

ROLES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF A PRINCIPAL

Responsible to: Pastor and Superintendent of Schools

The principal ensures the effective operation of a Catholic education program by providing leadership in curriculum development and programming, financial and personnel management, student/teacher/program evaluations, public relations and planning, facility maintenance and development.

The four roles of a principal (as Spiritual Leader, as Instructional Leader, as Administrator, and as Communicator) are important ministries of leadership in a Catholic school.

Principal as Spiritual Leader

The principal:

- ◆ Is committed to the Lord Jesus as a believing and practicing Catholic;
- ◆ Is prayerful, faith-filled and committed to spiritual growth;
- ◆ Is loyal to the Church and accepts its authentic teaching;
- ◆ Creates an environment where the process of faith and moral development can be applied;
- ◆ Creates an environment where the content and methods of religious education can be applied;
- ◆ Knows and applies Church documents and other religious resources that relate to schools;
- ◆ Provides opportunities which foster the spiritual growth of faculty, students, and other members of the school community;
- ◆ Leads the school community in prayer;
- ◆ Links the school and the local school community;
- ◆ Integrates gospel values and Christian social principles into the curriculum and the life of the school;
- ◆ Articulates the Catholic educational vision and directs its accomplishments;
- ◆ Recognizes and provides for cultural and religious differences within the entire school community.

Principal as Instructional Leader

The principal:

- ◆ Is committed to the philosophy of Catholic education that underlies Catholic schools;
- ◆ Promotes staff morale and a sense of Christian community among teachers;
- ◆ Shapes, shares, and implements a school philosophy which reflects the unique Catholic character of the school;
- ◆ Provides leadership in curriculum development in general, including the integration of Christian values;
- ◆ Initiates and conducts appropriate staff development activities;
- ◆ Models life-long learning by possessing an advanced degree and updates his/her knowledge;
- ◆ Shows a general variety of educational pedagogical skills;
- ◆ Initiates and conducts evaluations of students, staff, and innovative programs;
- ◆ Provides effective instructional leadership and supervision of staff and provides programs that reflect the unique Catholic nature of the school.

Principal as Administrator

The principal:

- ◆ Demonstrates good process in decision making;
- ◆ Is accountable and has high expectations of those with whom s/he works;
- ◆ Works collaboratively with a faculty, staff, parents, and other groups;
- ◆ Plans and supervises the school's financial resources;
- ◆ Is sensitive to the demands of justice in making financial decisions, especially as they relate to the Church's social teachings;
- ◆ Effectively uses technology in all aspects of the job;
- ◆ Knows current school law as it applies to the Catholic school;
- ◆ Develops emergency procedures;
- ◆ Provides leadership for the school's public and community relations activities;
- ◆ Provides an orderly school environment that promotes student self-discipline consistent with Gospel values and Christian principles;
- ◆ Represents and supports Diocesan norms and policies.

Principal as Communicator

The principal:

- ◆ Articulates Catholic Christian values;
- ◆ Articulates educational values;
- ◆ Knows and can apply appropriate group dynamics, conflict management, problem solving, and other organizational development skills;
- ◆ Knows how to delegate responsibilities appropriately and does so;
- ◆ Knows how to relate the service dimension of the school to the civic community;
- ◆ Is capable of ensuring the publication of appropriate handbooks;
- ◆ Provides weekly updates for parents;
- ◆ Provides opportunities for faculty and staff to interact with religious education staff.