

## **Rationale**

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community rooted in the love of Christ. We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge and to lead lives of faith, hope and charity. It is believed that Catholic schools must foster the spiritual, physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of all students working collaboratively in a manner consistent with the Ontario Catholic Graduate School Expectations and the Catholic social teachings. In applying Catholic Social Teachings to all that we do at TCDSB, parents will be supported in their integral role of nurturing the relationship between home, school and parish.

Schools must draw on the vast knowledge and expertise available in the community and involve its many resources, especially the family and the parish, in the education of children.

The purpose of Catholic School Parent Councils is, through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. Therefore, a Catholic School Parent Council shall function in an advisory role to the principal and shall achieve its purpose by making recommendations to the school principal and, where appropriate, to the Board on any matter in accordance with the Education Act and TCDSB Policies, Guidelines and Operating Procedures.

## **Operational Procedures:**

### **1. Membership**

The Toronto Catholic District School Board recognizes as members of the Catholic school community the following:

- (a) The parents/guardians of students enrolled at the school.
- (b) The school staff members, including teaching and non-teaching personnel.
- (c) The Pastor and the Parish designates.
- (d) The school trustee.
- (e) The students.
- (f) All Separate School ratepayer within the area serviced by the school.

### **2. Composition of Council**

The Catholic School Parent Council shall be established during the first 30 days of each school year, be as representative as possible of the Catholic school community, be chaired by a parent/guardian of the school elected by Council members, and be composed of a majority of Roman Catholic members as defined in the Education Act:

- (a) Parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school, who are to make up a majority of the council membership.
- (b) The principal of the school.
- (c) One teacher who is employed at the school, to be elected by teachers who are employed at the school.
- (d) One person who is employed at the school, other than the principal, vice-principal or any other teacher, to be elected by persons other than the principal, vice principal or any other teacher employed at the school.

- (e) One pupil appointed by the student council or, in the case of schools without student councils, elected by other students.
- (f) The Pastor or Parish designate.
- (g) One or more community representatives appointed by the Council.
- (h) One person appointed by the local Catholic School Parent Council to act as liaison with the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education Toronto.
- (i) One person, where possible, who has a special interest in Special Education.
- (j) The school Trustee and the school Superintendent of Education shall have standing at the Catholic School Parent Council meeting for the purposes of updating the council on relevant matters or to act as a resource person, as required.

### **3. Election of Parent Members**

- (a) A person is qualified to be a parent member of a Catholic School Parent Council if he or she is a parent/guardian of a pupil enrolled in the school.
- (b) A person is not qualified to be a parent member of a Catholic School Parent Council if,
  - i. he or she is employed at the school; or
  - ii. he or she is an employee of the TCDSB unless he or she takes reasonable steps to inform people qualified to vote in the election of parent members of that employment.
  - iii. a person is qualified to vote in an election of parent members of a Catholic School Council if he or she is a parent/guardian of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.
- (c) The number of parent members elected to the Catholic School Parent Council shall be consistent with those established in the Catholic School Parent Council's bylaws. **Unless otherwise stated in the by-laws the minimum number of council members will be seven, and parents shall still be the majority member.** Other members may include school personnel, community representatives and the pastor, (while still ensuring the majority are parents).
- (d) An election of parent members shall be held during the first 30 days of each school year, on a date that is fixed by the chair or co-chairs of the Catholic School Parent Council after consulting with the principal of the school.
- (e) Despite subsection (4), if a new school is established, the first election of parent members to the Catholic School Parent Council shall be held during the first 30 days of the school year, on a date that is fixed by the Board.
- (f) The principal shall, at least 14 days before the date of the election of parent members, on behalf of the Catholic School Parent Council, give written notice of the date, time and location of the election to every parent of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.
- (g) The election of parent members shall be by secret ballot.
- (h) Proxy votes are not allowed.

### **4. Other Elections**

- (a) A person is qualified to vote in an election of one teacher representative if they are a teacher, other than the principal or vice-principal, who is employed at the school.
- (b) A person is qualified to vote in an election of a non-teaching representative if they are employed at the school and are not a teacher, principal or vice-principal employed at the school.
- (c) A person is qualified to vote for an election of the student representative if they are a pupil enrolled in the school.

## **5. Term of Office**

The term of office for an elected or appointed Catholic School Parent Council member is one year.

- (a) A member of a Catholic School Parent Council may be re-elected or reappointed, unless otherwise provided by the by-laws of the council.
- (b) 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.
- (c) A vacancy in the membership of the Catholic School Council does not prevent the council from exercising its authority.

## **6. Officers**

- (a) A Catholic School Parent Council shall have a chair, who is a parent elected by members of the Council or, if the by-laws of the Council provide, two co-chairs, and may have such other officers as are provided for in the by-laws of the Council.
- (b) **The Chair and at** least one of the co-chairs of the Catholic School Parent Council must be Roman Catholic.
- (c) An employee of the TCDSB cannot serve as chair or co-chair of the Council.
- (d) Vacancies in the office of chair, co-chair or any other officer shall be filled in accordance with the by-laws of the Council.

## **7. The Catholic School Parent Council**

- (a) The Catholic School Parent Council shall:
  - i. Promote Catholic faith and Gospel Values.
  - ii. Establish its goals, priorities and procedures, consistent with the Mission and Vision of the Board, the tenets of the Catholic faith and within Ministry and Board policies.
  - iii. Hold a minimum of six meetings per year, including the Annual General Meeting. All meetings shall be accessible and open to members of the Catholic school community, the first meeting to be held within the first 35 days of the school year and after elections, on a date fixed by the principal.
  - iv. Ensure that for each meeting:
    - a majority of Council members are present
    - a majority of the members present are parent members; and
    - the quorum requirement shall be established accordingly
  - v. If necessary, establish committees to make recommendations to the Council; such committees to include at least one parent member of the Council and to be governed by the Council's by-laws.
  - vi. Develop by-laws governing the conduct of its affairs including:
    - by-law that governs election procedures and the filling of vacancies;
    - by-law that establishes rules respecting participation in proceedings in cases of conflict of interest;

- by-law that establishes a conflict resolution process, consistent with the Board's policy, for internal Council disputes.
- by-law that establishes a process for the governance of Catholic School Parent Councils and its affairs
- vii. Keep minutes and records of all meetings and financial transactions for a minimum of 4 years, and make these available at the school for examination without charge by any person from the Catholic school community.
- viii. Not engage in fundraising activities unless:
  - the activities are conducted in accordance with the Board policy S.M. 04, Fundraising in Schools; and F.P. 01 Purchasing.[[hyperlink to policies](#)]
  - The activities are to raise funds for a purpose approved by the Board through the school principal; and
  - The funds are used in accordance with Board policy and per legislation. Fundraising revenue cannot be spent on programs, services, instruction, staffing, materials or equipment that should be provided by the board.
- ix. Consult with parents of pupils enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by the Council and 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.
- x. Submit on an annual basis, a written report on its activities, including fundraising, to the principal and to the Board.
- xi. Not be incorporated.

## **B. CSPC CHAIR**

The Chair of the Catholic School Parent Council shall:

- i. Call Council meetings.
- ii. Prepare the Agenda for Council meetings in consultation with the Principal.
- iii. Chair council meetings.
- iv. Access the Board provided e-mail account, for the function and distribution of materials to the CSC.
- v. Ensure that the minutes of Council meetings are recorded and maintained.
- vi. Participate in information and training sessions.
- vii. Communicate regularly with the school principal in an effort to work cooperatively to improve student achievement and well-being.
- viii. Ensure that there is regular communication with the Catholic school community supported by the school's principal.
- ix. Consult with the Catholic Parent Involvement Committee, senior board staff and Trustees, as required.
- x. Upon request, provide the local trustee with copies of the minutes of the meeting.

## **C. CSPC MEMBERS**

The Members of the Catholic School Parent Council shall:

- i. Participate in Council meetings.
- ii. Participate in information and training programs.

- iii. Act as a link between the Council and the community in support of school programs to improve pupil achievement.
- iv. Make recommendations to the principal and, where necessary, to the Board to improve student achievement and well-being, and enhance the accountability of the education system.
- v. Make every effort to be as representative of the school community as possible
- vi. Conduct their meetings in an invitational, harmonious manner in the context of Gospel Values.
- vii. Be entitled to one vote, in votes taken by the Council, should the Council make recommendations to the principal and/or Board through a voting process.
- viii. Receive reimbursement for expenses incurred in the normal course of their duties as Council members in accordance with Board policy, but shall not receive any remuneration for serving as a Council member.

## **8. The Principal**

The Principal of the school shall:

- (a) Act as a resource person for the Catholic School Parent Council and will be a non-voting member.
- (b) Provide information and seek input on program and academic matters as well as provide information on budget and finances of the school.
- (c) Solicit the views of the Council with respect to the following:
  - i) The establishment or amendment of school policies and guidelines and the development of implementation plans that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents including,
  - ii) A local code of conduct governing the behaviour of all persons in the school, and
  - iii) School policies or guidelines related to appropriate dress for pupils.
  - iv) School action plans for improvement, based on EQAO reports on the results of tests of pupils, and the communication of those plans to the Catholic community.
- (d) Facilitate the establishment of the Catholic School Parent Council and assist in its operation.
- (e) Support and promote the Council's activities.
- (f) Present at each meeting of the Catholic School Parent Council, the current financial position and balance of all school and CSPC accounts using the TCDSB accounting template.
- (g) Provide for the prompt distribution to each member of the Council of any materials received from the Ministry that are identified by the Ministry as being for distribution to Council members.
- (h) Post any materials distributed to members of the Council in a location that is accessible to all parents.

- (i) Give written notice of the dates, times and locations of Council meetings to every parent in accordance with the timelines established in the by-laws. Attend every meeting of the Council, unless he or she is unable to do so by reason of illness or other cause beyond his or her control.
- (j) Assist the Council to post minutes and agendas of the meetings in the school, on the school portal and sent electronically to all Council members.
- (k) Act as a resource person to the Council and assist the Council in obtaining information relevant to the functions of the Council, including information relating to relevant legislation, regulations and policies.
- (l) Consider each recommendation made by the Council and advise the Council of the action taken in response to the recommendation.
- (m) The principal shall make available to the Catholic School Parent Council sample By-laws provided by the board staff and keep them updated from time to time.
- (n) If the principal or Board does not support the advice of the Catholic School Parent Council or proposed expenditure of funds, it will be provided in writing at the next Catholic School Parent Council meeting to be included as an appendix to the minutes including the basis in Board policy, law or solid grounding that the advice was not in the best interest of the school or Board.
- (o) Report the composition of the Council to the local supervisory officer before November 1 of each year.

## **9. Consultation by Board**

The Toronto Catholic District School Board shall consider each recommendation made to the Board by Catholic School Parent Councils, shall advise such Councils of the action taken in response to the recommendation, and shall solicit the views of local Catholic School Parent Councils with respect to the following:

- (a) The establishment or amendment of Board policies and guidelines that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents, including,
  - (i) Policies and guidelines with respect to the conduct of persons in TCDSB schools.
  - (ii) Policies and guidelines respecting appropriate dress for pupils in TCDSB schools.
  - (iii) Policies and guidelines respecting the fundraising activities of Catholic School Parent Councils.
  - (iv) Policies and guidelines respecting conflict resolution processes for internal Council disputes.
  - (v) Policies and guidelines respecting reimbursement by the Board of expenses incurred by council members.

- (b) The development of implementation plans for new education initiatives that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents, including,
  - (i) Implementation plans for policies and guidelines with respect to the conduct of persons in schools.
  - (ii) Implementation plans for policies and guidelines respecting appropriate dress for pupils.
  
- (c) Board action plans for improvement, based on the EQAO reports on the results of tests of pupils and the communication of those plans to the Catholic community.
  
- (d) The process and criteria applicable to the selection and placement of principals and vice-principals.
  
- (e) That any Catholic School Parent Council recommendation which might impact globally on TCDSB special education programs or services be referred to the Special Education Advisory Committee for information and comments; and that any recommendation of the Special Education Advisory Committee that might impact on special education programs and services in schools be referred to the Catholic School Parent Councils of the potentially impacted schools for information and comments.

#### **10. Consultation with Parents**

A Catholic School Parent Council shall consult with parents of pupils enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by the council.

#### **11. Annual Report**

- (a) Every Catholic School Parent Council shall annually submit a written report by May on its activities to the principal of the school and to the board that established the council.
- (b) A report of all fundraising activities shall be included in the annual report.
- (c) The principal shall, on behalf of the school council, give a copy of the annual report to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the copy is given, is enrolled in the school by:
  - (i) giving the report to the parent's child for delivery to his or her parent; and
  - (ii) posting the report in the school in a location that is accessible to parents.
- (d) Any and all approved recommendations from Council can be included in the annual report/
- (e) Any and all approved recommendations can be placed on the agenda of the Board at the request of the council at any time throughout the year
- (f) Utilize the template provided to Councils in the CSPC Handbook.