

# ST. JOHN ELEMENTARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

*Perth, Ontario*

## SCHOOL COUNCIL BY-LAWS

***NOTE: These by-laws are to be used in conjunction with the "Ontario Regulation 612/00" and the "School Councils: A guide for members, 2001."***

### **Article 1**    **Name of the Organization**

- 1.1            This organization will be known as **St. John Elementary Catholic School Council**, hereafter for the purposes of this document as "**the council**".

### **Article 2**    **Council Mandate**

- 2.1            (1) Working within the Mission Statements and goals of the Board and School, the council will:
- Provide opportunities for parents to be more involved in the education of their children.
  - Develop a mission statement and annual goals for the school and evaluate its Success in achieving those goals;
  - Provide support to the principal and staff by giving feedback on the overall Social environment of the school.
  - Promote catholic education and foster relationships among parents, staff and the local community.
  - Respond to referrals from the board on activities if requested by the board and/or the school;
  - In all of its activities and decisions, ensure authority, accountability and responsibility are taken into considerations.
- 2.2            **Purpose**
- (1) In accordance with "Ontario Regulation 612/00", the purpose of the Council is, through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. A school council's primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations in accordance with the Regulation, to the principal of the school and the board that established the council.

### 2.3 **Fundraising**

The council may engage in fundraising activities and shall only do so when Those activities are conducted in accordance with policies set out by the Board.

## **Article 3 Council Membership**

3.1 The council will consist of the following members:

- A majority of parents;
- The principal and /or vice-principal;
- At least one teacher employed in the school, other than the principal or vice-principal;
- One non-teaching employee of the school;
- One or more community representatives appointed by the elected council.

3.2 In keeping with the rights of Roman Catholics to govern their schools and Recognizing the valuable contribution made by non-catholic parents/guardians, it is the policy of the board that at least 80% of the elected parent representatives hold the same qualifications as trustees and that up to 20% of these positions may be held by non-catholic parent/guardian representatives whose residential education taxes are directed to the separate school system.

3.3 Although not mandated, the council may choose to have additional members to act in an advisory capacity to the council.

## **Article 4 Elections and Appointments**

- (1) Council elections shall be held within the first thirty (30) days of the start of the school year. Information regarding the election of parent representatives shall be communicated to all parents/guardians via a school newsletter at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the election. Nomination ballots will be included with the newsletter.
- (2) Using the official ballots provided in the Newsletter referred to in paragraph (1) of this Article, parents/guardians will be allowed a minimum of seven (7) days and maximum of ten (10) days to respond to the call for nominations.
- (3) Ballots may be delivered to the school by the student or voting may take place in person at the school. Ballots will be counted by the principal and/or scrutinizer(s). Ballots will be destroyed at the direction of the principal. The number of votes received and ranking of candidates shall not be revealed.

- (4) Candidates receiving the largest number of qualified votes for the positions for which they are nominated will be declared winners. Seats may be acclaimed upon singular nomination.
- (5) The names of all successful candidates will be published in the school newsletter.

#### **4.2 Election of the Teaching Staff Representative**

- (1) The principal, in consultation with the election committee, will make the necessary arrangements for the teaching staff representative to be elected. This election should occur during a regularly scheduled staff meeting. Anyone assigned to the teaching staff of the school (full or part-time) other than the principal or vice principal may be a candidate.
- (2) The seat may be acclaimed upon singular nomination.
- (3) Teaching staff may elect or appoint one alternate to attend council meetings if their representative is unavailable.

#### **4.3 Election of the Non-Teaching Staff Representative**

- (1) The principal, in consultation with the election committee, will make the necessary arrangements for the non-teaching staff representative to be elected. Anyone assigned to the non-teaching staff of the school (full or part-time) maybe a candidate. If no candidate is available in the category, a second teacher may substitute.
- (2) The seat maybe acclaimed upon singular nomination.
- (3) Non-teaching staff may elect or appoint one alternate to attend council meetings if their representative is unavailable.

#### **4.4 Parish Representatives**

The pastor of St. John the Baptist Church will be asked to appoint a representative from the parish annually.

#### **4.5 Selection of a Community Representative**

All appointments of community representatives to the school council are to be by majority vote at a meeting of the school council.

#### **4.6 Candidate Qualifications**

Candidates who either self-nominate or are nominated by another parent/Guardian for council must meet the following qualifications:

- Must be a Canadian citizen
- Must be 18 years of age or older
- Must reside in the area of the school's jurisdiction, and
- Be separate school board ratepayers.

#### **4.7 Election Committee**

The outgoing council will establish a council election committee. The committee will be responsible to ensure that a new council is in place within thirty (30) days from the start of the school year in September. The election committee will be made up of at least two parents, one member of the teaching staff and one member of the non-teaching staff.

*Note:* Ideally, the election committee will not include anyone standing for election, nor their spouse.

### **Article 5 Terms of Office**

- 5.1 (1) Council members are elected for a term that lasts from the first meeting of One school year to the meeting of the next.  
(2) Except for the principal, the term of office for each officer of the council Shall be for one year. However, in accordance with regulations, the number of times a member can be re-elected is not restricted.

*Note:* In an effort to encourage and maximize participation, it is Recommended that council members not hold a position for more than two (3) consecutive years. Also in the same spirit, it is recommended that council members retire for one (1) year for every four years served on the council.

5.2 The principal is appointed by the school board

5.3 Ex-officio members (such as a trustee) and advisors will serve one year terms. No limit will be set on the number of terms a member will be eligible to serve in an advisory capacity. Other non-voting advisors may be past-chair, chair of a committee, nominees who did not gain a council seat, non-catholic parents/teachers, community members with expertise in a special area, etc.

5.3 (1) The council may establish committees made up of teachers, parents,

Business leaders and other citizens. Committees carry out specific functions, study specific issues and make recommendations to the council. Council will seek widespread participation in these activities.

(2) “Standing Committees” such as curriculum, funding and finance may be established with a focus to implement valuable council programs or business.

(4) “Sub-Committees” maybe established to do additional work such as extra-curricular activities, breakfast program and/or peer mediation.

*Note:* Sub-Committees and/or Ad-Hoc Committees should be provided with Terms of Reference by the council outlining their specific responsibilities.

5.4 Membership on the council will cease when a member:

- fails to abide by the goals and mission of the council
- moves out of the schools district thereby ceasing to hold the criteria for representing a constituency.
- When a parent’s/guardian’s child is no longer enrolled in the school;
- When a teacher or employee ceases to be employed at the school;
- Has missed three (3) consecutive schedule meetings without proper notice to the chairperson;
- Submits a letter or resignation to the chairperson; or
- Displays behavior that is disruptive to progress of meetings.

*Note:* In the case of the chair, the vice or co-chair of the council will maintain any duties resulting from the Chairs departure in accordance with the above statements.

## **Article 6**    **Council Procedures**

- 6.1 (1) In general, meetings should follow parliamentary procedure or acceptable Form of conduct.
- (2) Generally, decisions shall be made through consensus. As compared to a democratic vote where most people support a decision, consensus would have all members willing to accept a decision as reasonable. Where it is deemed that a consensus decision is not appropriate, the chair will ask for a formal motion to be made.
- (3) Formal motions shall be submitted in writing by any member of the council to the secretary. The motion will then be read out to the council by the secretary and a seconder will be sought. The Chair will then allow for discussion on the motion and motions to amend where appropriate. Once discussions and amendments have been entered into the record, a formal vote either by show of hands or ballots shall take place.

*Note:* The chair will determine whether show of hands or ballots are to be used when voting on a motion.

- (5) Periodic reports shall be made by the school council to the school and parent community of activities of the council via the school newsletter or through a separate bulletin when deemed applicable.
- (6) Minutes of School Council Meetings shall be displayed near the school office for easy access.

## **Article 7 Roles and Responsibilities of School Council Members**

7.1 The roles and responsibilities of the Council Chair, Co-Chair, parent Representatives, school principal, teaching and non-teaching staff representatives and community representative shall be in accordance with the guidelines found at 5.6 and 5.7 of the “School Councils: A Guide for Members, 2001”.

7.2 The Secretary of the council is responsible for:

- Keeping a full and accurate account of all proceedings and transactions of All council meetings;
- Providing a copy of the minutes to the principal for distribution among council members;
- Maintaining a council file in the school administrative office containing copies of all minutes, correspondence, current bylaws and reports.
- In cooperation with the principal and Chair, maintaining an up-to-date council membership list of addresses and telephone number of council members in confidence.

### **7.3 The Treasurer of the council is responsible for:**

- Maintaining an accurate and up-to-date account of all finances administered by the council;
- Providing regular financial reports to the council during its meetings.
- Submitting an annual financial report to the chair for submission with the council’s annual report.

**Article 8**    **Preparing for and Running Meetings**

- 8.1**            Council meetings will be organized and carried out in accordance with Guidelines contained in Section 8 of “School Councils: A Guide for Members, 2001”.

**Article 9**    **Council Code of Ethics**

- 9.1**            Council members will conduct themselves in accordance with the “Code of Ethics” found at 5.5 of “School Councils: A Guide for Members, 2001”.