

**DURHAM CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

“The Board”

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 211-1**

**Catholic School Councils**

**ADMINISTRATIVE AREA: Governance**

**POLICY REFERENCE: Catholic School Councils (PO211)**

**APPROVED: October 24, 2005**

**REVISIONS APPROVED:**

---

**1.0 PURPOSE**

This administrative procedure supports the implementation of the Catholic School Councils Policy (PO211). Its purpose is to provide the broader Catholic Community with clarity regarding the Board’s expectations with respect to Catholic School Councils, their membership and role within the schools of the Board.

**2.0 DEFINITIONS**

- 2.1 A ***Catholic School Council*** refers to the body of duly elected members as defined in O. Reg. 612/00 who, in their advisory role, assist the principals in managing and setting priorities for the school.
- 2.2 A ***Separate School Supporter*** as defined by the Education Act “means an English-language Roman Catholic board supporter or a French-language separate district school board supporter.”

**3.0 PROCEDURES**

**3.1 ROLE OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL**

In keeping with the intent of the Catholic School Councils Policy (PO143), the role of the Catholic School Councils is to provide the principal of the school with advice. The advice provided shall be consistent with the policies of the Board and the distinctly Catholic character of the school.

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. A school councils’ primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations in accordance with this Regulation to the principal of the school and the board that established a council.” O. Reg. 612//000 s. 2.

**3.0 PROCEDURES (cont'd)****3.2 RESPONSIBILITY**

3.2.1 Catholic School Councils will deal with issues of particular relevance to its community. The Catholic School Council may make recommendations to the principal or to the Board on any matter.

3.2.2 The Catholic School Council shall:

- promote the spiritual life of the school;
- submit an annual written report on its activities to the principal and to the Board;
- within this annual report, include a report on any fundraising activities in which it has participated;
- consult with parents of pupils enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by the Catholic School Council;
- provide advice to the principal with respect to:
  - school code of conduct;
  - school policies or procedures related to policies and procedures established by the Board respecting appropriate dress for pupils;
  - school improvement plans, based on annual school priorities and goals that are consistent with those set by the Board;
- promote the best interest of Catholic education locally and provincially;
- establish goals, procedures and priorities of the Catholic School Council;
- attend training sessions provided by the Board and the Ministry of Education;
- hold a minimum of four meetings a year;
- communicate regularly with parents and other members of the community to seek their views on matters being addressed by the Catholic School Council;
- operate according to a constitution and by-laws developed by the Catholic School Council and aligned with the policies of the Durham Catholic District School Board.

**3.3 COMPOSITION**

3.3.1 Parents and guardians of students enrolled at the school shall form the majority of the Catholic School Council. The Catholic School Council should reflect the diversity of the community.

3.3.2 The Catholic School Council will include but not be limited to:

- parish priest or designate;
- parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school;
- a student (mandatory in secondary schools, at the discretion of the principal in elementary schools);
- the school principal;
- a teacher;
- a non-teaching staff member;
- community representative shall be appointed by the Catholic School Council. The Catholic School Council may specify by by-law that the Catholic School Council shall include 2 or more community representatives;
- one person may be appointed by a school association that is affiliated with the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education;

3.3.3 The Catholic School Council cannot appoint a person employed by the Board unless they are not employed at the school and have informed the members of their employment prior to appointment.

3.3.4 It is an expectation that each member of a Catholic School Council be committed to the Board's Mission Statement and uphold the tenets and beliefs of our Roman Catholic faith.

3.3.5 The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and the majority of parent/guardian members of the Catholic School Council shall be Separate School Supporters.

3.3.6 Each parent/guardian upon acceptance of nomination to a Catholic School Council shall sign a declaration confirming their commitment to Catholic Education as per Appendix A.

3.3.7 Catholic School Council members will be elected by the groups they represent.

3.3.8 The school principal and the parish priest or designate are automatically members.

3.3.9 The community representative is appointed by the Catholic School Council.

3.3.10 If an employee of the Board works at a school that his/her children attend, the employee may stand for election on the Catholic School Council as a staff member, but not as a parent.

3.3.11 All parents may serve on committees of the Catholic School Council and continue to enrich school life with their presence, contributions and insights.

- 3.3.12 Where circumstances preclude representation of any of the above groups, the Catholic School Council will continue to operate but will seek involvement of the non-represented group through outreach strategies and fill vacancies by election or appointment. Members acquired in this manner will serve as voting members for the remainder of the term of office.
- 3.3.13 Where a Catholic School Council member resigns or retires mid-term, the Catholic School Council may appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of the term. The minimum number of elected parents on the Catholic School Council shall be 50% plus one and a minimum number of members shall be stipulated in the school constitution by-laws.
- 3.3.14 All Catholic School Council by-laws will include the term of office defined as the period of time between the first Catholic School Council meeting of the school year and the first Catholic School Council meeting of the following school year.
- 3.3.15 Unless otherwise provided by the Catholic School Council's by-laws, the chair may be re-elected or re-appointed for no more than four consecutive one-year terms.

#### 3.4 ROLE OF TRUSTEES

- 3.4.1 As elected members of the Board, trustees will not stand for election on the Catholic School Councils. Trustees may attend meetings at the request of the Catholic School Council members. They will lend support, receive and respond to advice from Catholic School Council members. Trustees shall not use Catholic School Councils as forums for election campaigning or as a means of distributing election materials.

#### 3.5 ROLE OF SUPERVISORY OFFICERS

- 3.5.1 Supervisory Officers may attend meetings of the Catholic School Council. The Supervisory Officer may receive advice, provide information, and facilitate the effective operation of the Catholic School Council. In-service for Catholic School Councils may be co-coordinated by the Superintendent of Education - Family of Schools.
- 3.5.2 Where conflicts on Catholic School Council are not resolved at school level, the Superintendent of Education – Family of Schools shall assist with conflict resolution through dialogue, clarification and mediation.

**3.6 PARTICIPATION**

3.6.1 Catholic School Council and associated committee meetings are open to any interested member of the school community and any community member should be given the opportunity to participate in the deliberations of the Catholic School Council. Attempts should be made to reach decisions by consensus. If, however, it becomes necessary to put the matter to a vote, it should be restricted to the elected and appointed members of the Catholic School Council. The principal is not permitted to vote in Catholic School Council or on a committee of the Catholic School Council.

**3.7 ACCOUNTABILITY**

3.7.1 Ultimately, the principal is responsible for the operation of the school, within the provisions of the Education Act, the Regulations, the Policy and Procedures of the Durham Catholic District School Board, various Collective Agreements and all other applicable legislation. The principal is accountable to the Director of Education through the appropriate Superintendent of Education. Ongoing communication between the principal and the Catholic School Council is necessary to facilitate the efficient operation of the Catholic School Council and to encourage the collaborative nature of the relationship between the Principal and the Catholic School Council.

**3.8 PARISH PRIEST OR DESIGNATE**

3.8.1 The role of the parish priest or designate will be to lend knowledge, support and experience in promoting, developing and implementing Catholic faith formation in our schools. The intended outcome of the priest's or designate's role is to strengthen the fundamental partnership between the parish, home and school.

**3.9 THE CHAIR**

3.9.1 The Chair shall:

- ensure that the promotion of Catholic values and teachings is central to the work of the Catholic School Council;
- call Catholic School Council meetings and work to keep members informed;
- prepare the agenda in consultation with the principal;
- chair the meetings;
- retain minutes of all its meetings;
- keep records of all its financial transactions;
- make available the minutes and records at the school for examination without charge by any person;
- retain minutes and financial records for 4 years at the school;
- participate in information and training programs (or assign a designate to do so);
- communicate with the school principal on a regular and ongoing basis;
- ensure that there is regular communication with the school community.

### 3.10 THE PRINCIPAL

#### 3.10.1 The Principal shall:

- ensure that the Catholic faith is the foundation upon which decisions are made;
- consider each recommendation made by the Catholic School Council and advise the Catholic School Council of action taken in response to the recommendations;
- solicit the views of the Catholic School Council with respect to:
  - the school code of conduct;
  - school policies or procedures in accordance with the policies and administrative procedures established by the Board respecting appropriate dress for pupils;
  - school improvement planning.
- act as a resource person and assist the Catholic School Council in obtaining information relevant to the role of the Catholic School Council including information relating to relevant legislation, regulations and policies;
- attend every meeting of the Catholic School Council unless unable to do so by reason of illness or other extenuating circumstances;
- provide for the prompt distribution to each member of the Catholic School Council of any materials received by the principal from the Ministry or the Board that are intended for distribution to the members of Catholic School Councils;
- post any materials distributed to each member of the Catholic School Council from the Ministry in the school in a location that is accessible to parents;
- ensure that the annual report prepared by the Catholic School Council is distributed to every parent/guardian of a pupil enrolled in the school;
- encourage participation of parents, staff, students and others in the parish and the wider community;
- facilitate communication with senior staff and trustees as appropriate;
- ensure that copies of the minutes of Catholic School Council meetings are kept in the school;
- ensure that the issues addressed are those that are the responsibility of the Catholic School Council and relevant to the school community.

**3.11 THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS**

3.11.1 The Catholic School Council members shall:

- promote the Catholic faith and values;
- participate in Catholic School Council meetings and activities;
- participate in training and information programs;
- act as a link between the school and the community;
- encourage participation of parents and others in the parish and wider community;
- represent the views of the community in an informed, unbiased manner;
- act as goodwill ambassadors for the school community;

**3.12 THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS**

3.12.1 Nomination and elections for the Catholic School Council shall be held within the first 30 days of each school year, on a date that is fixed by the chair or co-chairs of the Catholic School Council after consulting with the principal of the school. The principal shall give written notice of the date, time and location of the election at least 14 days before the date of the election. This notification shall be in writing to parents of children enrolled in the school at the date notice is given. This notice can be delivered via the child and is to be posted in the school in an area accessible by parents.

3.12.2 Elections will be conducted by secret ballot. Voters must appear in person to exercise this right.

3.12.3 Parents or guardians who have children enrolled in the school are eligible to stand for election. Elections will be conducted as follows:

- parents/guardians who and have children enrolled in the school will elect parent members;
- teachers will elect the teacher member;
- non-teaching members of staff will elect the non-teaching member;
- students will select students (mandatory in secondary; at the direction of the principal in elementary). Students will be the children of separate school supporters and/or eligible to be separate school supporters except for the age requirement (e.g., secondary school).

3.12.4 If an employee of the Board works at a school that his/her children attend, the employee may stand for election on the Catholic School Council as a staff representative, but not as a parent representative.

3.12.5 Eligible voters shall cast one vote for each of the positions in their representative group.

- 3.12.6 If there is a tie for the final position on the Catholic School Council, the winner shall be determined by lot.
- 3.12.7 No individual campaign literature for Catholic School Council elections may be posted or distributed in the school.
- 3.12.8 School resources, both human and material, may not be used to support particular candidates.
- 3.12.9 Election procedures shall be supervised by the principal.
- 3.12.10 Parents/guardians shall be the majority on the Catholic School Council.
- 3.12.11 Separate school supporters will form the majority of parent/guardians members.
- 3.12.12 The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson will be separate school supporters.
- 3.12.13 If all of the elected positions are not filled through the election process, the Catholic School Council shall proceed. The Catholic School Council should however, seek members to fill the vacant positions through outreach into the community. Individuals will be appointed by the Catholic School Council for the remainder of the term.
- 3.12.14 A school may have such other officers as are provided for in the by-laws of the Catholic School Council.
- 3.13 VOTING
- 3.13.1 Subject to 3.13.3 below, each member of the Catholic School Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the Catholic School Council.
- 3.13.2 Subject to 3.13.3 below, each member of a committee is entitled to one vote in votes taken by committees.
- 3.13.3 The principal is not entitled to vote in votes taken by the Catholic School Council or by a committee of the Catholic School Council.
- 3.14 BY-LAWS
- 3.14.1 Every Catholic School Council shall ensure that the following by-laws are included in the Constitution:
- election procedures and the filling of vacancies in the membership of the Catholic School Council;
  - a definition of the term of office for members of the Catholic School Council consistent with Board Policy;



3.14 BY-LAWS (cont'd)

- establishment of rules respecting participation in Catholic School Council proceedings in cases of conflict of interest;
- establishment of a conflict resolution process for internal Catholic School Council disputes that is in accordance with any applicable policies of the Board that established the Catholic School Council.

3.15 MEETINGS

3.15.1 A Catholic School Council shall have a minimum of four (4) meetings a school year which will be open to all members of the school community. The first meeting of the Catholic School Council should be held after elections but within the first 35 days of the school year.

3.15.2 A meeting cannot be held unless a majority of members are present and there is a majority of parent members of the Catholic School Council. A Catholic School Council is entitled to hold its meetings at the school and the meetings are to be accessible to the public. The principal shall, on behalf of the Catholic School Council obtain the appropriate Community Use of Schools Permit, and, give written notice of dates, times and locations of Catholic School Council meetings to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given is enrolled in the school. The notice may be given to a child for delivery to parents and/or posted in the school in a location that is accessible to parents.

3.16 COMMITTEES

3.16.1 A Catholic School Council, in accordance with its by-laws, may establish committees to make recommendations to the Catholic School Council. Every committee of a Catholic School Council must include at least one parent member of the Catholic School Council but may include persons who are not members of the Catholic School Council. All committee meetings of the Catholic School Council shall be open to the public. Notices of the meetings must be posted in a location that is accessible to parents in the school and a child may deliver these notices to parents.

3.17 REPORTING

The principal of the school shall report annually after elections the names of the duly constituted members of the Catholic School Council by completing *Catholic School Council Membership* Form (Appendix B) and returning it to the Director or designate a current copy of the Catholic School Council's constitution.

**3.18 CONSULTATION BY BOARD**

3.18.1 In addition to its other obligations to solicit the views of Catholic School Councils under the Education Act, the Board invites Catholic School Councils to express their views, in writing policies and administrative procedures:

- established under subsection 302(1) of the Act with respect to the conduct of persons in schools within the Board's jurisdiction;
- established under subsection 302(5) of the Act respecting appropriate dress for pupils in schools within the Board's jurisdiction;
- regarding the allocation of funding by the Board to Catholic School Councils;
- regarding the fund raising activities of Catholic School Councils;
- vetted for input by the Board and other items that from time to time may require the input of each school community;
- regarding conflict resolution processes for internal Catholic School Council disputes, and
- regarding reimbursement by the Board of expenses incurred by members and officers of Catholic School Councils.

**3.19 FUNDING**

3.19.1 The Board will provide support as needed to Catholic School Councils for:

- Board wide training of Catholic School Councils;
- school-level funding that is accessed through the Principal.

**3.20 REMUNERATION**

3.20.1 A person shall not receive any remuneration for serving as a member or officer of a Catholic School Council.

3.20.2 If expenses are incurred by a member or officer of a Catholic School Council, those expenses shall be reimbursed if the principal approved such expenses in writing prior to the incurrence of such expenses.

3.20.3 The school shall be responsible for those expenses incurred by a member or officer of their Catholic School Council unless the principal has written approval from the Superintendent of Education - Family of Schools indicating otherwise.

**3.21 FUND RAISING**

3.21.1 All Fund raising activities including those that involve the Catholic School Councils are subject to the Boards' Fund Raising Policy (PO148).

3.21.2 The Principal shall report annually on any fund raising, including those of the Catholic School Council and such reporting shall be part of the accounting procedures used for non-Board funds.

**4.0 SOURCES**

1. *Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2 - Section 170 (1) 17.1, Section 170 (3)*
2. *School Councils – O. Reg. 612/00*
3. *Operation of Schools General – O. Reg. 298*
4. *Fund Raising Policy (PO148)*
5. *Ministry of Education and Training, The School Council Handbook*
6. *Education Improvement Commission, School Improvement Planning, A Handbook*

**5.0 REFERENCES**

*Declaration of Nominee for Catholic School Council*  
*Catholic School Council Membership*

**6.0 RELATED FORMS**

*Declaration of Nominee for Catholic School Council Form FO1025*  
*Catholic School Council Membership Form FO1020*

**Sample Only - Please refer to  
official form for completion.**

# SAMPLE

Durham Catholic District School Board

## ***Declaration of Nominee for Catholic School Council***

I, \_\_\_\_\_ do solemnly swear to uphold the  
*Name of Parent/Guardian*

tenets and beliefs of the Roman Catholic Faith as a Catholic School  
Council Member of

\_\_\_\_\_  
*School*

I will model and promote the Mission Statement of the Durham  
Catholic District School Board and support the principal and staff in the  
academic, physical, emotional and spiritual development of our  
students.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

**Sample Only - Please refer to  
official form for completion.**

# SAMPLE

Durham Catholic District School Board  
**Catholic School Council Membership**

School:	<input type="text"/>
Name of School Council Chair:	<input type="text"/>
Address:	_____
Telephone #:	_____
E-mail (if applicable):	_____
<b><u>Other School Council Members</u></b>	
Name	Position
	Parish Priest
	Parent/Guardian Representative(s)
	Student Representative(if applicable)
	School Principal
	Teaching Staff Representative
	Non-Teaching Representative
	Community Representative
	O.A.P.C.E. Affiliate