

THE HURON-PERTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SUBJECT:

CATHOLIC SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS AND
CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

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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 *Catholic School Advisory Council* and a *Catholic Parent Involvement Committee*. Both 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:

A: Catholic School Advisory Councils

1. Purpose:

- a) The purpose of Catholic School Advisory Council is, through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents.
- b) A Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council 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 where appropriate.

2. Advisory Authority of Catholic School Advisory Councils:

Catholic 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 Catholic School Advisory Council: A Catholic School Advisory 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.

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- 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council.

5. **Election of Parent Members:**

- a) A person is qualified to be a parent member of a Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council after the elections held under sections 5 and 6 in the school year until the date of the first meeting of the Catholic School Advisory Council after the elections held under sections 5 and 6 in the next school year.
- b) A member of a Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council does not prevent the council from exercising its authority.

9. Officers:

- a) A Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council shall meet at least four times during the school year.
- b) A Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council shall be open to the public.
- e) A Catholic School Advisory Council is entitled to hold its meetings at the school.
- f) All meetings of a Catholic School Advisory Council shall be held at a location that is accessible to the public.
- g) The principal of a school shall, on behalf of the Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council may, in accordance with its by-laws, establish committees to make recommendations to the council.
- b) Every committee of a Catholic School Advisory Council must include at least one parent member of the council.
- c) A committee of a Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council.

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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 Catholic School Advisory Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the council.
- c) Each member of a committee of a Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council.

14. By-Laws:

- a) A Catholic School Advisory Council may make by-laws governing the conduct of its affairs.
- b) Every Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council.
 - ii) A by-law that establishes rules respecting participation in Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council disputes.

15. Minutes and Financial Records:

- a) A Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council shall not be incorporated.

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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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council 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 Catholic 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 there under, Board Policies, Collective Agreements, and any other related requirements.

18. Role of the Chairperson of the Catholic 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 Catholic 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:

Catholic School Advisory Council 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 Catholic School Advisory Council
 - iv) policies and guidelines respecting the fundraising activities of Catholic School Advisory Council
 - v) policies and guidelines respecting conflict resolution processes for internal Catholic School Advisory Council disputes, and
 - vi) policies and guidelines respecting reimbursement by the board of expenses incurred by members and officers of Catholic School Advisory Council.
- 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 Catholic School Advisory Council.

21. Fundraising:

- a) Subject to section 1), a Catholic School Advisory Council may engage in fundraising activities.
- b) A Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council shall consult with parents of pupils enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by the council.

23. Annual Report:

- a) Every Catholic School Advisory 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 Catholic School Advisory Council engages in fundraising activities, the annual report shall include a report on those activities.
- c) The principal shall, on behalf of the Catholic School Advisory 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.

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B: Catholic Parent Involvement Committee

1. Purpose: A Catholic Parent Involvement Committee shall be established to:
 - a) support communication and consultation among Catholic School Advisory Councils and between school councils and the Board;
 - b) To promote the effective functioning of school councils.

2. Membership:
 - Each year, prior to November 1, the Superintendent of Education will extend an invitation to all members of our Catholic School Advisory Councils, to join our PIC.
 - The PIC will consist of those members who accept this invitation.
 - In case this process results in more than three board employees desiring to serve on the PIC, then the superintendent will inform the fourth board employee that the maximum number of employees on PIC has been met.
 - In case this process results in parents not forming the majority on PIC, then the superintendent will work with the PIC to recruit additional parent members as necessary to ensure that parents from the majority on PIC.

3. Selection of officers:
 - The PIC chair and co-chair will be chosen at the first meeting of PIC each school year.
 - Selection will be by consensus. Failing that, selection will be by vote: one vote for each PIC member.

4. Length of term:
 - PIC's will begin serving at or about the beginning of each school year, and will serve for the duration of the school year.
 - PIC members may serve repeat terms, subject to #2 above.

5. Conflict of interest:
 - PIC members have a duty to declare a conflict of interest, and to abstain from discussion and decision-making, on matters that present a real or perceived personal or pecuniary interest for the member.

6. Conflict Resolution:
 - Conflict or disagreement at PIC meetings shall be resolved through discussion and consensus. Failing that, resolution shall be by vote: one vote for each PIC member.

BOARD APPROVAL:

September 28, 1998
August 27, 2001
August 26, 2002
December 2011
March 26, 2012

EFFECTIVE DATE:

September 29, 1998
August 28, 2001
August 27, 2002
December 2011
March 27, 2012