



# Council Roles and Responsibilities

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## *catholic school council:*

Catholic School Councils are legally constituted bodies of elected and appointed representatives of the local school community established for the purposes of developing, encouraging and promoting activities which will enhance the quality of school programs and improve the levels of student achievement.

## *respective of the roles that others have to play:*

- Teachers deliver instruction.
- Principals are responsible for implementing decisions affecting the school and are accountable for the school's performance.
- School Board establishes policy and guidelines.
- The Ministry of Education establishes provincial standards, curriculum and policies.

## *benefits of a catholic school council:*

- Catholic School Councils increase local involvement in the education process and subsequently improve teaching and learning within our schools.
- Catholic School Councils ensure the shared responsibility and collaborative undertaking of the Catholic Education of our children by parents, schools, parish and community.
- Catholic Schools Councils enable all of our partners to work with education professionals to set the future direction of the school, identify education priorities and determine strategies for achieving goals.
- Catholic School Councils will serve as a vital link between all our partners and the School Board.
- Catholic School Councils, through commitment and creativity, will generate a strong community spirit. Community spirit makes a school more than just a building – it creates a learning environment where students feel the commitment of fellow students, principal and staff, clergy, community and families. This shared commitment will make the common goal a reality.

# Roles of Ontario Catholic School Councils

The school's mandate is to work toward ensuring the best possible education for all students within that school. The school council provides a structure in which parents, principal, teachers, non-teaching staff representative, parish representative, students and community members can talk about education in their community. The school council is also a vehicle by which everyone in the school community has a voice in educational issues.

More information can be found:

Ministry of Education: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/>  
HCDSB Website: <https://www.hcdsb.org/parents/catholic-school-councils/>  
[HCDSB Policy I-23](#)

## Roles

### It is the role of the School Council to:

- Work with the school's mission statement and goals rather than on day-to-day management of the school;
- Ensure that school programs and priorities meet the school community's expectations.
- Consult with the school community on setting priorities, strategies and performance measures;
- Advise the principal and the school board as per Regulation 612/00, school board policy and this operations manual;
- Consult with other school councils and education partners on wider issues;
- Share information with the school community, other school councils and the School Board.

### The Principals Role:

- To advocate for a strong school council;
- 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 advising responsibilities;
- Act as a council resource on the Education Act, Ministry of Education regulations, policies and memorandum, school 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 council, as required;
- Ensure that council meeting minutes are properly stored at the school;
- Assist the council in communicating with the school community;
- Encourage the participation of parents from various groups within the school community;
- Encourage the participation of community representatives, mindful of the need to properly represent the diversity of the population within the local community;
- To promote a collaborative, collegial model of decision making at the school and for the school council.

## **The Teacher's Role:**

- To advocate for a strong school council;
- To serve as a member of the school council (if elected to represent teaching staff);
- To provide assistance and ideas for the teacher representative on the school council;
- To support the actions and decisions of the school council;
- To ensure a teacher voice is expressed in all decisions which affect teaching and learning;
- To promote a collaborative, collegial model of decision making at the school and for the school Council;
- To encourage parents and the community to become involved in school activities;
- To communicate information back to all teachers at the school.

## **The Community Member's Role:**

The Community representative(s) on the school council will play a role in advocating for a strong school council bringing the community perspective into the school. Assisting the school in building partnerships with community members and building lines of cooperation to enhance student learning will be key role functions on the council.

## **The Student's Role:**

The student is at the centre of the education system and in higher grades, has a crucial role to play as a participant on the school council. The attitudes and values the student brings to council will help influence decisions made by the principal and the school council, and therefore help determine the direction of the school. The student's role on school council is:

- To advocate for a strong school council;
- To seek student views to share with the school council;
- To communicate information back to other students.

## **The Trustee/School Board's Role:**

- To advocate for a strong school council;
- To initiate and facilitate a minimum of three (3) meetings, one per term, of all the school council chairs;
- To develop consultative structures so all community stakeholders have opportunities for meaningful input into decisions about education in that community;
- To delegate to school councils responsibilities in accordance with the delegation;
- To develop mechanisms for reporting to parents and taxpayers on student achievement and the Performance of the school system;
- To consult with education partners on changes to programs and instructional approaches;
- To determine the types of educational programs the community needs and wants and endeavour to provide such programs;
- To develop and implement policies respecting school councils.

## **The Superintendent's Role:**

- To advocate for a strong school council;
- To play a key role in establishing accountability measures for the system;
- To uphold the Education Act, the Ministry of Education regulations and board policies;
- To ensure that policies regarding the operation of school councils are implemented;
- To work closely with school councils;
- To work closely with trustees and school administrators in establishing procedures for school councils.

## **The Support Staff / Non-Teaching Rep Role:**

- To serve as a member if elected to represent non-teaching staff;
- To provide assistance and ideas for the non-teaching staff representative on the school council;
- To support the actions and decisions of the school council;
- To ensure a non-teaching staff voice is expressed in all decisions which may impact on nonteaching staff
- To promote a collaborative, collegial model of decision-making at the school and for the school council;
- To encourage parents and community to become involved in school council activities;
- To communicate information back to all non-teaching staff at the school.

## **The Parish Representative Role**

- To serve as a member of the school council (if chosen to represent the parish community);
- To support the actions and decisions of the school council;
- To ensure a parish voice is expressed in all decisions which may impact the parish community;
- To promote a collaborative, collegial model of decision-making at the school and for the school council;
- To encourage parents and community to become involved in school council activities;
- To communicate information back to the parish community.

### **The Parents Role**

- To serve as a member of the school council (if elected to represent the parental community);
- To support the actions and decisions of the school council;
- To ensure a parental voice is expressed in all decisions which may impact the parental community;
- To promote a collaborative, collegial model of decision-making at the school and for the school council;
- To encourage all parents to become involved in school council activities;
- To seek information from and communicate information to the parental community around school council issues;
- To participate in information and training program.

# It is the responsibility of the school council to:

## Actively seek the views of the school community

Continually seeking input from the school community is the only way councils can accurately formulate goals and expectations for the school that will meet community needs

## Actively represent the views of the school community and become as influential as possible

School councils have a responsibility to make the views of the school community known to the principal, school board, and other education partners, where applicable.

## Inform the school community

School councils must keep the community well informed of the council's roles, functions, projects and decisions (along with the reasons behind them).

## Involve the school community

The school council will need to make a special effort to bring all partners into the education circle to ensure decisions reflect the interests of all children in the school.

## Work within the policies of the local school board

School council members will be guided by the mission statement of their School Board and must work within School Board policies and guidelines.

## Become well informed

School council members must be familiar with school policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them. It is important for school councils to take advantage of sessions designed to increase their understanding of the principles of team work, consensus building, school-based decision making and other issues that affect the work of the school council.

## Focus on the best interests of all students

The school council must ensure all students' needs are expressed, considered and addressed. No individual or group can be allowed to promote its own agenda or self-interest at the expense of others.

## Maintain high ethical standards

The school council must limit discussions to matters of concern to the school community as a whole. The confidential nature of individual student learning and behaviour must be respected. The school council must also handle financial matters in an accountable manner.

# Responsibilities of the St Teresa of Calcutta School Council Members

## CHAIR

### The Chair of St Teresa of Calcutta Catholic School Council shall:

- Be the prime liaison with the principal on key issues where council members' input is required
- Be sensitive to issues raised by parents either formally or informally that are presented away from council meetings and are able to properly direct concerns
- Oversee the planning/organization of school council based initiatives to ensure they are successful and achieve their respective goals
- The organization and the running of the St Teresa of Calcutta School Council Meetings.
  - Meetings should take place once a month with a minimum of 6 required meetings throughout the year
  - Prepare and plan the agenda based on current issues and action items raised at previous meetings
- Work with all other council roles to address the needs of the school community for that year
- Be knowledgeable and conversant about the St Teresa of Calcutta School Council's constitution
- Attend chair's meeting held three times a year by the board and consult with senior board staff and trustees, as required
- Bring to council major issues that are facing our board
- Writing an end of the year synopsis to the Superintendent in charge of school councils, outlining the work that was done by the St Teresa of Calcutta School Council during that school year.
- Ensure that a mid-year and end of year communication is sent out to parents of St Teresa of Calcutta School, advising of what initiatives the school council was advised in and where our fundraising dollars were spent to support learning and the overall successful operation of our school

## CO-CHAIR

- Support the Council Chair in all responsibilities of the 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 and/or Council of Chairs meetings
- In the event of a resignation/incapacity or leave of absence of the Chair, the Co-Chair will fulfill the Chair's responsibilities

## TREASURER

The treasurer is responsible for accounting for the financial side of council. Their duties would include:

- Maintaining the School Generated Funds for council and keeping this record current for posting on the school website
- Prepare and present an up to date account of council funds at each meeting – which include fundraising totals and expenses
- Liaise with the school secretary/principal to confirm accounts are accurate
- Confirm that all council members are compliant with the Board policy that there is no direct reimbursement for expenses; all purchases must be approved by the chair and principal and must have a receipt

## SECRETARY

The secretary is responsible for the clerical side of council. Their duties include:

- Taking of minutes at each meeting/preparing photocopies or email distribution to council members in a timely manner (preferably a week after the meeting) – minutes are to be sent to the Chair who will then review before sending along to the Principal/Vice-Principal for their approval
- The secretary will also prepare the agenda for the next council meeting –including new business items as well as the “**Action Items**” from the previous meetings. This ensures that no item that requires additional follow-up is neglected.
- Compilation of information and preparation of Council’s contribution to the monthly school newsletter/liaise with the Chair for final approval and then forward to the school administration for inclusion in the school WEEKLY newsletter found online
- Communication on council issues to the home either via letter, email or by maintenance of information on the school website

## LITURGICAL

The expectations of the liturgical post have encompassed the following in the past:

- Prepare budget for the liturgical events of the year
- Confer with school administration on event calendar and expectations:
- Organize sacrament celebrations at the school and purchase items/food for the planned event (i.e. Communion Reception, Communion Banners, Confirmation Luncheon )
- Offering assistance to the staff for any school masses/celebrations of the words
- Ensuring that the correct colored cloth is placed on the cross at the appropriate time according to the ecumenical calendar
- Ensuring that St Teresa of Calcutta School reflects a proper Christian appearance i.e. front foyer area
- Establishment of a committee given the great number of responsibilities which fall under liturgical. It is recognized that the input of a variety of volunteers enhances this mandate
- Liaising with the Parish Rep and at times, liaise directly with St. Matthew Parish on liturgical issues directly affecting the school and its’ celebrations

## **COUNCIL MEMBERS**

### **The members of the school council shall:**

- Participate in council meetings and all council led initiatives and events where able and appropriate;
- Participate in information and training programs;
- Be of good will working for the common good of the school community;
- 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;
- Attend meetings regularly;
- Support and promote the decisions reached by council;
- All members of the Catholic school council must be Catholic.
- Notwithstanding the above, in addition to the membership requirements of Ontario Regulation 330/10, provision may be made by a Catholic school council for the election of up to two (2) non-Catholic parents/guardians of Catholic children attending said school.
- The chair and/or co-chairs of the Catholic school council must be Catholic.

## **PRINCIPAL**

### **The principal of the school shall:**

- 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 council, as required;
- Ensure that copies of the minutes of the council's meetings are kept at the school;
- Assist the council in communicating with the school community;
- Encourage the participation of parents from all groups and of all interested people within the School community; Be responsible for organizing and conducting the first election enlisting the support of an elections committee; the counting of election ballots will be done by the principal/vice-principal;
- Have the election results published in the school's newsletter;
- Be responsible for making decisions on all appeals regarding the election process and procedures; The Halton Catholic District School Board shall be responsible through the appropriate Superintendent for making all final and binding decisions on any appeals not resolved at the principal level.

## **VACANCIES**

When a vacancy occurs among the parent representatives, the council shall notify the school community of the position and request volunteers. From the names received, the council shall appoint a replacement. When a vacancy occurs among the constituent representatives, the council shall notify the constituent body and request it select a replacement representative.

A replacement councillor shall serve only for the balance of the term of the councillor he/she is replacing. 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.