



St Joseph's School, Tara Parent Engagement Network Constitution



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DRAFT CONSTITUTION FOR PARENT ENGAGEMENT NETWORK

Foreword

St Joseph's School, Tara is a school that operates with the consent of the Catholic Bishop of Toowoomba and is governed by The Corporation of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba.

As a Catholic school, St Joseph's considers the partnership with parents and families as crucial in the education of each student and to the school being actively involved within the local community. As a school, we welcome the involvement of parents and families in all aspects of school life and commit to nurturing active partnerships.

The creation of a Parent Engagement Network has come about in response to requests to consider an alternative model to the School Board and Parents and Friends Association, acknowledging the changing nature of families and schools and evolving ways of working together. This Network continues to honour the place of parents and families in the life of our school through providing an effective avenue for parents and families to come together to be informed, consulted and learn in relation to school planning, policy, decision making and education programs and engage in activities, projects and events that build community.

DRAFT CONSTITUTION FOR PARENT ENGAGEMENT NETWORK

Parent Engagement Network Constitution

This Constitution was adopted at the first Forum on [Click or tap to enter a date](#)

1. Name

- a. The formal name of the group and its activities is the St Joseph's School, Tara Parent Engagement Network (PEN), referred to as 'the Network'.

2. Interpretation

- a. In this Constitution unless the context otherwise requires
 - i. 'parent/guardian' means the natural parents, legal custodians or people who are 'in loco parentis' ie someone who is legally acting in place of a parent on behalf of a minor
 - ii. 'school' means any institution of pre-school preparatory year, primary or secondary education conducted in accordance with Canon 803 of the Code of Canon Law
 - iii. 'ordinary member' is a parent/guardian of a child currently enrolled at the school
 - iv. 'the Executive' means those 'ordinary members' elected to fill the positions of Chair, Secretary and Working party coordinators and the Principal and Parish Priest/Director (or their nominees) who are ex-officio members of the Executive
 - v. 'ex-officio members' are members of the Executive by virtue of the office they hold; they have full voting rights
 - vi. 'Forum' means the meetings facilitated by the Executive with ordinary members
 - vii. 'Working parties' means those 'ordinary members' who work together on projects, events and activities as determined by the Executive
 - viii. 'Catholic School Parents Queensland (CSPQ) – Diocese of Toowoomba' means the body formally representing the interests of all parents of students in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Toowoomba
 - ix. 'delegate' means an 'ordinary member' delegated to act as a representative on the CSPQ – Diocese of Toowoomba; this member would usually be a member of the Executive
 - x. 'Catholic School Parents Queensland' is the body representing all Parents and Friends Associations in Catholic Schools in Queensland
 - xi. 'annual levy' is the fee applied by Catholic School Parents Queensland to the parents of each child attending a Catholic school in Queensland and is paid annually.
- b. This Constitution provides direction for the establishment and operation of the Network. In doing this, the Constitution
 - i. makes clear the purpose of the Network
 - ii. sets guidelines for the leadership structure, membership and Forum procedures
 - iii. explains key Network activities that include Forums and Working parties
 - iv. sets guidelines for the proper management of any finances
 - v. allows flexibility where determined to suit local circumstances
 - vi. sets standards and expectations for appropriate conduct and participation.

3. Purpose

- a. The Network is a formal structure, approved by the Bishop, for parents/guardians to engage in the educational mission of the Catholic school.
- b. The Network supports the principal and staff in implementing a comprehensive and contemporary education program. Parents/guardians have an advisory role in decisions made in the development and implementation of the strategic plan and policies of the school as well as the provision of resources to support the educational programs of the school.
- c. All parents/guardians are welcome to be ordinary members of the Network and assist in
 - i. developing a positive and affirming community spirit
 - ii. supporting the work of the principal and staff
 - iii. providing feedback to the principal and staff on school initiatives, policies and strategic direction
 - iv. prudent and consultative decision-making
 - v. promoting interaction between home and school, parents and teachers
 - vi. encouraging parent/family engagement with their child's learning and school life
 - vii. deepening parent/family understanding of teaching and learning programs
 - viii. promoting the school in the wider community
 - ix. the provision of resources to support the educational program.
- d. The Network is an affiliate of the Catholic Schools Parents Queensland and CSPQ – Diocese of Toowoomba. Affiliation requirements are determined by the CSPQ.
- e. The Network will not
 - i. affiliate with any political body or party
 - ii. affiliate with any association whose objectives are inconsistent with the purpose outlined above
 - iii. become incorporated.

4. Structure, membership and Forum procedures

- a. Executive membership
 - i. Membership of the Executive will consist of ordinary members filling the positions of Chair, Secretary and Working party coordinators and the Parish Priest/Director (or their nominee) and principal as ex-officio members.
- b. Election of the Executive
 - ii. At the Network's first Forum of the year, current ordinary members of the Executive who have served their term of office will step-down but will be eligible for re-election or re-appointment subject to the terms of this Constitution.
 - iii. The term of office of the elected Executive members is two years with the right to serve a maximum of two consecutive full terms in the one position.
 - iv. Having served the maximum term in one position a member may stand for election for another position on the Executive.
 - v. If an Executive member has served their maximum term and no nomination is forthcoming for that position, the ordinary members may re-appoint the incumbent

to that position for a further 12-month period.

c. Termination of membership of the Executive

- i. Any member of the Executive may resign at any time by giving notice in writing to the Secretary; the resignation will take effect at the time the notice is received by the Secretary unless a later date is specified in the notice.¹
- ii. Any member of the Executive may be removed from office if the member
 - fails to comply with any of the provisions of this Constitution or
 - conducts him/herself in a manner considered to be injurious and prejudicial to the reputation, mission or interests of the school.
- iii. A recommendation in relation to a termination and the reasons for considering termination is to be made by the principal to the Senior Education Leader.
- iv. The member concerned will be given fair opportunity to present his/her case to the Senior Education Leader.
- v. The Senior Education Leader will advise the member of the decision, in writing, within seven days.
- vi. An appeal of the Senior Education Leader's decision can be made by the member to the Executive Director: Catholic Schools who makes the final determination to uphold or overturn this decision.
- vii. The Executive Director: Catholic Schools, reserves the right to remove from office a member or members of the Executive for reasons specified in 4.d.ii.

d. Vacancies on Executive

- i. The Executive has the authority to appoint a member to fill any casual vacancy caused by the resignation or removal of an Executive member until the first Forum of the next calendar year.
- ii. Such an appointment will be ratified at the next scheduled Forum.

e. Functions of the Executive

- i. Except as otherwise provided by this Constitution and subject to resolutions of the members of the Network carried at any Forum the Executive will
 - manage the administration of the affairs, including the plan, possessions and funds of the Network as described in this Constitution
 - interpret and apply the Constitution with regard to any matter concerning the activities of the Network.

f. Meetings of the Executive

- i. The Executive will meet separately from the Forums as required during its term of office to exercise its functions
- ii. Decisions taken at meetings of the Executive will be tabled at the next Forum for ratification or reporting purposes.
- iii. A special meeting of the Executive may be convened by the Chair, upon the reasonable request of another Executive member.
- iv. At every Executive meeting a simple majority of the Executive members will constitute a quorum; the Executive may meet, subject to the Constitution and regulate its proceedings as it thinks fit, provided that questions arising at any

¹ In the case of the resignation being the Secretary, this notice is to be given to the Chair.

meeting of the Executive will be decided by consensus or a majority of votes and where a vote is tied the motion lapses so that the status quo is maintained.

g. Working parties

- i. Working parties are 'fit for purpose' groups which are convened to fulfil a need identified by the Executive.
- ii. Membership of Working parties will include a Working party coordinator and any number of people with the skills or interests to plan, implement and review a project, event or activity as determined by the Executive.

h. Appointment of Working party coordinators and members

- i. The Working party coordinator/s will be elected at the first Forum of the year or as required at subsequent Forums.
- ii. The term of office of the appointed a Working party coordinator/s will be determined by the project, event or activity that is being coordinated.
- iii. A person may nominate themselves or another to join a Working party according to their skills and/or interest level.

i. Termination of Working party coordinators

- i. Any Working party coordinator may resign at any time by giving notice in writing to the Secretary; the resignation will take effect at the time the notice is received by the Secretary unless a later date is specified in the notice when it will take effect on that later date.

viii. Any Working party coordinator may be removed from office if the member

- fails to comply with any of the provisions of this Constitution or
- conducts him/herself in a manner considered to be injurious and prejudicial to the reputation, mission or interests of the school.

- ii. A recommendation in relation to a termination and the reasons for considering termination is to be made by the principal to the Senior Education Leader.

- iii. The Working party coordinator concerned will be given fair opportunity to present his/her case to the Senior Education Leader.

- iv. The Senior Education Leader will advise the Working party coordinator of the decision, in writing, within seven days.

- v. An appeal of the Senior Education Leader's decision can be made by the Working party coordinator to the Executive Director: Catholic Schools who makes the final determination to uphold or overturn this decision.

- vi. The Executive Director: Catholic Schools, reserves the right to remove from office a member or members of the Executive for reasons specified in 4.j.ii.

j. Functions of the Working party coordinators

- i. Except as otherwise provided by this Constitution and subject to resolutions of the members of the Network carried at any Forum, Working party coordinators will
 - operate within the parameters set by the Executive and under the direction of the principal
 - discuss and plan the project, event or activity
 - attend Forums and Executive meetings to seek approval and/or endorsement of the Working party's plans.

- k. Meetings of the Working parties
 - i. All Working parties meet as required, as determined by the Working party coordinator to plan and implement the approved project, event or activity.

5. Forums

- a. Forums
 - i. Forums are to be held at least four times a year.
 - ii. Forums are to be designed to inform, educate or consult with parents/guardians and are to be linked to the school strategic and annual action plan, policy development or review and/or education priorities and programs.
 - iii. An agenda for each Forum is to be determined by the Executive and communicated to ordinary members as per this Constitution.
 - iv. The first Forum of each year is to include the requirements described at 5b.
 - v. Subsequent Forums are to include the requirements at 5c.
 - vi. Special Forums can be called by the Executive for a specific purpose.
- b. Agenda for first Forum of the year
 - i. The business to be transacted will include
 - the presentation of the minutes of the previous first Forum of the year
 - business arising from the minutes
 - the principal's report, including presentation of the Strategic plan, Forum topics and Working party projects, events and activities (inclusive of budget)
 - the election of members of the Executive, including CSPQ – Diocese of Toowoomba delegates (if applicable)
 - noting of the annual levy to be paid to CPSQ.
 - ii. After the first Forum the principal is to notify CPSQ of the membership of the Executive, including the delegate/s on CSPQ – Diocese of Toowoomba (if applicable).
- c. Agenda of subsequent Forums
 - i. The business to be transacted at subsequent Forums will include
 - the presentation of the minutes of the previous Forum
 - business arising from the minutes
 - the Chair's report
 - CSPQ – Diocese of Toowoomba delegate/s report (if applicable)
 - the Working party coordinators' reports (if applicable)
 - the Principal's report which may include
 - progress of Strategic plan initiatives and associated budget
 - implementation of school policy
 - progress reports on school operational matters including building, facilities and budget
 - Religious Education and Religious Life of the School.

d. Calling and conduct of Forums

- i. The Executive will schedule and communicate Forum dates and agendas at the beginning of each school year; the Executive will determine the manner by which this information is communicated.
- ii. The Chair will convene special Forums when reasonably requested in writing signed by a majority of the Executive or not less than eight ordinary members and clearly stating the purpose for which the special Forum has been requested.
- iii. Unless otherwise provided by this Constitution, at every Forum, the Chair, or in his/her absence a Chair elected by resolution of a majority of the members present at the Forum, will chair the Forum.
- iv. The Chair will conduct all Forums in accordance with agreed and accepted rules for the conduct of Forums.
- v. Matters at Forums will usually be decided by consensus but should a deadlock occur a vote of all members of the Forum present will be taken and a majority decision will apply.
- vi. Should a vote be required every ordinary member present will be entitled to one vote; where a vote is tied the motion lapses so that the status quo is maintained.
- vii. Voting will be by show of hands, unless a simple majority of ordinary members present move that a secret ballot be conducted; the Chair will appoint two ordinary members to conduct the secret ballot in such manner as he/she will determine; the result of the ballot as declared by the Chair will be deemed to be the resolution of the matter.
- viii. The Secretary will maintain accurate minutes of all questions, matters, resolutions and other proceedings of every meeting of the Executive, Forums and any special Forums; minutes will be available for parents to access and read.

6. Alteration of the Constitution

- a. This Constitution may be amended at the first Forum of the year or any other Forum where the suggested change/s is/are made available to all ordinary members at least one week prior to the scheduled Forum date.
- b. Notice of any proposed amendment/s should be given in writing to the Secretary; the notice should be signed by four ordinary members who support the proposal; immediately following receipt of such Notice, and at least one week before the Forum, the Secretary will make available to all members the proposed amendment to be considered at the first Forum of the year or a subsequent Forum.

7. Funds

- a. The income and any assets of the Network will be applied in achievement of the strategic plan and associated priorities of the school.
- b. The financial year the Network will be from 1 January to 31 December.
- c. The funds generated by the Forum's activities will be banked by the school finance officer, into the school's operating account. Transactions will be coded to the Network and its planned activities.
- d. The Principal is to present an updated report to each Forum of how funds have been expended as per the approved Network plan.
- e. All moneys will be banked as soon as practicable after they are received.

- f. The Network is not to hold assets and are to operate in a 'not-for-profit' model ie any funds generated are to be applied to meeting the priorities of the school.
- g. The Network will not borrow money.
- h. As soon as practicable after the end of each year, the Network's financial transactions will be audited as a part of the school's annual audit. A statement of transactions will be presented at first Forum in the following the calendar year in which the audit was made.
- i. In the event that this is not possible, the statement of transactions will be presented to the next Forum.
- j. Where practicable, all cash will be placed in the school safe, during and immediately following a Network coordinated event; cash will not be taken to a Network member's residence unless approved by the principal. If deemed necessary the principal will nominate two members of the school staff to oversee the counting, banking and receipting of all funds; the counting of cash will take place in a secure location within the school administration building.

8. No agency of the school

- a. The Network will not hold itself out as agent of the school and has no authority to bind the school.
- b. The Network cannot enter into any contracts without the authority and agreement of the principal.

9. Dissolution

- a. The Network will be dissolved
 - i. if the membership or attendance is fewer than three persons, or
 - ii. if a resolution to that effect is carried by a vote of three-quarters majority of the members present at a special Forum convened to consider the question.
- b. In such an event, the financial and other assets of the Network remaining after the payment of all expenses and other liabilities will automatically transfer to the school.

10. Certification

- a. We certify that this is a true and correct copy of the Constitution of insert name of Network.

Chair's name		Date	
Chair's signature			
Secretary's name		Date	
Secretary's signature			
Principal's name		Date	
Principal's signature			