stakeholders in meeting the implementation goals of policies. Gather and analyze evidence that improvements have been made.
- Establish a process for leadership succession planning for the replacement of the school's leader in order to sustain continuity in implementation of policies.

#### **To move from level 3 to 4,**

- Establish a process of accountability for successful implementation of policies to be executed with evidence gathered and analyzed by stakeholders, and adjustments made to operations and program.
- Conduct this accountability process on a regular basis.
- Maintain leadership succession over time, following the guidelines of a well-crafted plan, to ensure continuity and sustainability of policies throughout leadership transitions.

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

Governing body  
School leadership  
Leadership team  
Policy  
Procedure  
Operations policies  
Leadership succession  
Authority  
Accountability  
Sustainability  
Systematization

## **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

## **Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks**

*5.4 The governing body, in collaboration with or through the actions of the leader/leadership team, maintains a constructive and beneficial relationship with the (arch) diocesan Education Office consistent with (arch)diocesan policy pertaining to the recognition of Catholic schools by the Bishop.*

### **I. What does this benchmark indicate for school performance?**

Benchmark 5.4 is about the relationship of the local school site governing body in collaboration with the school's leader/leadership team with the (arch)diocesan office of education. In keeping with the elements of Catholic Social Teaching that promote both subsidiarity and solidarity, schools support a collaborative relationship with the (arch)diocesan educational leadership. It is in this relationship that individual schools are strengthened by the community of Catholic schools brought together through the common effort to serve the educational mission of the Church. A strong relationship with the diocesan Education Office can provide opportunities for shared resources when available.

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

Here are some fundamental guiding questions which will help frame this item:

- Do the governing body and school leader have copies of the (arch) diocesan school policies?
- To what extent has the governing body and school leader provided professional development to the members of the board regarding (arch)diocesan school policies?
- To what extent has the governing body and school leader provided professional development to the members of the faculty regarding (arch)diocesan school policies?
- To what extent has the governing body and school leader provided professional development to the school's parents regarding (arch)diocesan school policies?
- Are the school's policies in alignment with the (arch)diocesan school policies?

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**5.4** *The governing body, in collaboration with or through the actions of the leader/leadership team, maintains a constructive and beneficial relationship with the (arch) diocesan Education Office consistent with (arch)diocesan policy pertaining to the recognition of Catholic schools by the Bishop.*

- What assessment tools are used to indicate alignment and implementation of (arch)diocesan policies in the local school?
- What accountability measures and reports indicate a highly functional relationship between the school's governing body, leader, and (arch)diocesan office leadership?
- What is the frequency of two-way communication between the school and the office of education regarding budgets, finances, human resources, educational support programs, and initiatives?
- Do school print and electronic publications include information about the (arch)diocesan office of education? Are there links on the school's website connecting to the (arch)diocesan office of education?
- To what extent is the school in relationship with other schools of the (arch)diocese through the community building activities of the office of education?

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

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

the governing body and school leader put policies in place that are aligned with policies of the (arch)diocese. Further, the school policies are implemented in accordance with the guidelines of the (arch)diocesan policies and are regularly monitored for alignment.

#### At level **4-Exceeds Benchmark**,

the governing body and school leader put policies in place that are fully aligned with policies of the (arch) diocese, implemented in accordance with the guidelines of the (arch) diocesan policies, and regularly monitored for alignment. The actions of the school leader and governing body continuously foster a mutual and productive working relationship with the (arch)diocesan office of education by integrating initiatives and programs. In addition, the

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governing body and school leader regularly work in collaboration with other schools of the (arch)diocese, fostered through the work of the office of education.

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

the governing body and school leader put policies in place that are somewhat aligned with policies of the (arch) diocese. The school policies are inconsistently implemented in accordance with the guidelines of the (arch) diocesan policies and irregularly monitored for alignment. Relationships with other schools of the (arch)diocese are limited and/or pro forma.

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

the governing body and school leader put policies in place at the school level but largely ignore the policies of the (arch)diocese. The governing body and school leader appear to be working independently from the (arch)diocese and other schools of the (arch)diocese.

## IV. What are some key suggestions for improvement?

### To move from level 1 to level 2,

- Begin a process to align the school's policies with the policies of the (arch)diocese.
- Establish an assessment process to gauge progress in aligning the policies in an expeditious and yet effective manner.
- Review the aligned policies of the school and (arch)diocese for congruence.
- Begin to share information and best practices through the office of education as an outreach to other schools of the (arch)diocese.
- Implement a plan and process to begin the movement away from isolation to a community of schools concept using the office of education as the conduit.

### To move from level 2 to level 3,

- Complete the alignment of policies and fully implement them in accordance with the guidelines of the (arch)diocesan policies.

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- Establish a regular monitoring system to make sure that the policies remain aligned.
- Inform all governing body members and leadership team of school and (arch)diocesan policies and their alignment.
- Develop a plan to present the policies to all school stakeholders for their knowledge, use, and implementation.
- Provide outreach, support, and exchange of information with other schools of the (arch)diocese engaging in a community of schools.

### **To move from level 3 to 4,**

- Align all the policies of the school and the (arch)diocese and regularly monitor implementation.
- Continuously foster productive relationships between other schools of the (arch) diocese, the office of education, and themselves for the purpose of promoting solidarity.
- Host regular gatherings of the schools of the (arch)diocese for the cultivation of initiatives, programs, and professional development.

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

Governing body  
Office of education or Education office

## **Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks**

**5.5** *In the case of a parish school, the governing body, in collaboration with the leader/leadership team, maintains a relationship with the canonical administrator (pastor or designee of Bishop) marked by mutual trust, close cooperation, and continuing dialogue.*

### **I. What does this benchmark indicate for school performance?**

Benchmark 5.5 states the expectation of the type of relationship that should exist between the parish school's governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator. The qualities of mutual trust, close cooperation, and continuing dialogue that mark this relationship are critical to the good health of the school, thus ensuring ongoing fidelity to the school's mission, academic excellence, and operational vitality.

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

Here are some fundamental guiding questions which will help frame this item:

- Do school calendars and schedules for meetings reflect the presence of the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator in regular attendance?
- Do public announcements and publications reflect the solidarity of the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator in the response to issues and the communication of program information?
- Do the records of public events identify the regular presence of the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator?
- Will the stakeholders of the school identify the qualities of mutual trust, close cooperation, and continuing dialogue as characteristic of the relationship between the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator?
- What type of leadership assessment is conducted annually? Is the process designed to be formative, summative, and/or evaluative? How is the assessment used to benefit the relationship between the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator?

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- Is there an annual budget formation process that includes the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator in regular discussion until the strategic plan is complete?
- Are there clearly designed and explained roles and responsibilities that the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator can call upon to guide their work together?
- Is there a strategic plan for the vision of the school that was developed through collaborative effort of the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator? Does the strategic plan contain the collaborative responsibility of assessing progress by the mutual effort of the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator?

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

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

the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator exhibit through the evidence above that the qualities of mutual trust, close cooperation, and continuing dialogue mark their relationship in a regular and consistent way.

#### At level **4- Exceeds Benchmark,**

the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator develop and foster a continuous working relationship marked by regular, positive interactions, shared goals, mutual trust, close cooperation and continuing dialogue that is productive, sustained and future focused. This positive relationship is totally integrated into “the way we do things.”

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

the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator exhibit an inconsistent and unpredictable relationship that is sometimes collaborative. Timely and effective decision-making is often impaired by this relationship.

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**5.5** *In the case of a parish school, the governing body, in collaboration with the leader/leadership team, maintains a relationship with the canonical administrator (pastor or designee of Bishop) marked by mutual trust, close cooperation, and continuing dialogue.*

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

the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator are not collaborating. There is an evident disconnect between the governing body, the school leader, and the canonical administrator. The stakeholders recognize this disconnect and respond to planning, policy and regulations designed by the governing body and school leader with confusion and/or disregard. The parish canonical administrator and school leader do not share the same vision for the school's future.

### IV. What are some key suggestions for improvement?

#### **To move from level 1 to level 2,**

- Begin a dialogue with the parish canonical leader to develop a relationship of mutual trust. This can be very difficult to accomplish if issues existing in the relationship are contentious. Seek third party facilitation if needed.

#### **To move from level 2 to level 3,**

- Increase a dialogue with the parish canonical administrator on a much more intentional and planned level.
- Promote a shared vision approach to planning and decision-making with the parish canonical administrator.
- Conduct regular meetings and share information between the governing body, school leader, and parish canonical administrator for the purpose of planning and decision-making.
- Establish a climate of mutual trust, close cooperation, and continuing dialogue that marks a positive relationship recognized by the stakeholders.

#### **To move from level 3 to 4,**

- Expand dialogue between the parish canonical leader, governing body, and school leader that is marked by a sense of mutual trust and close cooperation.

## **Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks**

**5.5** *In the case of a parish school, the governing body, in collaboration with the leader/leadership team, maintains a relationship with the canonical administrator (pastor or designee of Bishop) marked by mutual trust, close cooperation, and continuing dialogue.*

- Collaborate at a level that all stakeholders become witnesses to a relationship that provides future focused decision-making that is a result of this collaboration.
- Establish an environment that all other stakeholder groups and committees of the school use as a model of collaboration marked by mutual trust and cooperation that guides their work together in support of the school's mission and vision.

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

Parish canonical administrator

## Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks

**5.6** *The governing body engages in formation and on-going training and self-evaluation for itself and the leadership team to ensure the faithful execution of their respective responsibilities.*

### **I. What does this benchmark indicate for school performance?**

The members of the governing body are formed in the mission and prepared to assume their roles and responsibilities if they are to be competent stewards of the school's mission and resources (both personnel and material). In fact, it is a priority. This requires members to be continually engaged in formational and educational activities from the moment that they begin to consider joining the board to the day their term of service ends. Therefore, formational and educational activities are presented during the three stages of membership:

- Prospective member (Getting acquainted with the mission and the role and operations of the board)
- Newcomer (Orientation)
- Veteran (Ongoing- this includes items for all board members on their areas of responsibilities)

This requires a well-planned program with materials, resources, and presenters, as well as a group who will oversee the activities for each of the three stages of membership. A Nominating Committee/Governance Committee of the board would be the suggested group to not only oversee the activities, but to plan and execute the blueprint.

The diocese is a resource to assist with this comprehensive and on-going formation and education. It is suggested that a designated person at the diocesan level be responsible for ongoing and systematic training and evaluation of the governing group.

Finally and most importantly, an annual evaluation is necessary to determine if the formation and education is making a difference in the performance of the governing body. Based on the evaluation, the board needs to develop and implement an annual board development plan. It is suggested that in order to plan effectively, time for a planning retreat should be allocated.

## Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks

**5.6** *The governing body engages in formation and on-going training and self-evaluation for itself and the leadership team to ensure the faithful execution of their respective responsibilities.*

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

Here are some fundamental guiding questions which will help frame this item:

- What information can be distributed at the Prospective and Newcomer stages? Who determines the topics for these two stages? Who presents the topics?
- How is the veteran or ongoing formation determined? How is it designed and who determines the needs? Who oversees it?
- Is there a designated person at the diocesan level who is responsible for ongoing and systematic training and evaluation? How is the training delivered? How are connections made between the diocesan staff and the governing body?
- How are new members as well as veteran members prepared to direct their discussions, strategies, and decisions around the school's' mission and vision?
- How is the board engaged in an annual review of its performance as a governing body? How is the review used to develop the board's plan for improvement?
- Is a leadership manual for Catholic school boards/governing bodies available from the (arch) diocesan office or the religious community that offers school boards a common frame of reference, vocabulary and best practices to ensure success?
- Has a board Nomination/Board Development Committee been established to design, execute and assess board formation and education? What are the stated responsibilities of the Nomination/Board Development Committee?

## Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks

**5.6** *The governing body engages in formation and on-going training and self-evaluation for itself and the leadership team to ensure the faithful execution of their respective responsibilities.*

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

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

the governing body engages in formation and on-going training at all three levels (prospective member, newcomer, and veteran). The governing body and the leadership team demonstrate a strong commitment to this training as part of their commitment to ensure the faithful execution of their respective responsibilities. In addition, both groups are strongly committed to an annual self-assessment that includes a retreat to plan for the governing body's improvement. The Nominating/Governance Committee is a standing board committee responsible for the oversight for all of the above. This committee is dedicated to ensuring that formation, education and self-evaluation occurs on a regular schedule.

#### At level **4-Exceeds Benchmark**,

the governing body is very committed to and engages in continuous formation, education, and self-evaluation at all three levels (prospective member, newcomer, and veteran). The governing body visibly supports and ensures that the leadership team is engaged in continuous formative efforts. Both the governing body and the leadership team have clearly defined accountability measures for the outcomes associated with their responsibilities and the governing body's ongoing work and improvement plan. Outcomes are assessed utilizing both formative (after each meeting) and summative (annual self-evaluation and input from stakeholders) measures to ensure the faithful execution of their respective responsibilities, with clear follow up and plans for improvement. Annual assessments are designed to include all stakeholder groups to secure input that represents the diversity of stakeholders.

An important element of the governing body's assessment is that an annual retreat be held following the assessment process. At this planning retreat, the board and the leadership team discuss the results of the evaluation and design an improvement plan. The Nominating/Governance Committee, a standing board committee, oversees all of the above.

## **Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks**

**5.6** *The governing body engages in formation and on-going training and self-evaluation for itself and the leadership team to ensure the faithful execution of their respective responsibilities.*

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

the governing body and the leadership team intermittently engage in formation and on-going training and self-evaluation. The board and the leadership team have no set plan to provide activities at the three levels (prospective member, newcomer, and veteran).

There is little if any assessment of the governing body's work nor accountability for expected outcomes. Thus, they limit their ability to ensure consistent, informed and faithful execution of their respective responsibilities as stewards of the mission. No Nominating/Governance Committee exists or, if it does exist, its role is limited.

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

the governing body and the leadership team do not engage in formation and on-going training. Neither group has a plan in place to do so. Furthermore, the two groups do not support the concept of assessment and accountability. This negatively impacts the governing body's faithful execution of their respective responsibilities as informed stewards of the mission. No Nominating/Governance Committee exists.

## **IV. What are some key suggestions for improvement?**

### **To move from level 1 to level 2,**

- Engage in formation and ongoing training and self-evaluation for the benefit of the board and leadership team to ensure continuous, faithful execution of their respective responsibilities.
- Focus on formation and on-going training in the orientation of new members and ongoing development of veteran members.
- Establish a standing Nominating/Governance Committee of the board.

### **To move from level 2 to level 3,**

- Provide oversight for the formation, education and self-evaluation of the governing body as a responsibility of the Nominating/Governance Committee.

## Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks

**5.6** *The governing body engages in formation and on-going training and self-evaluation for itself and the leadership team to ensure the faithful execution of their respective responsibilities.*

- Plan focused and ongoing training activities for prospective members, newcomers, and veteran school board members sponsored by the Nomination/Governance Committee.
- Provide formation and ongoing training for prospective members, newcomers, and veterans sponsored by the Nominating/Governance Committee.
- Organize and provide an annual self-assessment process that includes a retreat to engage in ongoing governing body improvement and ensure the faithful execution of their responsibilities.

### **To move from level 3 to 4,**

- Commit to and actively engage in the continuous formation and education of the governing body members at all three levels (prospective member, newcomer, and veteran levels) as well as self-evaluation.
- Visibly support and ensure that the leadership team is engaged in continuous formative efforts
- Establish clearly defined accountability measures for both the governing body and the leadership team based on the outcomes associated with their responsibilities.
- Assess outcomes utilizing both formative (after each meeting) and summative (annual self-evaluation and input from stakeholders) measures to ensure the faithful execution of the governing body and leadership team's respective responsibilities.
- Develop and implement plans that address areas of improvement.
- Include all stakeholder groups in annual assessments to secure input that represents the diversity of stakeholders.
- Conduct an annual retreat where the governing body and leadership team discuss the assessment results and design an improvement plan.
- Charge the Nominating/Governance Committee, a standing committee of the board, with ongoing oversight all of the above.

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

Formative Evaluation  
Summative Evaluation  
Formation  
Education

On-going training  
Self-evaluation  
Leadership team

## **Guidelines for Interpreting and Scoring Benchmarks**

**5.6** *The governing body engages in formation and on-going training and self-evaluation for itself and the leadership team to ensure the faithful execution of their respective responsibilities.*