



Huron-Superior Catholic

DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCILS

1. Mandate of the Board

The Board shall consult with Catholic School Councils on a number of specified matters, including the development and implementation of policies regarding the Board's:

- Code of Conduct and appropriate dress for students;
- development of principal profiles to assist with placement of principals and vice-principals;
- allocation of funding for Catholic School Councils;
- fundraising policy;
- conflict resolution policies;
- reimbursement of expenses for Catholic School Council members; and
- action plans for improvement, based on EQAO reports on results of tests.

2. Mandate of the Council

According to Reg. 612/2000, 2(1), "The purpose of Catholic School Councils is, through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement [and well-being] and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents."

Catholic School Councils are able to make recommendations on any matter to the principal or to the Board through the principal. The Board and/or principal shall report back on how their advice has been taken into account.

NOTE: Matters regarding personnel and litigation shall not be discussed by Catholic School Councils.

In addition to advisory responsibilities, the Catholic School Council shall:

- contribute to the Catholic culture of the schools of the Board;
- establish its goals, priorities and procedures;
- organize information and training sessions to enable members of the council to develop their schools as council members;
- hold a minimum of four meetings per year (all meetings shall be open to members of the school community);

- communicate regularly with parents and other members of the community to seek their views and preferences with regard to matters being addressed by the council and to report on the activities of the council to the school community; and
- promote the best interests of the school community.

3. Membership

Members of the Catholic School Council will represent an equitable distribution among the constituent groups of the school community. Membership shall include at least:

- the school principal;
- one teacher of the school (other than the principal or vice-principal);
- one non-teaching member of the school staff;
- one parish representative;
- one community representative (appointed by the council);
- one student representative (secondary school level only).

NOTE:

- a) The number of parent members shall constitute a majority of the members of the Catholic School Council.
- b) Where there is an Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (O.A.P.C.E.) or Parent Guild in the school, a person from such O.A.P.C.E. or Parent Guild shall be appointed to the Catholic School Council. A link between such bodies is crucial.
- c) All persons elected or appointed must respect and promote the philosophy and traditions of the Catholic faith and the Board's Mission Statement.
- d) A Catholic School Council may specify through its by-laws that the council shall include two or more community representatives appointed by the elected council, providing that the same number of parents is added to ensure that parent members constitute a majority of members of the Catholic School Council.
- e) A Board employee cannot be elected as a parent representative or appointed as a community representative on the council unless he or she is not employed at the school; and he/she notifies electors prior to being elected as parent representative or appointed as community representative in the school where their child(ren) attend school.
- f) A board employee will not be able to serve as chair or co-chair of a Catholic School Council.
- g) Trustees will not be eligible to serve on a Catholic School Council in the board where they are a trustee.

4. Election/Selection of Term of Office:

- a) Members of the Council, with the exception of the principal, are elected or appointed annually.
- b) The principal is appointed by the Board.
- c) A person is qualified to be a parent member of a school council if he or she is a parent of a pupil enrolled in a school.
- d) The election of members to the council shall occur within the first 30 days of the school year, on a date that is fixed by the chair or co-chairs of the Catholic School Council after consulting with the principal.
- e) The principal of a school shall, at least 14 days before the date of the election of parent members, on behalf of the Catholic School Council, give written notice of the date, time and location of the election of every parent of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school. The notice required may be given by giving the notice to the parent's child for delivery to his or her parent, and/or posting the notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parents. The election of parent members shall be by secret ballot.
- f) Elections must be organized by the retiring council and the school principal in a way that will ensure that all parents and staff members have the opportunity to vote for their representative.
- g) Arrangements will be made for parent voting to occur in a variety of ways over a specified period of days. These may include ballots distributed to the homes, and voting at any school-based events held during the voting period.
- h) The teacher representative will be elected annually by school teaching staff.
- i) Non-teacher staff members will be elected annually by non-teaching staff of the school.
- j) The parish representative will be appointed by the appropriate pastor(s).
- k) In secondary schools, one student representative shall be appointed by the Student Council. In elementary schools, one student may be appointed by the principal if he/she determines, after consulting the other members of council, that the council should include a pupil.
- l) Appointed members of the council will be representatives of the Catholic community.
- m) A member of a Catholic School Council may be re-elected or reappointed, unless otherwise provided by the by-laws of the council.
- n) A vacancy in the membership of a Catholic School Council shall be filled by election or appointment, in accordance with the by-laws of the council.

- o) A vacancy in the membership of a Catholic School Council does not prevent the council from exercising its authority.

5. Council Procedures:

- a) A Catholic School Council shall meet within the first 35 days of the school year after the elections are held, on a date fixed by the principal of the school. At the first meeting of the school year, the Council shall elect a chair or two co-chairs and a vice-chairperson and a secretary. The Chairperson serves for a one-year term. (A board employee is not eligible to serve as Chair, Co-Chair/or Vice-Chair.)
- b) A meeting of a Catholic School Council cannot be held unless:
- i) a majority of the current members of the council are present at the meeting;
 - ii) a majority of the members of the council who are present at the meeting are parent members.
- c) Each council will determine its relationship with the school's existing parent-school organization or O.A.C.P.E.
- d) Each council will establish a meeting schedule of at least four meetings per school year, all of which will be open to members of the school community. The dates of meetings will be publicized.
- e) Each council will prepare and publicize a set of operational by-laws that guide its activities.
- f) Councils may establish committees to carry out specific functions and will seek widespread participation in these activities.
- g) Councils will operate in a manner that is non-judgmental, is based on no-fault discussion and uses consensus and compromise as the usual method for developing recommendations and plans.
- h) Councils will inform the general school and parent community of their actions through such means as newsletters, special meetings, activities and through liaison with the local O.A.C.P.E. unit/or Parent Guild.
- i) Minutes and Financial Records:
- A Catholic School Council shall keep minutes of all of its meetings and records of all of its financial transactions.
 - The minutes and records shall be available at the school for examination without charge by any person.
 - Subsections (a) and (b) do not apply to minutes and records that are more than four years old.
- j) Fundraising:
- i) A Catholic School Council may engage in fundraising activities.
 - ii) A Catholic School Council shall not engage in fundraising activities unless,

- the activities are conducted in accordance with any applicable policies established by the Board;
 - the activities are to raise funds for a purpose approved by the Board or authorized by any applicable policies established by the Board.
- iii) A Catholic School Council shall ensure that the funds raised by it are used in accordance with any applicable policies established by the Board.
- k) Consultation with Parents:
A Catholic School Council shall consult with parents of pupils enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by the council.
- l) Annual Report:
- Every Catholic School Council shall annually submit a written report on its activities to the principal of the school and to the school Board that established the council.
 - If the Catholic School Council engages in fundraising activities, the annual report shall include a report on those activities.
 - The principal shall, on behalf of the Catholic School Council, give a copy of the report to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the copy is given, is enrolled in the school.

6. Role of the Chairperson:

It is the role of the Catholic School Council Chairperson to:

- provide leadership to the council members;
- chair council meetings;
- in cooperation with the principal, prepare a written agenda and distribute it to all council members prior to each meeting;
- meet regularly with the school principal to discuss agenda and council activities;
- express consensus as reached by council where possible and appropriate;
- be the spokesperson for the council;
- monitor implementation of council decisions.

7. Role of the Principal:

It is the role of the principal to:

- accept responsibility for the organization and election of the council;

- in cooperation with the Board Administration and Trustees, plan programs and provide materials that will develop roles, responsibilities and functions for the council;
- assist, advise, support, cooperate and consult with the council to ensure that it achieves its goals and purposes;
- provide administrative assistance and clerical secretarial support for council activities;
- attend meetings of the council and publicize its activities in the school newsletter and other correspondence;
- help the council executive to establish a regular meeting schedule that is publicized in the school and the community;
- help the Chairperson to prepare a written agenda that is distributed to all council members prior to each meeting;
- maintain the authority, responsibility and obligations of the Province of Ontario.

8. *Role of the Council Members:*

The members of the Catholic School Council shall:

- participate in council meetings;
- participate in information and training programs;
- act as a link between the council and the community;
- encourage the participation of parents and all partners within the school community;
- be committed to developing and nurturing the full potential of each child and their relationship with Jesus, which will inspire Catholic leadership.