

THE SPONSORSHIP REVIEW PROCESS IN USA-EAST

Like the Society of Jesus itself, the Jesuit school serves the worldwide mission of the Church. Jesuit Education is called to be truly, even radically different, having at its very core the love of God who creates us with a purpose, and who creates all things to help us find and achieve that purpose. The point of Jesuit Education is to help students through the cultivation of mind, heart, body, spirit and community, to recognize the gifts of knowledge, culture, and relationship, to discern their own right use of these gifts, and to assist them in building lives for themselves that will best help them to use these gifts in response to God's love for the good of God's people.

A provincial superior is the only person who can designate that a school within his Province boundaries is a work of the Society of Jesus and the Catholic Church. In sponsorship agreements, the Provincial formally restates Society sponsorship of a school and, therefore, allows a school to use the term "Jesuit" and also affirms that a school is Catholic. The governing Board of a school commits to hold in trust and maintain the Jesuit character and mission of the school in cooperation with the Province. The Office of the Provincial's Assistant for Secondary and Pre-Secondary Education coordinates a process to support the schools and the Provincial in their ongoing partnership to secure and enhance the Jesuit and Catholic identity of the Province secondary and pre-secondary schools.

The goals of the Sponsorship Review Process are to:

- Strengthen the accountability for the Jesuit and Catholic identity of schools that is mutually shared by the Board and the Province.
- Enable the Provincial to carry out his responsibility for the sponsorship of Jesuit institutions.
- Assist governing boards in their ongoing responsibility for the character and mission of Jesuit schools.
- Allow schools to assess programs, policies and practices which establish the Jesuit and Catholic identity of the school.
- Engage all school constituencies in a substantial discussion concerning the school's Jesuit and Catholic identity.

Essential components of a Sponsorship Review Process include:

- The Office of the Provincial Assistant for Secondary and Pre-Secondary Education (PASE) will consult the school administration to schedule a sponsorship review visit. Visits usually last for 3 days. The Sponsorship Review will take place on a 6 year cycle which may coincide with the accreditation review and mid-point review.
- Schools will be expected to budget appropriately in order to cover the cost for the review process. It is understood that every effort will be made to keep costs to a minimum.
- Since the Board holds in trust the Jesuit character and mission of the school, the Board committee that oversees the sponsorship agreement would be responsible for oversight of the review process at each school. A committee comprised of trustees, administrators and faculty will prepare a report at the conclusion of the school's self study as part of the review process. This self-study will be submitted to the school leadership (President, Board of Trustees) for approval and distribution to the PASE and the visiting team.
- The criteria articulated in *Our Way of Proceeding: Standards and Benchmarks for Jesuit Schools in the 21st Century* guide the school's self-study. In conducting the self study schools would provide for the collection of data sufficient for a thorough sponsorship assessment, and relating closely to the principles articulated in *Standards and Benchmarks*. Data for the self-study could be compiled from a school's regional accreditation process, or from such instruments as the JSN's Student Profile Survey and Ignatian School Identity Survey.
- While the assessment should reflect all five domains in Standards and Benchmarks, the school will ordinarily focus on 2 or 3 important goals or action steps that the school identifies as most critical.
- Included in the self-study would be a reflective assessment of the Province's performance in fulfilling its role in the Sponsorship Agreement with the school. This should include feedback from the Board, the Administration, and the Faculty and Staff as well.
- The PASE Office in consultation with the school leadership forms a team comprised of 4-8 administrators, faculty and staff, drawn from schools in the Eastern Provinces. The team is chaired by a member of the PASE Office not currently serving on that school's Board. The team visits the school to validate the process and results of the school's reflective self-study. The visiting team receives the self-study well in advance of the visit. In turn, the team prepares a report of their findings, addressing two fundamental questions:

How is this school Catholic and Jesuit?

How does this school form its constituencies in the Ignatian and Jesuit tradition?

In addressing these questions, the visiting team works from the self-study results but will also be alert to any matters important to Jesuit and Catholic identity. The report will conclude with commendations and possible questions. A recommendation will be made to the Provincial regarding continued Society sponsorship.

- Before issuing its final report, the visiting team will share its observations with the leadership group of the school.
- The final report of the visiting team is received and ongoing oversight provided by the appropriate Province leadership group (e.g., PPR, the regional PASE team). The leadership group reviews the report and ultimately makes a recommendation to the Provincial for renewal of the school's sponsorship status, or for conditional renewal pending further review.
- Copies of the visiting team's final report are sent to the Provincial, the school leadership, the Board Chair, and the Chair of the Board of Members.

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