

**ST. JAMES THE LESS CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**PERRIS, CALIFORNIA**

**DIOCESE OF SAN BERNARDINO**

**Est. 1965**



**SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

**Rev. 2017-2018**

**Revised February 13, 2019**

## ST. JAMES THE LESS CATHOLIC SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

St. James the Less Catholic School is an educational ministry of St. James the Less Parish that exists to form each student in a spirit of faith, wisdom, and character. Following the model of our founders, the Sisters of Mercy, we provide rigorous academic excellence. We guide students in Transitional Kindergarten through Grade 8 to be faith-filled Catholics, life-long learners, responsible citizens, creative and expressive individuals, and problem solvers. The school welcomes all those who are willing to participate fully in our mission and philosophy.

## ST. JAMES THE LESS CATHOLIC SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

At St. James the Less Catholic School we believe it is fundamental to provide students and families with Catholic traditions and values, a challenging curriculum that inspires discovery, and the opportunity to serve our parish and global community as valued stewards of God's gifts. Aligning with the pillars of Faith-Sharing, Collaboration, Reconciliation, and Hospitality as outlined by the Diocese of San Bernardino, we cultivate and nurture within our students and families an enduring love of learning.

As a people of God, in partnership with St. James the Less Catholic Church, our dedicated priests, faculty, and staff provide a safe and nurturing educational environment committed to high academic standards and developmental needs of the whole child, integrating the skills needed in preparation for the future. Centered on the Eucharist, our devotion to Mary, and the works of Mercy, students at St. James the Less Catholic School acquire a strong foundation in faith, wisdom, and character.

At St. James the Less Catholic School we believe that a well-established partnership and open communication with parents is vital to the success of every unique child. Parents and teachers collaborate for the purpose of mentoring students to become self-confident and independent leaders.

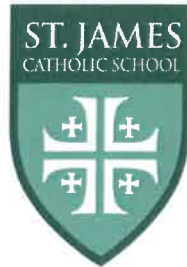
At St. James the Less Catholic School we believe:

- Every child is a child of God, unique and precious
- In the image and likeness of Jesus, teachers mentor their students with love and compassion
- Parents and teachers collaborate to help students become self-confident and independent leaders

## **St. James the Less Catholic School MOTTO**

A shield of faith, wisdom, and character.

ST. JAMES THE LESS CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
Est. 1965  
SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS  
Rev. in process (2017-2018)



**Why the Jerusalem Cross?**

St. James the Less, the author of the first Catholic Epistle, was the son of Alphaeus of Cleophas. His mother Mary was either a sister or a close relative of the Blessed Virgin, and for that reason, according to Jewish custom, he was sometimes called the brother of the Lord. The Apostle held a distinguished position in the early Christian community of Jerusalem. St. Paul tells us he was a witness of the Resurrection of Christ; he is also a "pillar" of the Church, whom St. Paul consulted about the Gospel.

According to tradition, he was the first Bishop of Jerusalem, and was at the Council of Jerusalem about the year 50. The historians Eusebius and Hegesippus relayed that St. James was martyred for the Faith by the Jews in the Spring of the year 62, although they greatly esteemed his person and had given him the surname of "James the Just."

**Schoolwide Learning Expectations - SLEs**

**Student Learning Expectations TK-Kindergarten**

**Faith Filled Catholic Who:**

1. Knows my prayers.
2. Treats others the way I want to be treated.
3. Gives to the missions around the world with prayers, gifts and money.

**Life Long Learner Who:**

1. Uses good manners and gets along with others.
2. Works independently.
3. Tries my best in all that I do.

**Responsible Citizen Who:**

1. Knows right from wrong behavior and the consequences.
2. Respects all of God's creation.
3. Plays and uses good sportsmanship.

**Creative and Expressive Individual Who:**

1. Communicates the best I can when I write and speak.
2. Knows that God made all people special.

**Student Learning Expectations 1st-3rd Grades**

**Faith-Filled Catholic who:**

1. Follows the 10 Commandments, prays daily, and attends Holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.
2. Lives the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy.
3. Believes that Jesus is truly present in the Holy Eucharist.

**Life-Long Learner who:**

1. Pays attention and participates in class, is organized, and does homework every day.
2. Is an independent problem solver.
3. Takes responsibility and pride in my learning and the learning environment of others.

**Responsible Citizen who:**

1. Follows school classroom rules and procedures
2. Listens to my conscience and do what is right even when no one is watching.
3. Respects the flag and my country.

**Creative and Expressive Individual who:**

1. Uses my gifts and talents from God.
2. Has a positive and joyful attitude.
3. Collaborates with my peers.

**Student Learning Expectations 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grades**

**FaithFilled Catholic who:**

1. Knows and lives the principles of the Catholic faith.
2. Has deep and abiding compassion for humankind, leading to moral action on social issues.
3. Actively participates in the liturgical life of the Church.

**Life-Long Learner who:**

1. Can adapt to new situations and life's changes.
2. Is an active listener and effective communicator.
3. Take responsibility and pride in your own learning and the learning environment of others.

A Responsible Citizen who:

1. Make moral choices that affect the well-being of myself and others by developing an informed conscience.
2. Promotes and works for social justice in the classroom and beyond.
3. Follows school and classroom rules and procedures.

Creative & Expressive Individual who:

1. Expresses self-confidence, optimism, and adaptability.
2. Clearly articulates ideas to others through written, oral, and kinesthetic communication.
3. Is a knowledgeable and independent thinker.

**ST. JAMES THE LESS CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
ADVISORY Council CONSTITUTION**

**Article I. Name, Authority and Constitution**

Section 1. Name

The name of the Council shall be “St. James the Less Catholic School Advisory Council”. It shall be referred to herein as the Council.

Section 2. Authority

The Council’s authority shall be within the limits delineated in Article II, which follow the Diocesan School Council policies requiring schools to have a Council: **2025 Requirement to establish local school advisory Councils**. The Bishop has mandated that each school have a school Council. A parish may choose the model for a Council or commission of education to fulfill this requirement. (cf1310)

**APPROVED: DIOCESAN SCHOOL COUNCIL  
DATE: DECEMBER 1987**

Section 3. Constitution

**2025.1** Constitution and bylaws of local school Councils shall identify the Council as consultative. Constitutions and bylaws shall be submitted to the Office of Catholic Schools for approval. Where an education Council or commission is chosen rather than a school Council, the school shall submit to the Office of Catholic Schools the procedures followed for enactment of Council responsibilities toward the school.

**APPROVED: DIOCESAN SCHOOL COUNCIL  
DATE: DECEMBER 1987**

**Article II. General Purpose, Role Jurisdiction**

Section 1. Purpose and Role

A. The general purpose of this Council is to identify and articulate the educational needs of St. James the Less Catholic School and to support and implement the philosophy and mission of both the parish and the school, within the guidelines of the Diocese of San Bernardino.

B. The proper role of the Council is to identify, develop, and recommend policies which govern the operation of the school. These give direction related to planning, operation and maintaining the school. Approving policy is the role of the Administration. Implementing policy is the role of the Principal.

C. The policies formulated by this Council must be consistent with and supportive of the laws of this State, the policies of the Bishop, and Diocesan School Council. No policy of the Council shall become binding without the approval of the Administration and the implementation of the Principal.

D. Once the policies take written form and are properly approved and put into effect, the active role of the Council changes to an indirect role monitoring through reports. Implementation of written policy is the primary concern of the Principal who is accountable to the Council for effective policy execution.

Section 2. Limits of Jurisdiction

A. Neither the Council as a whole nor any individual members shall formally entertain or consider communications or complaints until they have been first referred to either the Principal or Pastor. Only in those cases where satisfactory adjustments cannot be made by the Principal and/or Pastor shall communications follow the Resolution of Conflict policy as outlined in the school's Parent/Student Handbook.

B. Individual members have status as Council members only when acting formally as members of the Council while it is in session, or when specifically entrusted by the Council to carry out definite assignments.

**Article III. Functions and Duties**

**2025.2 Function/Role/Relationships Of Councils -- General**

The local school Council shall represent parents and parish community in decisions relating to the general direction of the school. The Council is consultative to the principal and pastor (pastoral coordinator) and collaborates with them in the following areas of responsibility:

- A. Planning (reviewing mission statement, goals, long range plan);
- B. Policy Development (proposing policies which give general direction for administrative action);
- C. Financing (developing means/plans, advise and review allocating resources according to budget, monitoring);
- D. Public Relations (communicating with various publics, recruiting students, and promoting the school);
- E. Evaluation (assessing goals and plans, determining the Council's effectiveness).

The policies of the Diocese shall be used as guidelines for policy formulation at the local level. Once policies take written form and are properly approved or promulgated, they are binding. Implementation of the policies is the concern of the administrator who is accountable to the Council for effective policy execution. (Cf. 2033, 2043)

**APPROVED: DIOCESAN SCHOOL COUNCIL**  
**DATE: DECEMBER 1987**

#### **SUMMARY:**

The role of a Council member of St. James the Less Catholic School is to represent the interests of the entire school community. The Council is advisory, not governing. This means that the Council makes policy recommendations. This advisory role protects Council members from being responsible for the actions of school personnel or school related issues. Policy recommendations become policy once they are approved by the Administration and then acted upon by the Principal.

The Council is only a Council when they meet at the designated meeting place and time. Council meetings are an opportunity to serve the entire community, not a special forum to take care of personal issues. Decisions made by the Council should be in the best interests of the entire school community, not one class, one family or one student. Once the Council meeting is adjourned, Council members may represent their own interests and the interests of their family. Council members may not act in their capacity as members of the School Council except within the scope of the regular meetings or in the duties for assigned tasks as directed.

#### **Article IV. Membership**

### Section 1. Ex-Officio Members

- A. The pastor shall be an *ex-officio* and non-voting member of the Council.
- B. The principal shall be an *ex-officio* and non-voting member of the Council.
- C. A faculty representative shall be an *ex-officio* and non-voting member of the Council.
- D. The Student Council representative shall be an *ex-officio* and non-voting member of the Council.
- E. The Parent Activity Committee president shall be an *ex-officio* and non-voting member of the Council.
- F. The past president may serve an additional one year term as an *ex-officio* and non-voting member to help facilitate in the election and transition of the new president.
- G. Other *ex-officio* and non-voting members may be appointed to the Council by the school principal as approved by the pastor. These additional positions are usually reporting members of the Council.

### Section 2. Members

There shall be a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of nine (9) members of the Council, excluding *ex-officio* and non-voting members, who are appointed by the principal and approved by the pastor. The principal may hold elections for any or all offices depending on the number of people interested in serving on the Council. Elected members of the Council also need the approval of the pastor.

### Section 3. Length of Term

Except for the *ex-officio* members of the Council, each voting member of the Council shall serve a term of two years with a maximum of two additional two year terms. Variances to the Length of Term policy must be recommended by the principal and approved by the pastor.

Terms of office begin on July 1<sup>st</sup> each year, ending the following June 30<sup>th</sup>, regardless of when the member began service.

### Section 4. Eligibility and Non-Eligibility

- A. All members of the Council shall be positive contributors to the parish to which the Council member belongs.
- B. The majority of the voting Council members must be registered members of St. James the Less Parish and/or must be parents of children currently enrolled in the school.



C. Professional educators, business professionals, parishioners and community leaders may serve as Council members. They are appointed by the principal and approved by the pastor and serve terms as outlined in Article IV, Section 3.

D. Salaried employees of the parish or school may only serve on the Council as an *ex-officio* non-voting member for the purposes of reporting and offering advice or information.

E. Persons whose personal philosophy differs from the philosophy of Catholic education and the mission and philosophy of St. James the Less Catholic School may not be considered or serve as Council members.

F. Service Hour Credit is given for meeting attendance. Attendance is verified by sign-in sheets.

## **Article V. Officers and Committees**

### **Section 1. Enumeration**

A. The officers of this Council shall consist of three (3): a President, Vice-President/Treasurer and Secretary.

B. The officers shall be selected by the principal and approved by the pastor. Neither the principal nor the pastor is eligible to hold any office on the Council.

C. The Council may provide for standing and temporary (ad hoc) committees drawn from its own membership or from the parish and school community. Such committees may prepare studies and provide information that will permit the Council to make informed judgements.

### **Section 2. Election and Terms**

Prior to the first meeting of each new school year, offices for the Council shall be selected by the principal from the Council membership. Council office shall serve for a term of one year in office. The term may be renewed at the discretion of the principal for any number of terms, up to membership term limits.

### **Section 3. Responsibilities**

Since St. James the Less Catholic School is part of a diocesan system, the authority of the Council is subject to that of the Diocesan School Council. The role of the Council is to recommend policy and not administer the school. All policies must have the approval of the pastor.

A. The Council president shall preside at all meetings of the Council, plan Council meetings with the principal and/or with the pastor, and appoint committees as necessary to conduct

Council business. The Council president shall sign all recorded and approved School Council minutes to establish the validity of the minutes. The Council president shall call the meetings to order and shall insure that the meeting is conducted in a timely and orderly fashion.

B. The Vice-President/Treasurer shall serve as the Council's Finance Officer, receiving copies of all the school's financial reports at months end and at year end. Additionally, the Vice-President/Treasurer shall perform the duties of the President when that officer is absent or unable to perform duties.

C. The Secretary shall record the official minutes of all Council meetings and handle necessary Council correspondence. The Secretary shall assure that an accurate recording of the Council business is saved as part of the school's records. The Secretary shall record the attendance of Council members.

## **Article VI. Meetings**

### **Section 1. Scheduled**

The Council shall meet monthly on a specified day of the week and at a specific time. Special meetings may be called by the president as needed or as requested by the Council members. Regular meetings of the Council shall be advertised in the school's newsletters, detailing the date, time and place.

All meetings of the Council shall be open unless designated as executive session. Executive session meetings are closed to public and are generally informational meetings only – not meetings where business is conducted and policies recommended in secret. The information in Executive session is considered confidential and should not be shared with the community at large.

The Council shall establish and publish a process for those individuals who are not Council members but who wish to address the Council. At St. James the Less Catholic School, the process that is available for non-Council members is to send their information to the Council President in writing, at least two week in advance of a meeting. The Council president will review the request or suggestion and present the information during the "reports" portion of the meeting. At that time the Council will determine if the request or suggestion shall be moved to the discussion portion of the meeting. No action is taken on a request or suggestions at the same meeting these are presented. Individuals are thanked and their requests or suggestions are taken under advisement.

### **Section 2. Non-Scheduled**

The Council may be called to a special meeting by the principal or pastor. Non-scheduled meetings may not take place without either the pastor or the principal present.

### Section 3. Quorum

It shall be necessary that a simple majority of voting members be present at a meeting in order for the Council to transact business.

### Section 4. Voting and Appeals

A. The Council shall conduct its business by a call from the President for consensus. This means that all members should strive to agree on issues at hand by arriving at acceptable compromises. The Council president shall take a poll of agreement from the Council prior to making a recommendation. When consensus is reached, acceptable working of policies and recommendations is drafted by the president and presented to the Council for final approval.

B. If consensus cannot be reached on an issue; the issue should be postponed to the following meeting, and then revisited for further discussion. If consensus still cannot be reached, a simple majority shall be used to carry a motion. Should a tie vote exist, issues may be resolved by the principal after due consideration.

C. Decisions become effective upon approval of the pastor and when acted upon by the principal.

### Section 5. Attendance

In the case of absences, the principal reserves the right to appoint a replacement of any Council member who misses 3 or more regular School Council meetings in any school year. Responsibility for the appointment of new members rests with the principal, with the approval of the pastor.

### Section 6. Procedure

Agenda items are arrived at in collaboration between the administration and the president. Agenda items are presented, discussed and appropriate action is taken by the procedure described in Article VI, Section 4, paragraph A.

### **Article VII. Amendments**

Amendments or revisions to this constitution require a two-thirds vote of the entire voting Council and final approval of the principal and pastor.

