

# THE HURON-PERTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

## SUBJECT:

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS

3E:1



## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

The Mission of the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board, in partnership with the local Catholic community, is to ensure quality learning for today and tomorrow, and to encourage growth of the whole person, within a Christ-centered environment.

In an effort to further enhance the Catholicity of our schools each school will establish and maintain a *School Advisory Council* made up of parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, students (where appropriate), and parish community representatives. The *School Advisory Council* will operate under the requirements of the Education Act, Policies and Procedures of the Board and within the Statement of Direction for the Huron-Perth Catholic District School Board.

## **PROCEDURE:**

### 1. **Purpose:**

- a) The purpose of school councils is, through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents.
- b) A school council's primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations in accordance with Ontario Regulation 612 to the principal of the school and the board.
- c) As well, the role of the School Advisory Councils will be:
  - to facilitate communication among home, school, parish and community;
  - to foster positive relations among parents, students, staff and the local community;
  - to co-operate with, and seek assistance from other school-related groups such as the P.T.A., where appropriate.

### 2. **Advisory Authority of School Councils:**

School Advisory Councils will:

- a) Seek ways in which to involve parents, the parish(es) and community support agencies in the school in order to relieve the teachers of some of the non-academic obligations presently placed on them.

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- b) Advise the principal on any of the following matters if they have been identified by the Council as priorities on a yearly basis:
- i) The determination of the focus of the School Action Plan establishing curriculum goals and priorities
  - ii) The distribution of the school's budget in order to achieve the Board's Statement of Direction for Catholic Educational Programs
  - iii) The selection of learning materials as necessary to achieve the Board's Statement of Direction for Catholic Educational Programs
  - iv) The school code of conduct in accordance with the Board Policy
  - v) Extra curricular activities in the school
  - vi) The school's response to board and province-wide test results
  - vii) The prioritization of items to be included on the capital request form
  - viii) School-community communication strategies
  - ix) Review and implementation of Board policies at the local level
  - x) Other items identified by the principal or School Council: A School Council may make recommendations to the principal of the school or to the Board on any matter.
- c) Advise the Board on:
- i) Methods for the collection, on a system-wide basis, of parents' views and preferences concerning the school year calendar
  - ii) School programs which are not determined by provincial Ministries, the Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops or the Ontario Council of Catholic Bishops
  - iii) The selection of principals/vice-principals in accordance with Board policy, practice and collective agreements
  - iv) Procedures for the community use of school facilities.

- d) In addition to their advisory responsibilities:
  - i) Establish their goals, priorities, and procedures
  - ii) Organize information and training sessions to enable members of the Council to develop their skills as Council members
  - iii) Hold a minimum of four meetings per year (all meetings shall be open to all members of the school community)
  - iv) 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
  - v) Promote the best interests of the school community.
- e) Comply with Freedom of Information and Protection of Personal Privacy Legislation in matters relating to individual staff and students.

3. **Composition:**

A school council for a school shall be composed of the following people:

- a) A minimum of five (5) parents with children attending the school – elected annually by the parents.

NOTE: Parent members must constitute a majority of the members of the school council.

- b) The principal of the school.
- c) One (1) teacher who is employed at the school, other than the principal or vice-principal, elected in accordance with section 6.
- d) One (1) person who is employed at the school, other than the principal, vice-principal or any other teacher, elected in accordance with section 6.
- e) One (1) student elected annually by students attending the school or one (1) student who is appointed by the Student Council. (Mandatory in secondary schools).
- f) In the case of a school with no secondary school grades, one pupil enrolled in the school who is appointed by the principal of the school, if the principal determines, after consulting the other members of the school council, that the council should include a pupil.

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- g) One (1) parish/community representative without children or grandchildren at the school – appointed annually by the other members of the Council in consultation with the appropriate pastor(s).
- h) One (1) person appointed by an association that is a member of the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education, if the Association is established in respect of the school.

\*The number of parents is to be increased as necessary to ensure that parents constitute a majority of the members of the Council.

NOTE: It is possible that some of these positions may remain vacant if no candidates are willing to serve.

4. **Qualifications:**

- a) All teachers, students, parents, and members of the broader community are encouraged to become actively involved with the various committees established to provide assistance and advice at the school.
- b) A member of the Board cannot be a member of a school council.

5. **Election of Parent Members:**

- a) A person is qualified to be a parent member of a school council if he or she is a parent of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.
- b) Despite subsection a), a person is not qualified to be a parent member of a school council if,
  - i) he or she is employed at the school; or
  - ii) he or she is not employed at the school but is employed elsewhere by the board that established the council, unless he or she takes reasonable steps to inform people qualified to vote in the election of parent members of that employment
- c) An election of parent members of a school council 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 school council after consulting with the principal of the school.
- d) Despite subsection c), if a new school is established, the first election of parent members to the school council shall be held during the first 30 days of the school year, on a date that is fixed by the board that established the school council.

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- e) The principal of a school shall, at least 14 days before the date of the election of parent members, on behalf of the school council, give written notice of the date, time and location of the election to every parent of a pupil who on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school.
  - f) The notice required by subsection e) shall be given by:
    - i) giving the notice to the parent's child for delivery to his or her parent; and
    - ii) posting the notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parents.
  - g) The election of parent members shall be by secret ballot.
6. **Other Elections:**
- a) The elections of members of school councils referred to in paragraph c), paragraph d) and paragraph e) of section 3 shall be held during the first 30 days of each school year.
  - b) A person is qualified to vote in an election of a member of a school council referred to in paragraph c) of section 3 if he or she is a teacher other than the principal or vice-principal, who is employed at the school.
  - c) A person is qualified to vote in an election of a member of a school council referred to in paragraph d) of section 3 if he or she is a person other than the principal, vice-principal or any other teacher, who is employed at the school.
  - d) A person is qualified to vote in an election of a member of a school council referred to in paragraph e) of section 3 if he or she is a pupil enrolled in the school.
7. **Term of Office:**
- a) A person elected or appointed as a member of a school council holds office from the later of,
    - i) the date he or she is elected or appointed; and
    - ii) the date of the first meeting of the school council after the elections held under sections 5 and 6 in the school yearuntil the date of the first meeting of the school council after the elections held under sections 5 and 6 in the next school year.
  - b) A member of a school council may be re-elected or reappointed, unless otherwise provided by the by-laws of the council.

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**8. Vacancies:**

- a) A vacancy in the membership of a school council shall be filled by election or appointment in accordance with the by-laws of the council.
- b) If an election is held to fill a vacancy in the membership of a school council, sections 5 or 6, as the case may be, applies, with necessary modifications, to the election.
- c) A vacancy in the membership of a school council does not prevent the council from exercising its authority.

**9. Officers:**

- a) A school council shall have a chair or, if the by-laws of the council so provide, two co-chairs.
- b) A chair or co-chair of a school council must be a parent member of the council, and shall be elected by the members of the council.
- c) A person who is employed by the board cannot be the chair or co-chair of the council.
- d) A school council may have such other officers as are provided for in the by-laws of the council.
- e) Subject to subsections b) and c), vacancies in the office of chair, co-chair or any other officer of a school council shall be filled in accordance with the by-laws of the council.

**10. Remuneration:**

- a) A person shall not receive any remuneration for serving as a member or officer of a school council.
- b) A budget amount sufficient to cover printing, mailing and similar expenses, or out-of-pocket expenses incurred by members of the council in carrying out their responsibilities will be identified by the council from the general school budget.

**11. Meetings:**

- a) A school council shall meet at least four times during the school year.
- b) A school council shall meet within the first 35 days of the school year, after the elections held under sections 5 and 6, on a date fixed by the principal of the school.
- c) A meeting of a school council cannot be held unless:
  - i) a majority of the current members of the council are present at the meeting; and
  - ii) a majority of the members of the council who are present at the meeting are parent members.
- d) All meetings of a school council shall be open to the public.
- e) A school council is entitled to hold its meetings at the school.
- f) All meetings of a school council shall be held at a location that is accessible to the public.
- g) The principal of a school shall, on behalf of the school council, give written notice of the dates, times and locations of the meetings of the council to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school.
- h) The notice required by subsection g) shall be given by:
  - i) giving the notice to the parent's child for delivery to his or her parent; and
  - ii) posting the notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parents.

**12. Committees:**

- a) A school council may, in accordance with its by-laws, establish committees to make recommendations to the council.
- b) Every committee of a school council must include at least one parent member of the council.
- c) A committee of a school council may include persons who are not members of the council.
- d) Section 11 subsections d) to h) apply, with necessary modifications, to committees of school councils.

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13. **Voting:**
- a) The council will operate in a manner that uses consensus and compromise as the preferred method for developing recommendations and plans.
  - b) Each member of a school council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the council.
  - c) Each member of a committee of a school council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the committee.
  - d) The principal of the school is not entitled to vote in votes taken by the school council or by a committee of the school council.
14. **By-Laws:**
- a) A school council may make by-laws governing the conduct of its affairs.
  - b) Every school council shall make the following by-laws:
    - i) A by-law that governs election procedures and the filling of vacancies in the membership of the school council.
    - ii) A by-law that establishes rules respecting participation in school council proceedings in cases of conflict of interest.
    - iii) A by-law that, in accordance with any applicable policies established by the board that established the council, establishes a conflict resolution process for internal school council disputes.
15. **Minutes and Financial Records:**
- a) A school council shall keep minutes of all of its meetings and records of all of its financial transactions, and forward such to the appropriate Supervisory Officer.
  - b) The minutes and records shall be available at the school for examination without charge by any person.
  - c) Subsections a) and b) do not apply to minutes and records that are more than four years old.
16. **Incorporation:**  
A school council shall not be incorporated.

**17. Role of Principal:**

- a) The principal of a school may delegate any of his or her powers or duties as a member of the school council, including any powers or duties under this Policy, to a vice-principal of the school.
- b) The principal of a school shall perform the duties relating to school councils that are imposed on the principal by Regulation 298 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (Operation of Schools – General).
- c) The principal shall:
  - i) Attend meetings of the School Advisory Council as a non-voting, ex-officio member
  - ii) Serve as Secretary of the council
  - iii) Facilitate the establishment of the council and assist in its operation
  - iv) Support and promote the council’s activities
  - v) Seek input from the council, as necessary from time to time, in areas which the council has identified as priorities for the year
  - vi) Act as a resource on laws, regulations, board policies, and collective agreements
  - vii) Obtain and provide information required by the council to enable it to make informed decisions
  - viii) Communicate with the Chairperson of the council, as required
  - ix) Maintain a full and correct record of the proceedings of the council and ensure that copies of the minutes of the council’s meetings are kept at the school and are forwarded to the appropriate Supervisory Officer
  - x) Assist the council in communicating with the school community
  - xi) Encourage the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the school community on various committees established to provide assistance and advice at the school

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- xii) Make a general annual report regarding the School Action Plan

Notwithstanding any of the above outlined under the “Role of the Principal”, the Principal continues to be responsible for the day-to-day operation of all aspects of the school subject to the Education Act, the Regulations made thereunder, Board Policies, Collective Agreements, and any other related requirements.

18. **Role of the Chairperson of the School Advisory Council:**

- a) Call council meetings
- b) Prepare the agenda for council meetings in consultation with the principal
- c) Chair council meetings
- d) Ensure that meetings are conducted in a manner that promotes the philosophy and traditions of the Catholic faith and the Board’s Mission Statement
- e) Ensure that the minutes of council meetings are recorded and maintained
- f) Participate in information and training programs
- g) Communicate with the principal
- h) Ensure that there is regular communication with the school community
- i) Consult with senior Board staff and trustees, as necessary from time to time

19. **Role of School Advisory Council Members:**

- a) Participate in council meetings
- b) Act in a manner that contributes to the Catholicity of the school and the spiritual growth of the students
- c) Participate in information and training programs
- d) Act as a link between the council and the community
- e) Encourage the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the school community

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**20. Consultation with the Board:**

School councils will be invited by the Board to provide its views with respect to the following matters:

- 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 established under subsection 302 1) of the Act with respect to the conduct of persons in schools within the board's jurisdiction
  - ii) policies and guidelines established under subsection 302 5) of the Act respecting appropriate dress for pupils in schools within the board's jurisdiction
  - iii) policies and guidelines respecting the allocation of funding by the board to school councils
  - iv) policies and guidelines respecting the fundraising activities of school councils
  - v) policies and guidelines respecting conflict resolution processes for internal school council disputes, and
  - vi) policies and guidelines respecting reimbursement by the board of expenses incurred by members and officers of school councils.
- 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 established under subsection 302 1) of the Act with respect to the conduct of persons in schools within the board's jurisdiction, and
  - ii) implementation plans for policies and guidelines established under subsection 302 5) of the Act respecting appropriate dress for pupils in schools within the board's jurisdiction.
- c) Board action plans for improvement, based on the Education Quality and Accountability Office's reports on the results of tests of pupils, and the communication of those plans to the public.
- d) The process and criteria applicable to the selection and placement of principals and vice-principals.

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NOTE: Subsections a) to d) do not limit the matters on which a board may solicit the views of school councils.

21. **Fundraising:**

- a) Subject to section 1), a school council may engage in fundraising activities.
- b) A school council shall not engage in fundraising activities unless:
  - i) the activities are conducted in accordance with any applicable policies established by the board, and
  - ii) the activities are to raise funds for a purpose approved by the board or authorized by any applicable policies established by the board.
- c) A school council shall ensure that the funds raised by it are used in accordance with any applicable policies established by the board.

22. **Consultation with Parents:**

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

23. **Annual Report:**

- a) Every school council shall annually submit a written report on its activities to the principal of the school and to the board that established the council.
- b) If the school council engages in fundraising activities, the annual report shall include a report on those activities.
- c) The principal shall, on behalf of the 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.
- d) Subsection c) may be complied with 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.

**BOARD APPROVAL:**

September 28, 1998  
 August 27, 2001  
 August 26, 2002  
 Reviewed August 2004

**EFFECTIVE DATE:**

September 29, 1998  
 August 28, 2001  
 August 27, 2002  
 Reviewed August 2004



# THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL SCHOOL COUNCIL

ONTARIO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

HURON-PERTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

ACHIEVEMENT  
OF OUTCOMES  
IN THE BOARD'S  
STATEMENT  
OF DIRECTION FOR  
CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL  
PROGRAMS



REVIEW, DEVELOPMENT,  
AND IMPLEMENTATION OF  
THE SCHOOL ACTION PLAN



PRINCIPAL



ASSISTANCE  
AND ADVICE

SUPERVISION  
AND SUPPORT

LOCAL SCHOOL  
COUNCIL

- PARENTS
- STAFF
- STUDENTS
- PASTOR
- COMMUNITY

SYSTEM'S SENIOR  
EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

- DIRECTOR
- SUPERINTENDENTS

GOVERNANCE AND POLICY SETTING

LEGISLATION AND REGULATION