

# QUEEN OF HEAVEN CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

## ARTICLES

### **Article 1 - Name**

The name of the Council shall be Queen of Heaven Catholic School Advisory Council representing Queen of Heaven Catholic School in the Town of Milton, Diocese of Hamilton, in the Province of Ontario, hereafter referred to in this document as the Council. The policies governing the Queen of Heaven Catholic School Advisory Council were developed by the Halton Catholic District School Board.

### **Article 2 a. - Purpose**

In accordance with the Ministry of Education's School Councils: A Guide for Members, the Queen of Heaven Catholic School Council has been established. It is the embodiment of the belief that education is a shared responsibility among home, school, church and community at large. The Council is an advisory body representing the school community that works in conjunction with the school's administration to enhance the quality of school programs and promote the level of student achievement, in a faith-centered environment.

### **Article 2b. – Council Mandate**

The Council shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its members, and any profits or other gains to the Council shall be used in promoting its objectives.

### **As an advisory body, the Catholic School Council will:**

Provide *advice* to the principal and, where appropriate, to the Board regarding such issues as:

- local school-year calendar
- school code of student behaviour
- curriculum and program goals and priorities
- the responses of the school or school board to achievement in provincial and board assessment programs
- preparation of the school profile
- selection of principals
- school budget priorities, including capital-improvement plans
- school-community communication strategies
- methods of reporting student outcomes to parents and the community
- school -based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational and nutrition programs
- community use of school facilities
- local co-ordination of services for children and youth
- development, implementation and review of board policies at the local level
- involvement with Parish Youth Ministry initiatives

### **Article 2c. - Objectives**

The principle objectives of the Council are guided by The Ministry of Education's School Councils – A Guide for Members (as found in Appendix A). Additional objectives of the Council are to provide advice to both the school principal and where appropriate to the School Board on any of the matters that the Council has identified as priorities and are within the individual Council's scope of influence. Specifically, the school council objectives are:

- to provide advice (input) to the staff and principal on issues of importance such as the school philosophy, mission and vision; school discipline policies; programs and directions; and budget allocations to meet student needs
- to stimulate continuous improvement in meaningful involvement by all members of the school community
- to facilitate collaboration among all the concerned participants of the school community
- to support an approach to schooling in which decisions are made collaboratively and whenever possible, at the school and classroom level
- to keep the board informed in co-operation with the principal of the needs of the school
- to support the school in its efforts to focus teachers' time and school resources on the essential tasks of teaching excellence and a high standard of learning
- to facilitate communication with all educational stakeholders and the community
- to raise funds which support the effective operation of the school and support its religious mandate

### **Article 3 – Composition of School Council**

The Council shall be comprised of elected &/or appointed members as set forth in the Ministry of Education and Training's School Council's: A Guide for Members governing school councils The membership of the Catholic School Council shall include a minimum of 12 persons consisting of:

- no fewer than 8 parents or guardians of students enrolled in the school (elected by parents and guardians or acclaimed &/or appointed)
  - the school principal & vice principal
  - minimum of one teacher from the school, other than the principal or vice-principal (elected by teachers)
  - a non-teaching staff member of the school (elected by non-teaching staff)
  - the pastor or his delegate (parish representative)
  - community representatives (optional & appointed by the Council)
2. The Council may make provisions for the election of up to two (2) non-Catholic parents/guardians of Catholic children attending Queen of Heaven Catholic School. These would be in addition to the 6 positions reserved for Catholic parents.
  3. The Council shall endeavor to have its membership reflect the diversity of its school community.
  4. Parents shall be elected at large by the parents of students enrolled in the school and shall form the majority on the Council. Members can be self-nominated, acclaimed or appointed to serve on Council.
  5. In the event an election is required, procedures shall follow the bylaws as spelled out by the Halton Catholic District School Board. Specifically:
    - 5.1 Terms of Office for all elected council members shall be one (1) year.
    - 5.2 Members of the Council, with the exception of the principal & designates, are elected or appointed annually for a maximum of three consecutive terms.
    - 5.3 Where a Council member resigns or misses 3 consecutive Council meetings, the Council may choose to appoint a replacement to serve until the next election.
    - 5.4 Any member may withdraw by notice, in writing, to the Chair and Principal, and if the withdrawing member is the Chair, by notice, in writing, to the Vice-Chair and Principal.
    - 5.5 The election of members of the Council shall occur within the first thirty (30) days of the school year.
    - 5.6 Elections must be organized by the school principal in a way that will ensure that all parents and staff members have the opportunity to vote for their representative. The principal shall, at least fourteen (14) days before the election of parent members, give written notice of the date, time and location of the election to every parent of a pupil

- who is enrolled in the school by giving notice to the pupil for delivery to their parent and by posting notice in the school in a parent accessible location.
- 5.7 Members of the Council who represent other significant groups may be elected and/or appointed by their respective groups.
- 5.8 There will be no honorarium paid to members of the Council.
- 5.9 Names and contact information of all Council members will be forwarded to the Director of Education within 30 days of election or appointment.
- 5.10 The names of all Council members will be published in the next school newsletter following elections or appointments.

#### **Article 4 – Council Procedures**

- The Inaugural Meeting of the Council will be held within the first thirty-five (35) days of the school year, subsequent to the elections/appointments held in the first thirty (30) days of the school year. This meeting will be chaired by the principal and the purpose of the meeting will be to elect/agree upon Council roles and make recommendations regarding appointments to the Council. The purpose of the first meeting of the new Council will be to review the Annual Year-End Report from the previous school year and to establish goals of the Council for this year.
- The Council will establish a meeting schedule of at least 4 meetings per year and publicize these dates.
- All meetings will begin with the Council prayer.
- Minutes of Council meetings will be recorded and maintained at the school site and be available to stakeholders upon request without charge. Minutes are required to be kept on file for a minimum of four (4) years.
- The Council will establish committees to carry out specific functions and will seek widespread participation in these activities. Every committee established must include at least one parent member of the Council.
- The Council should use consensus as the usual method for developing recommendations and plans. If voting becomes necessary, a simple majority will be sufficient for a vote on any issue. The principal or designate (VPs) is/are not entitled to vote in votes of the Council or of committees of the Council.
- The Council will inform the general school and parent communities of their activities through such means as newsletters and email notifications.
- The Council may respond to referrals from the Board and report on their activities if requested by the Board.
- Any member of the local community may address the Council if two weeks prior written notification is given to the Chair and Principal. The presentation may not exceed five minutes in length, but may be extended at the discretion of the Chair.
- Council meetings are always open to members of the school community.
- Council meetings shall not proceed unless there is a quorum in attendance. Any quorum will include one half of the elected parents and one half of the remaining council. A majority of the members of the Council who are present at the meeting must be parent members.
- If there is a loss of quorum while the meeting is in progress, there will be no further motions presented or voting.

#### **Article 5 - Executive**

**Officers of the Council shall consist of a Chair, a Co-Chair, a Principal and a Treasurer.**

- a) Every elected member of the Council, who is also a parent, is eligible to be elected as an Officer of the Council. The Chair and Co-Chair of Council must be baptized Catholic.
- b) Every elected or appointed member of the Council is eligible to vote for Officers of the Council.
- c) Officers will be elected at the inaugural meeting of the council.
- d) Terms of Office shall run from the inaugural meeting of the council up to but not including the inaugural meeting of the succeeding council.

## **5.1 Voting Procedures for Officers**

Nominations for Council roles will be accepted and recorded at the inaugural meeting of the council. Nominees will then be asked if they wish to serve in such a capacity; members are able to co-chair committee chair positions. If a vote is necessary to determine roles, it will be done via secret ballot at the inaugural meeting of Council.

## **5.2 Duties of the Council Members and Principal**

### a) Chair

- communicate with the Principal
- be the official spokesperson of the Council
- call School Council meetings
- prepare the agenda for School Council meetings in co-operation with the Principal
- chair the Council meetings beyond the inaugural meeting
- ensure that there is regular communication with the school community
- consult with senior Board staff and trustees, as required
- will serve as a liaison with all committees of the Council
- will attend Administrative Committee meetings & Council of Chairs Meetings
- communicate with the Council secretary/school Principal to ensure that the minutes of the Council meetings are recorded and maintained

### b) Co-Chair

- assist Chair and undertake tasks assigned by the Chair
- in the absence of the Chair, supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the School Council
- in the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the Chair, fulfill the Chair's responsibilities

### c) Principal

- promotes the Catholic faith and values
- acts as liaison between parents and senior administration of the Board
- is accountable to the Superintendent of Education
- informs parents of policy changes
- considers and responds to parental input
- gives direction to the School Council
- co-operates in the development of meeting agendas & approves agendas
- invites all parents to participate in the School Council
- shall attend every meeting of the Council, unless unable to do so by reason of illness or other cause beyond his/her control (Vice Principal serves in Principal's absence)
- encourages two-way communication between the school and the community
- assists in organizing elections for Council members, if necessary
- facilitate the establishment of the School Council and assist in its operation
- support and promote the Council's activities
- seek input from the Council in areas for which it has been assigned advisory responsibility
- act as a resource on laws, regulations, board policies and collective agreements
- obtain and provide information required by the council to enable it to make informed decisions
- communicate with the chair of the School Council, as required

- ensure that copies of the minutes of the Council's meetings are kept at the school
- encourage the participation of the parents from all groups and of other people within the school community
- maintain a list of Council members with current phone numbers and addresses
- will serve as Secretary of the Council, if necessary, or assign a designate
- shall consider each recommendation made to him/her by the Council and shall advise the Council of the action taken in response to the recommendation

d) Treasurer

- chair the Financial Committee and serve as a liaison with school financial secretary and Principal or designate
- is responsible for preparing financial reports in conjunction with school financial secretary and principal or designate and reporting to School Council financial statements of any funds raised by School Council
- work with the school administration to properly account for funds of the School council and keep such books or records as may be directed
- prepare a yearly budget and monitor expenditures against approved amounts.

**5.3 Duties of the Members of the Council**

- participate in council meetings
- encourage the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the school community
- act as a link between the School Council and the community
- promote the goals of the School Council
- serve as Chairs of the Committees of the Council

5.4 The Secretary will be responsible for having the minutes taken, published, distributed and stored.

**Article 6 - Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended as follows:

1. The proposed amendments shall be submitted to the School Council at any regular meeting of the Council as included on the Council meeting agenda at least one week prior to the scheduled Council meeting. The amendment shall be read aloud at the meeting
2. After such notice, the amendment shall become part of the Constitution if, at the next regular meeting of the Council, it is approved by a quorum of members present and voting.
3. Notwithstanding the above, amendments may be mandated by the Halton Catholic District School Board or by the Ministry of Education and Training.
4. Proposed constitutional amendments will be published prior to any votes being taken on these Constitutional amendments with notification of date for discussion and vote. Results will be reported to the school community shortly after being approved.

# QUEEN OF HEAVEN CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL BYLAWS

The Council may establish bylaws which provide for effective governance and policy-making. Bylaws may be approved by a simple majority of the Council. No bylaw may supersede the Acts or Regulations of the Province of Ontario, Policies of the School Board or the Constitution of the Council.

The Council may amend the Constitution adhering to these procedures:

- the proposal to amend must be communicated to the parent community stating the present article and the amendment and a rationale for the change
- the amendment may be adopted with the approval of 51% of the parent representatives and 50% of the other members of the Council
- the amendment shall be communicated to the parent community within 60 days
- the amendment becomes effective after the next scheduled election for parent representatives.

## **Bylaw 2 – Committees**

1. Committees shall be created by School Council and the Principal/designate as may be desirable for the furtherance of the work of the Council.
2. At a minimum, the council will establish these required committees/roles:
  - Finance Committee (treasurer to chair)
  - Parish Representative &/or Liturgical Committee
  - Safety Committee
  - Community Building
3. A Council member shall chair and/or sit on each committee. The Council member shall be responsible for reporting the committee's work to the Council.
4. The school council must outline the role/purpose of each committee describing the operating guidelines (see Appendix C), the committee's particular role, function and framework.
5. Committees shall submit oral or written reports and recommendations to the Council and shall follow directions from the Council for definite action to implement such recommendations. Committees shall make reports to regular meetings and other meetings as required.
6. Any committee requiring a vote or resolution to be passed must communicate to the Chair/Council and put forth a motion for a vote to take place at a regular meeting of Council.

## **Bylaw 3 – Vacancies**

1. When/if a vacancy occurs among the parent representatives, the Principal shall notify the school community of the vacancy and request volunteers. From the names received, the Council shall appoint a replacement.
2. A replacement council member shall serve only until the end of the school year, or a shorter period if so-mandated by the Council.
3. In the event that an elected or appointed posting cannot be filled, then such position shall remain vacant until such time as it can be filled.

## **Bylaw 4 – Resignations**

1. Resignations by any member of the Council shall be made in writing to the Chair/Co-Chair and Principal or designate and announced at the next Council meeting.

**Bylaw 5 – Amendments**

1. Any proposed changes to the constitution must be made in writing to the Chair and Principal/designate, at least two (2) weeks prior to the next Council meeting and placed on the agenda. The change must be in Motion form and passed by quorum.
2. Notwithstanding the above, amendments may be mandated by the Halton Catholic District School Board or by the Ministry of Education and Training.