Resurrection Lutheran Church
BYLAWS of the CONSTITUTION of the CONGREGATION

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of the
CONSTITUTION
of the
CONGREGATION

RESURRECTION LUTHERAN CHURCH

6170 Plank Road
Fredericksburg, VA 22407

Updated January A.D. 2019
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Section I. Statement of Purpose

We reflect the love of Christ by reaching up to God in prayer; by reaching into our hearts for love and compassion; by reaching out to those in need; by reaching across the divides of prejudice that separate us; and by reaching through the darkness of despair, pain, grief, loneliness, and fear so that we may reflect the light and love of Christ.

We reflect the love of Christ by loving God and loving our neighbors; those in our congregation, our communities, and our world.

We reflect the love of Christ by caring for all people, especially those in need; by caring for our church, the Body of Christ; and by caring for this earth and all of God’s creation.

Section II. Parish Records

A. The Secretary of the Congregation Council will assist the Pastor and staff in the maintenance of all parish records.

B. At the time of a pastoral vacancy, the Vice-President of this Congregation shall be responsible to oversee the maintenance of the parish register and letters of transfer.

Section III. Congregational Meeting

A. The annual Congregational Meeting shall be held during the month of June. The purpose of the Meeting is to adopt a Ministry Plan for the current fiscal year, accept the annual report, and elect members of the Congregation Council and Trustees as needed. The date of the annual Congregational Meeting shall be established by the Congregation Council, and notification to members shall be in compliance with the Constitution of the Congregation.

B. An annual report shall be prepared by the Congregation Council for presentation at the annual Congregational Meeting. It shall include a Pastor’s report, reports from appropriate staff members, a Treasurer’s report, minutes of the previous year’s Congregational Meetings, reports from all committees and organizations of this Congregation, and a Ministry Plan for the current year.

C. The annual report should be available to the members of this Congregation no later than seven days prior to the annual Congregational Meeting.

D. In addition to the annual Congregational Meeting in June, the Congregation Council shall call a Congregational Meeting each year during the month of January. The purpose for this meeting will
be to elect members of the Endowment Board, update the Congregation on budget matters, and bring before the congregation any other business that is appropriate.

Section IV. Congregational Year

The term Congregational Year, as used in the Constitution of the Congregation and in these Bylaws, shall be defined as the fiscal year beginning July 1st and concluding June 30th.

Section V. Officers

A. The President shall preside at meetings of the Congregation Council. In the event of the President’s absence the Vice-President shall preside. In the event of the President’s inability to serve, the Vice-President shall preside. In such an event, the Vice-President shall convene a meeting of the Congregation Council only after consulting with the office of the Bishop of the Virginia Synod.

B. The Secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of this Congregation and of the Congregation Council in a volume provided by this Congregation, which shall be preserved annually in the archives.

C. The Financial Secretary shall receive and keep records of all income from all sources.

D. The Treasurer, who may be assisted by an Assistant Treasurer, shall keep the books of accounts of this Congregation and shall receive from the Resurrection Lutheran Church (RLC) Financial Secretary all funds and disburse them appropriately, making monthly remittance of benevolence receipts to the Treasurer of the Virginia Synod. The Mission Endowment Board Financial Secretary will, in coordination with the Treasurer, disburse funds from the Endowment Fund as required and approved by the Endowment Board.

E. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall make monthly written reports of all financial transactions to the Congregation Council and make reports to this Congregation, with a satisfactory audit, at the annual Congregational Meeting.

Section VI. Congregation Council

A. Nominations for Congregation Council membership shall be made by a Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall present nominations at least equal to the number of vacancies for consideration by all voting members of this Congregation.
B. A vehicle shall be established and provided whereby all voting members of this Congregation have the opportunity to express interest in serving on the Congregation Council. Additional nominations may be made from the floor during the Congregational Meeting at which the nominations are announced and elections conducted.

C. All elections of members of the Congregation Council shall be by written ballot and the results recorded in full by the Secretary. All candidates shall be listed on one ballot and each voting member shall cast a vote for as many candidates as there are vacancies to be filled. The votes shall be tabulated and those members receiving a majority will be considered elected. If necessary, subsequent ballots may be taken to fill remaining vacancies. All members elected must receive a majority vote.

D. The Congregation Council, in consultation with the Pastor and Financial Secretary, shall review annually this Congregation’s membership rolls and make any appropriate adjustments.

Section VII. Congregational Teams

A. In addition to those teams designated in the Constitution, this Congregation shall have additional standing teams that support the mission, purpose, and business functions of RLC. Those teams currently established are described in subsequent paragraphs and sections of these bylaws. In addition, the Congregation Council may establish other ad hoc teams as may be necessary to fulfill specific missions.

B. The Congregation Council in conjunction with the appropriate team or board shall determine and may vary the membership of the standing and ad hoc teams from the current membership rolls. All team members shall have voice and vote unless otherwise specified in the Constitution of the Congregation or in these Bylaws.

C. The term of membership on the standing teams shall be the Congregational Year or as specified in the respective committee bylaw. If the term is not specified, a member may be reappointed for successive years. The term of membership on an ad hoc team will be for the duration of the project or reason for creation of the team.

D. At least one member of the Congregation Council, other than the Pastor, shall be appointed as liaison to each standing and ad hoc team.

E. Routine meeting dates shall be established by each team and entered onto the church calendar by the administrative secretary.
F. All teams shall:

1. Elect a team leader and, if appropriate, a secretary.

2. Provide reports of team meetings to the Congregation Council and an annual written plan and report to this Congregation.

3. Fulfill the tasks and carry on the business in regard to their specific function.

4. Bring any unresolved business to the attention of the Congregation Council.

5. Coordinate their activities, as appropriate, with other RLC ministry teams and Boards.

6. Prepare an annual spending plan for the consideration of the council.

G. The Worship and Music Team shall:

1. Ensure that worship services are conducted regularly in God’s house.

2. Ensure that all worship services are conducted in accordance with the practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

3. Ensure that ushers, acolytes, and other required personnel are recruited and trained.

4. Ensure that hymnals and other devotional material are provided and properly safeguarded.

5. Supervise and enhance the welfare and effectiveness of the Church Choir and Praz Team, in consultation with the Choir Director.

6. Arrange for the care of paraments, altar appointments, communion ware, and other supplies. In consultation with the Pastor and Choir Director, the committee shall furnish music supplies appropriate for worship.

H. The Evangelism/Outreach Team shall:

1. Stimulate and lead the members of this Congregation in continuous and concentrated endeavors to reach the unchurched with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and encourage them to be active in the life of this Church.
2. Be active in the deepening of spiritual life of all members.
3. Study the outreach of this Congregation in light of the surrounding community as it changes.
4. Assist the Pastor in outreach and follow-up of prospective members.

I. The Faith in Action Team shall:
1. Proclaim the Good News of the love of Christ in word and deed at all times and in all places by reaching, loving, and caring.
2. Encourage members of the Resurrection family to reach out to their neighbors, the community and the world by putting their faith into action as individuals and as teams through Resurrection’s programs.
3. Identify specific needs in our community and the world that RLC can meet or make substantial contributions to.
4. Conduct both year-round and special projects to meet identified needs.

J. The Christian Education Team shall:
1. Encourage the nurturing of the Christian faith through concentrated study of God’s Word, Christian doctrine, and the Lutheran Confessions in accordance with ELCA teachings. Ensure that all age groups are involved in learning about the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
2. In association with the Pastor(s), oversee and promote educational programs in this Congregation.
3. Encourage the use of educational materials published or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and/or full communion partners.
4. Provide the Church’s periodicals and books of family devotion for use in the homes of the members of this Congregation.
5. Be responsible for conducting background checks and training as required by RLC’s Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Program for all congregational members working with children and youth.
K. The Stewardship Team shall:

1. Provide an ongoing, year-round program of stewardship education.

2. Invite all members to participate according to their means in the financial support of Resurrection Lutheran Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

3. Encourage and facilitate planned giving through close cooperation with the Mission Endowment Fund Board.

4. Challenge all members to bear witness and service in support of the work of the church.

L. The Finance Team shall:

1. Plan, direct, and coordinate the financial activities of RLC.
   a. Prepare and recommend to the Church Council an annual spending plan, which is to be adopted by the congregation before the beginning of each fiscal year.
   b. Administer (supervise) the spending plan in consultation and coordination with the RLC Church Council.
   c. Recommend and administer the financial policies of the church.
   d. Prepare a financial report for presentation to the Church Council on a monthly basis.
   e. Conduct a mid-year review of current spending performance and recommend necessary adjustments to the Church Council.
   f. Facilitate the Annual Audit as directed by the Church Council.

2. The Finance Team will be composed of 5 to 9 members and the RLC treasurer will serve as team leader. Other members of the team will include the pastor(s), and persons who have a broad knowledge of our church and, when possible, general business practices.

3. The Finance Team will meet at least quarterly to consider all church financial issues. Other meetings may be called as deemed necessary by the team. Team internal guidelines and processes will be developed by the team.

4. The Finance team, in conjunction with the Church Council, may develop and refine various policies to achieve clarity in fiscal matters such as: emergency expenditures, fund disbursement, church credit card use, treatment of designated funds, benevolence funds, operating reserve, memorial gifts, treatment of financial records and special offerings, etc.
M. Property Team shall:

1. Plan, direct and coordinate the operation and maintenance of the RLC building and grounds.

2. Coordinate with all ministry teams and the Resurrection Lutheran School (RLS) to assure the best facility support.

3. Periodically review insurance for adequacy and to identify any gaps in coverage.

4. Provide for developing, updating and executing RLC’s physical security policies and practices.

N. Hospitality Team shall:

1. Provide ongoing, year-round opportunities for the congregation to gather for fellowship.

2. Be available to provide a meal for the family and friends at the celebration of life or funeral, held at RLC of a member who has passed away.

3. Encourage members to participate in regular and special events that foster fellowship and caring for fellow members and the community.

4. Recognize and celebrate special events in the life of the congregation and/or its members.

5. Partner with other RLC teams for special fellowship events.

6. Conduct regular monthly planning meetings, purchase supplies and paper goods and otherwise maintain the RLC kitchen.

O. Youth Team shall:

1. Be made up of staff, volunteers, parents and, as appropriate, youth.

2. Develop and execute a sustainable mission/vision for a youth program for youth ages 11-18.

3. Develop and sponsor an annual calendar of events and activities.

4. Ensure participation of youth in synod and church-wide youth-related activities, e.g., Lost and Found.

5. Develop and participate in service-related projects, e.g., mission trips/projects.

6. Provide for integration and opportunities for youth, as appropriate in the full life of the Church.
7. Conduct fund raising activities/events to support the youth program.

Section VIII. Mission Endowment Fund Board

A. The Mission Endowment Fund Board shall manage the activities of the Mission Endowment Fund in accordance with this Bylaw and Policies approved by the Congregation Council.

B. A Mission Endowment Fund Board of seven voting members shall be selected in the following manner:

1. Five members shall be elected at the January Congregation meeting.

2. Nominations for the Mission Endowment Board shall be made by the same Nominating team that nominates candidates for the Congregation Council. The Nominating team shall present nominations at least equal to the number of vacancies for consideration by all voting members of this Congregation.

3. The term of office for these elected members shall be three years with the first slate of members serving staggered terms, two for a term of three years, two for a term of two years and one for a term of one year. Members shall be eligible for only two consecutive terms.

4. The Congregation Council shall yearly, at its July meeting, appoint one of its members to serve on the Mission Endowment Fund Board.

5. In addition to the elected members and the member appointed by the Congregation Council, a pastor of the congregation shall be an ex-officio member of the Mission Endowment Fund Board, with voice and vote.

6. The Treasurer, in conjunction with the Endowment Board Financial Secretary, shall maintain the account of the Mission Endowment Fund. The Endowment Board Financial Secretary in coordination with the treasurer will disburse funds from the Endowment Fund with approval of the Endowment Board. The Treasurer will serve as an ex-officio member of the Mission Endowment Fund Board, with voice but no vote.

C. The duties of the Mission Endowment Fund Board shall include the following:

1. Determine how the Mission Endowment Fund assets will be invested, including the asset allocation. The investment objective will be to provide long term growth so the annual
distribution will keep pace with inflation. In any event, all investments shall be invested by outside professional investors such as the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust and/or ELCA Mission Investment Fund once the Mission Endowment Fund assets reach $25,000. No Mission Endowment Fund Board member shall invest the assets in a way that would bring private inurement to that individual. The Mission Endowment Fund Board shall report at least quarterly to the Congregation Council on any and all activity within the Fund. Current balance, additions, distributions and any other activity shall be included with the report. Annual accounting and a report of ministries supported through the Fund shall be distributed to the Congregation at its annual meeting.

2. Begin making distributions from the Mission Endowment Fund once it reaches a threshold of $50,000. Distributions will be based on the total value of the Fund, the interest accumulated during the fiscal/plan year and may include any dividends received, realized gains or losses, and/or unrealized gains or losses. When the fund exceeds $50,000 in value on the year end valuation date, the next year’s distribution may include an additional distribution. If at any time the Fund falls below the threshold of $50,000, no further distributions shall be made until it reaches that amount.

3. Provide annual distributions to ministries as stated below:
   a. Minimum of twenty percent (20%) for outreach into the local community as the Board determines;
   b. Minimum of twenty percent (20%) for ELCA Church wide ministries as the Board determines;
   c. Minimum of twenty percent (20%) for extraordinary programs/capital improvement or other ministry initiatives within this Congregation;
   d. The remaining forty percent (40%) shall be distributed through any of the above categories.

4. Encourage gifts to the Mission Endowment Fund through education and promotion of the Fund. The Mission Endowment Fund Board may use the services of the ELCA Foundation Regional Gift Planner in assisting potential contributors to the Fund in determining the best way to include the Fund in their current giving and estate plans. At the discretion of the donor, an amount of up to ten percent (10%) of each such gift may be distributed immediately using the guidelines set forth in Section 2 above. The remaining portion will be added to the Mission Endowment Fund.

5. Decline acceptance of a gift if deemed to be in the best interest of the fund and the Congregation.

6. Receive and celebrate gifts given for ministry through the Mission Endowment Fund and maintain a permanent book of remembrance of donors to the Fund.
7. Respond to a request from the Congregation Council, under an unforeseen emergency situation, to use principal of the Mission Endowment Fund to help the Congregation rectify an economically devastating situation.

8. Accept gifts specifically designated for the Mission Endowment Fund. The Board may also accept gifts to the Congregation that are not specifically designated for the Fund by the donor, if directed by the Congregation Council. Examples of undesignated gifts received by this Congregation are, but not limited to, memorials, bequests, life insurance proceeds and remainders from life income agreements.

Section IX. Resurrection Lutheran Church School

A. Preamble: School Governance

1. The Constitution of Resurrection Lutheran Church, as provided for by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, affirms that “all power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head... (and) all actions of this Congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.” Within that context, the Constitution acknowledges that “the powers of this Congregation are vested (in its members and voiced) in the Congregation Meeting”.

2. While the overarching authority resides with the Congregation, specific authority and responsibility is conferred in and assigned to the Congregation Council and to the Pastor(s). In general, the Council “shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this Congregation... to set goals and priorities... to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals... (and) to oversee and provide for the administration of this Congregation”. Further, the Council “shall be responsible for the financial and property matters... (and) for employment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this Congregation.

3. For Pastors, their paramount responsibility and authority is to provide for the spiritual leadership in the life of the Congregation. In addition to participating on the Council in the general oversight of the Congregation, they also are charged with “supervise(ing) all schools and organizations of this Congregation”.

4. Consistent with the Constitution, the Resurrection Lutheran Church School is considered to be one of the ministries of RLC and exists to support the mission and vision of the Congregation as part of an integrated ministry plan. Accordingly, it is accountable to the Congregation through the Council, and under the overall supervision of the Pastor(s).
5. To support the Pastor(s) and the Congregation Council, and to further the overall mission of the church, various committees are established to provide advice, information and, as required, administration or administrative support. They, too, are accountable to the Congregation through the Council and/or the Pastors.

6. Within this committee framework, the School Board is established. Its specific focus is to oversee and support, on behalf of the Pastor and the Council, the activities and functioning of the school so that it achieves its stated purposes and mission.

B. GENERAL

1. The Resurrection Lutheran Church School (RLS) is an organization of RLC whose purpose is to carry out a Christian education ministry as part of the total ministry plan of the Church. As such, it is accountable to the congregation, and functions under the overall direction of the Congregation Council and the supervision of the Pastor(s). Operational direction and guidance is provided by the School Board.

2. As a matter of operational philosophy, the school is intended to be financially self-supporting to the maximum extent possible. The school’s finances are kept separate from the Church’s. The school, however, is subject to periodic financial audit on the Church’s schedule.

C. SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the RLC School is to serve the congregation and community through a Christ-centered program, nurturing the total child spiritually, academically, emotionally, and physically in a safe learning environment.

D. SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY

Resurrection Lutheran Church School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.

E. RESURRECTION LUTHERAN CHURCH SCHOOL BOARD

1. The School Board is one of the ministry committees of RLC that provide advice, information, and, as required, administration or administrative support in one of the designated ministry areas of the congregation. In that regard, the Board is accountable to the congregation through the Council and/or the Pastor(s).
1. The focus for the School Board is education programs and related activities for young children that are not otherwise within the purview of the RLC Christian Education Committee. The School Board provides operational oversight and management of the school, through a School Director, and under the general direction of the Congregation Council and supervision of the Pastor(s). The Council and the Pastor(s) maintain overall responsibility for all aspects of the school.

2. School Board Functions:
   a. Prepare and propose a mission and/or purpose statement consistent with mission and vision of the Congregation.
   b. Provide oversight and approval to the Director and Teachers who develop curriculum that fulfills that mission and/or purpose, while meeting any requirements of the state of Virginia, as well as the ELCA’s requirements for certification.
   c. Annually review the position descriptions for the staff including recommending annual compensation and benefits levels, as appropriate within the framework of the RLC Personnel Policies Manual and in conjunction with the Director.
   d. Advise on and approve the recruiting and filling of all school positions.
   e. Approve the Director’s proposed annual budget for all school operations prior to submission to the Congregation Council.
   f. Develop and propose policies to guide and direct the school in alignment with those of RLC.
   g. Work with, advise, and support the School Director who is responsible for the daily management of all aspects of the school’s operations.
   h. Provide for the financial management of the school by reviewing and approving the monthly finance report submitted by the Director.
   i. Provide to the Pastor(s) and Council monthly summaries of School Board meeting to include the monthly financial report. Provide an annual report to be included with the RLC Annual Report that is presented at the RLC annual Congregational meeting.
   j. Provide for the promotion of the school consistent with the overall needs, priorities, and interests of the Congregation’s total ministry plan.

3. School Board Membership:
   a. The School Board shall be composed of a minimum of the following members, as Board officers: Chair, Registrar and Secretary. The Pastor and Council Liaison serve as voting members. In addition, School Director, and others deemed necessary and appropriate by the Council in conjunction with the School Board serve as non-voting ex-officio members.
   b. Board members are appointed by the Congregation Council for a term of 2 years. There are no limitations in the number of consecutive terms a member may serve. The Council may extend any member’s term up to one year to ensure that there is appropriate overlap and continuity.
All Board members shall be members of RLC, voting members, active in the life of the Congregation, and a positive role model.

c. The Chair is nominated by the Board and appointed by the Council for a one-year term. The Chair may be re-appointed to consecutive terms.

d. Board members serve at the discretion of the Congregation Council, and may be removed for cause.

4. The School Board Meetings:
a. The School Board shall schedule regular business meetings which are open to members of RLC. Parents of school students or other interested parties may attend and may speak at the invitation of the Chair who has been given advance notice of their desire to do so. The Board may elect to meet in closed session before, during or following the regular business meeting to discuss matters requiring confidentiality.

b. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Chair, at the request of the Council, or at the request of three or more of the Board’s voting members. Members must be informed of the reason for the meeting. Only those issues about which members have been notified shall be discussed. Notice of special meetings shall be given at least two or more days prior to the date of the meeting except:
   1) when an emergency is declared by the Chair, or in the absence of the Chair, by the Pastor; or
   2) when three or more voting members waive such notice after a meeting has been called by the Chair.

c. All meetings shall require a simple majority of voting members present to constitute a quorum.

d. In the absence of the Chair, the Pastor shall appoint a Board member who shall preside at Board meetings until a replacement has been appointed and shall have the usual powers of the presiding officer.

e. All scholarship applications shall be reviewed confidentially and voted on by the Chair, Registrar and Director. Their recommendation is brought to the Board for discussion and a vote to approve the awarding of full or partial scholarships.

F. THE PASTOR(S)

The Constitution of RLC outlines the responsibilities of the Pastor(s) and clearly establishes the spiritual leadership role in the life of the congregation. This role is extended to the school as well. This is consistent with the specific constitutional responsibility to “supervise all schools and organizations of this Congregation”.

1. **Responsibilities:**
   
a. Interpret and visibly promote the childhood ministry to the Congregation and the community.
   
b. Schedule and conduct regular (e.g., weekly) devotional and/or instructional activities for students consistent with the Christ-centered educational purpose of the school.
   
c. Participate in special school program activities and events whenever possible and as appropriate.
   
d. Promote among faculty and staff a climate of ministering to students and their families and include the School Director as a member of the full RLC staff ministry team.
   
e. Demonstrate commitment to the mission and goals of the school by maintaining appropriate visibility and involvement with respect to parents/guardians of school students. Display a caring attitude toward families to promote parental trust in the Pastor(s) with concerns, needs or problems.
   
f. Serve as ex-officio member(s) of the School Board.
   
g. In the constitutional role as supervisor of the school, provide general guidance and direction to the Lead Teacher/School Director and the School Board as they carry out their responsibilities in the operational management of the school.

G. **THE SCHOOL DIRECTOR**

The School Director is responsible for the overall administration of the school, including the supervision of faculty and staff.

1. **Hiring of the School Director:**
   
a. The School Board shall be responsible for recruiting, interviewing, and recommending the selection of the School Director to the Congregation Council. The Council will consider the recommendations and confirm or reject it.
   
b. The contract for the School Director will be negotiated by the School Board Chair, based on salary and benefits established by the Council upon advice of the Personnel Team. The contract is approved and signed by the Pastor, the Council President and the School Board Chair.

2. **School Director:**

The School Director shall receive general direction and supervision from the Pastor(s) consistent with policies, goals, and priorities established by the Congregation Council and shall be considered a member of the RLC staff ministry team.
3. **Responsibilities of the School Director:**

The School Director is responsible for the overall operation and administration of the school, consistent with policies established by the Council, and under the direction and guidance of the Pastor(s) and the School Board. This includes:

- a. Plan for, implement, and administer the approved education program and curriculum while complying with all Council policies and priorities, and within budgetary parameters.
- b. Establish and maintain a system of records necessary to administer school operations, and meet fiduciary and evaluation responsibilities.
- c. Recommend to the School Board requirements for hiring faculty and staff, including competencies and credentials required and/or desired. Participate, as directed by the School Board, in the recruiting, interviewing and hiring process for faculty and staff.
- d. Provide the full range of direct supervision of faculty and staff. As requested by the Board, the School Director shall make recommendations relative to annual compensation, benefits, or other changes to the conditions of employment within the framework of the RLC Personnel Policies Manual.
- e. Develop and, with approval of the School Board, implement a process of soliciting applications for school enrollment consistent with policies of full inclusion. Make recommendations to the School Board for enrollment decisions, including recommendations for subsequent student removal. Inform applicant families of enrollment decisions.
- f. Plan for, seek approval for, procure, and manage all equipment, supplies, and other physical assets required by and for the school within budgetary parameters and direction provided.
- g. Participate, as directed by the School Board, in the development of a proposed annual budget for the overall operation of the school.
- h. Provide ongoing oversight and evaluation of all school operations to ensure that they are in full compliance with the:
  1) intent of the school mission statement,
  2) approved educational program and curriculum,
  3) guidance and direction from the Pastor(s) and Board, and
  4) policies established by the Congregation Council.
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