

Governance

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. (Philippians 2:1-2)



A Appointing a Governing Board

In many congregations, the Board of Education governs the early childhood ministry (ECM). It also supervises Sunday school, confirmation classes, vacation Bible school, youth and adult education, the elementary school and any other educational ministries the congregation may conduct.

It may be beneficial to appoint an Early Childhood Committee as a subcommittee of the board. This group would report regularly to the board with several members of the subcommittee serving on the board.

If a separate Early Childhood Committee is appointed, be sure to implement a procedure for reporting to the board so that the early childhood program remains an integral part of the total ministry plan of the congregation. Provide links to congregation members. Be sure major policy development and decisions are ratified by the decision-making group in the congregation.

A variety of governing structures exist in WELS congregations. One model is an Early Childhood Education Committee or Board that reports to the Church Council or Board of Elders. Other congregations have ad hoc committees for each area of interest. Whatever structure the congregation adopts, the governing body must be an integral part of the established organizational structure.

(Cf. Appendix 3.1 Two Administrative Possibilities or in the Chapter 3 folder)

B The Governing Board is Responsible for or Oversees:

- Keeping ECM's focus on congregation's mission, philosophy, and objectives.
- Developing policies to guide the director in daily operation of Christ-centered ECM.
- Preparing and presenting to congregation long- and short-term goals for ECM.
- Planning a yearly schedule of committee responsibilities.
- Communicating and working with congregation, district, synodical offices of WELS.



- Calling or hiring a director, teachers, and staff to ensure quality program.
- Assisting director and staff in providing program that exceeds state requirements and fulfills mission and objectives.
- Preparing and annually reviewing job descriptions for all staff.
- Conducting annual evaluation of director.
- Funding and financial management of ECM.
- Providing publicity for ECM.
- Property needs including facility, equipment, and furnishings.
- Conducting annual on-site reviews of center facility, equipment, and materials.

Organization of the Governing Board

Number of Board Members

The number is often determined by the size of the early childhood ministry, the congregation and the responsibilities assigned to the board. Usually a board has from five to seven members. Boards that are too large have difficulty maintaining high attendance and their members' full responsibility. Boards that are too small sometimes lack a variety of perspectives and leadership skills.

Makeup of the Board

The makeup of the board will be determined by the congregation's constitution or the charter for the ECM board. The following guidelines may help when choosing board members. Strive for a:

- Variety of abilities, interests, skills, ages, and viewpoints.
- Mixtures of socio-economic levels and ethnic backgrounds representative of families.
- Well-balanced board may include individuals with experience in education, parenting of young children, financial planning, building and grounds maintenance, marketing, human resources. Advisory members should include pastor, ECM director, and chairman of the Board of Education or School Board.

Board Member Qualifications

Qualifications of board members include the following criteria:

- Live Christian faith in word and action
- Demonstrate leadership in congregations
- Express high interest and commitment toward understanding Christian education and Lutheran ECM
- Commit to attend meetings regularly and punctually
- Demonstrate high level of integrity and confidentiality

Length of Service on Governing Board

A service term of two or three years ensures continuity in management of the ECM. Terms should not expire simultaneously. The church constitution should state the number of terms a board member is eligible to serve. (Cf. Appendix 2.3 Sample Letter to Board Members or in the Chapter 2 folder)

Officers of the Governing Board

The officers may be elected by members of the congregation or elected by the board itself.

Chairman

- Leads and organizes
- Uses parliamentary procedure to chair meetings
- Makes time for required tasks
- Displays positive attitude
- Motivates others
- Addresses issues in a timely and effective manner
- Works closely with director

Vice-Chairman

- Assumes responsibilities as directed by chairman
- Represents chairman when necessary

Finance Keeper

- Has experience in bookkeeping and is competent in fiscal matters
- Prepares or assists in the preparation of detailed budget that accurately reports educational, staff, and facility needs
- Prepares clear financial statements
- Works cooperatively with the ECM director and effectively with church finance committee, church treasurer, and others related to financial management of ECM

Secretary

- Records and files minutes of meetings
- Distributes copies of minutes no later than two weeks after meeting
- Handles correspondence as directed by board
- Maintains files, records, and policies for board in permanent binder and in policy manual for the ECM (or appropriate electronic files)

Property Chairman

- Has experience in property maintenance and repair
- Works cooperatively with ECM and church property chairman
- Assumes responsibility for the maintenance and repair of the classroom, furnishings, equipment, and grounds

Help Board Members Think Strategies

- Prioritize agenda items
- Establish links between agendas of various committees
- Provide written preface to each major policy issue to show how the matter fits into the overall strategy
- Allow the ECM director to speak about priority issues
- Remind board members of their roles and the board's continuing agenda (The board's role is to set policies for the director to implement--- "policy-based management")

The Chairman Prepares an Agenda

- Opening prayer or devotion to focus on spiritual growth
- Reading and approval of last's meeting's minutes
- Presentation and approval of financial report
- Reading of correspondence
- Director's report
- Reports of active subcommittees
- Unresolved or unfinished business
- New business (include each item)
- Announcements
- Review of decisions and responsibilities of members
- Closing prayer

Committees and Subcommittees Perform Specific Assignments

- Personnel
- Building and grounds
- Finance
- Public relations



Board Meetings

Most boards meet monthly and should be limited to 1 or 2 hours. After 2 hours, table agenda items or schedule a continuation of the meeting for another time. Special meetings are sometimes required to handle special concerns and assignments.

Decide on a meeting time that best fits the schedules of board members. A once-traditional evening meeting at the church may need to change to a Saturday breakfast or luncheon meeting.



Legal Issues Concerning Operation of ECM

Whether the state does or does not require an ECM to be licensed, be aware of regulations and comply and strive to exceed mandates. All board members must be aware of all legal issues. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Inclusion of ECM in church By-Laws is **required**
- Non-discrimination status (Cf. Appendix 3.3 Sample Non-discriminatory Policy or in the Chapter 3 folder)
- Liability insurance
- Tax exemption status
- Fingerprint clearances/background checks for staff
- Handling alleged misconduct of staff member
- Reporting possible child abuse/neglect
- AIDS policy (Cf. Appendix 3.4 Sample Aids Policy or in the Chapter 3 folder)
- OSHA
- Blood borne pathogens

It is important that contact be made with the state department of labor for laws regarding:

- wages
- hiring/dismissal of employees
- labor laws

Keep in mind the WELS Early Childhood Self-Study will also aide as a reference guide regarding regulations.



Orientation of ECM Board Members

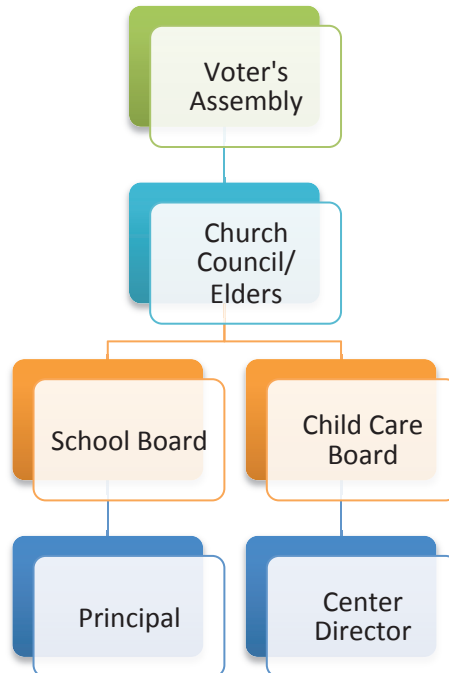
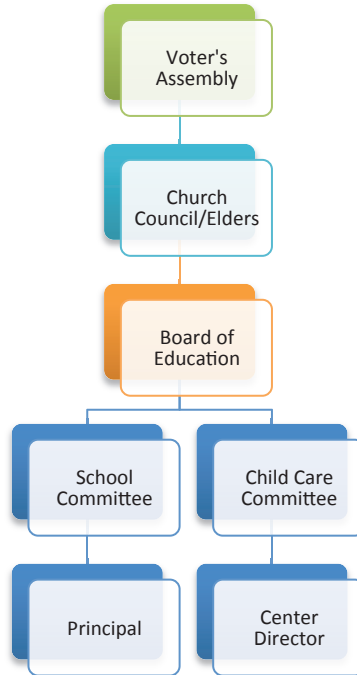
Set aside time to orient ECM board members. The director or other church staff member skilled in group facilitation can be the leader. Include:

- Opening devotion; short Bible study
- Warm-up activity (Ask each to tell something about himself/herself that others in the group may not know. Then tell what he/she brings to this board.)
- Establish group norms. (Begin on time; honor everyone's opinion; agree to disagree; say it here and now when it can do some good, maintain confidentiality.)
- Review mission statement of congregation; compare it to mission statement of ECM
- Review ECM philosophy statement
- Describe present program
- Review role and function of board
- Review responsibilities of ECM director
- Review any self-governance policies (meeting expectations, attendance, agenda, record keeping, confidentiality, board member responsibilities)
- Review policies relating to ECM operation
- Review/adapt goals for ECM

Notes

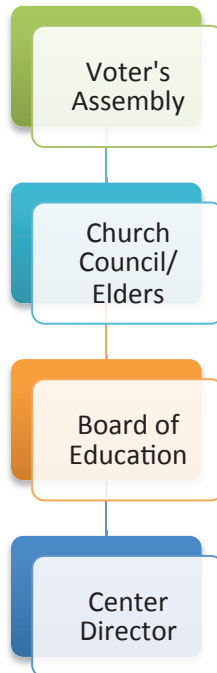
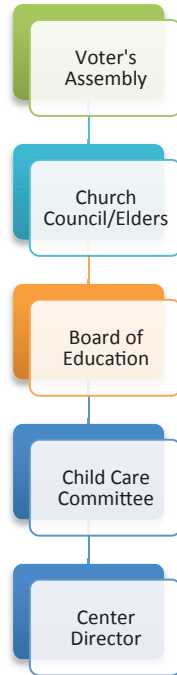
A. Two Administrative Possibilities

Two Administrative Possibilities Where There IS A School



A. Two Administrative Possibilities

Two Administrative Possibilities Where There is NO School



B. Sample Letter to Board Members

"It is the Lord Christ you are serving." Colossians 3:24

Dear Board Member,

What a privilege it is to serve. Thank you for your willingness to serve as a member of the board for the early childhood ministry. We will continue to pray for you as you begin your service in this vital position.

Your task...

God gives the church the job of declaring the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ and partnering with parents to spiritually nurture their children. The church has selected you to assist in carrying out that mission. Your role is an important and rewarding one.

In addition...

By being an effective, caring board member, you will enrich the lives of children, help teachers in their ministry, and serve many families. Through the power of the Holy Spirit you will be an instrument in the service of the Lord. You will touch lives forever with the love of our caring Christ.

And there is still more...

As you and other board members work together, you too will learn and grow. God will bless your service with new friendships and partnerships. As you read and study God's Word together, you will be edified as you seek to edify others. Together, you will be able to celebrate successes—even little ones—and then praise God. You will be equipped to address challenges with the comfort and confidence of the gospel.

More? Yes!

God is always ready to bless. God seeks to bless you as a board member and as a member of his family of believers. As a board member, you will learn many new things about early childhood education and children. You will acquire new skills and develop new understandings and insights. You will grow with the help of the Holy Spirit in Christian faith, love, and joy. All these will be God's gifts to you—gifts that will enrich your life and equip you for continued service for the Lord.

May the Lord equip you and grant you rich blessings as you serve him, the children and families of the early childhood ministry, and the congregation.

In His Service,

Your Pastor

Your Early Childhood Program Director

C. Sample Non-Discriminatory Policy

“(Name of school) admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and local programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.”

If you issue any brochures, handbooks, or catalogs dealing with student admissions, programs and scholarships, include in such brochures, handbooks, and catalogs the above policy statement.

If you issue written advertising, other than catalogs, handbooks, or brochures, as a means of informing prospective students of your program, include the following reference in all such written advertising;

“(Name of school) admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.”

D. Sample AIDS Policy

Though Lutheran schools are not required by law to accept or to provide adapted programs for children having special needs, they will, nevertheless, make their decision in the spirit of the Gospel and their service to people.

Note: In some instances when any federal, state or local financial assistance is accepted (e.g. milk money, lunch subsidy, vouchers) legal requirements may exist. Schools must check with federal, state or local agencies for specific requirements.

Student situations

1. If a child has AIDS, ARC, or is HIV positive and seeks admission to the early childhood program, a pre-enrollment conference including the child's parents, physician, probable teacher, and the administrator will take place to determine:
 - a. AIDS-induced impairment of the child's mental function
 - b. Psychological impairment manifested in assaultive behavior and the potential exposure of others to infected blood
 - c. The immunization status of the child
 - d. The necessary limits on the child's curricular and extra-curricular school activity
2. Each enrolled child is expected to meet immunization requirements of the school for the protection of the student body and faculty.
3. As appropriate in the religion curriculum, teachers will emphasize the compassion of Christ to the sick, the promise of divine care for those who place themselves at risk in the service of others, the hope of the Resurrection in the presence of terminal disease and the celebration of the new life in Christ through faith while physical life disintegrates in dying.
4. As a further expression of concern for the health and well-being of students and faculty, the school will maintain the highest standards of cleanliness in restrooms, waste disposal, and janitors' closets through adequate cleaning and packaging procedures and the use of proven disinfectants.
5. The school will maintain a supply of latex gloves in the health room and classrooms and staff will use them as required.

Employment situations

1. The employing entity will inform itself of federal and state laws that apply to it in the employment of ARC, AIDS, and HIV infected persons.
2. A person called or engaged by the congregation cannot be terminated for an ARC or AIDS illness or an HIV-positive status on the presumption that a sinful life-style was the cause of the disease. They can be brought to account if proved unprofessional conduct and/or sinful personal behavior exists.
3. As is true of anyone with a chronic life-threatening disease, a person afflicted with an ARC/AIDS illness or with the HIV virus needs understanding and compassion. The employer will avoid stigmatization of an individual with these diseases. Demonstrating the compassion of Christ, the employer will provide a supporting and nurturing environment in which the employee can give his or her optimal work performance.
4. An employee with ARC/AIDS will be asked to provide a physician's statement that he/she is able to work, and consistent with the physician's statement, request any reasonable job accommodation necessary for the employee to continue employment.
5. An employee with ARC/AIDS will be covered, as is any other employee, with respect to sick leave, disability and insurance.
6. When an employee with ARC/AIDS is no longer able to meet his or her job responsibilities, as determined by a physician, he or she will be placed on disability, if available. (Consult disability provisions of your health insurance contract.) Termination solely because a person has ARC/AIDS diseases or is HIV positive or having ARC/AIDS may be an infraction of the law.
7. An employee not HIV positive who refuses to work with an employee diagnosed as HIV positive or having ARC/AIDS must present a physician's statement recommending job transfer before the transfer will be considered.

E. Committee Calendar

January

- Establish Month of the Young Child Sub-Committee (April)
- Election of Officers
- Assign visitations
- Annual report due

February

- Yearly mailing to recruit new enrollments
- Walk through center to evaluate physical environment
- Schedule mid year cleaning of center

March

- Approve Bloodborne Pathogens Compliance Status and update policy
- Review tornado drill policy-set drill dates

April

- Establish summer picnic sub-committee (August)
- Visitation reports

May

- Annual review of newsletter
- Review before/after school rate and schedule
- Review parent evaluations of the ECM

June

- Sub-committee assignment-budget review
- Review policies and guidelines for Christian early childhood education

July

- Goal setting session
- Review staff continuing education
- Set-up and review fire drills
- Schedule yearly cleaning of center

August

- Review draft budget report and accept comments
- Establish "Jesus Birthday party" sub-committee (December)

September

- Review pay scale and benefits
- Review handbooks

October

- Final approval of budget-requires board approval
- Establish new fee schedule to go into effect January 1 with board and council approval

November

- Establish child-care dates for church calendar with work nights and family events

December

- Revisit self-study

Monthly agenda items:

- Review minutes of previous meeting
- Treasurer's report
- Director's report
 - Staff
 - Facility
 - Continuing education
- Old business
- New business
- Outreach/Harvest Strategies