

POLICY: <u>CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCILS</u> # <u>907</u>		
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**A: POLICY**

1. 1.1 The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board believes that the total educational experience is enhanced through increased involvement between home, school, Church and community. Our schools deliver Catholic education in partnership with the family, the Church and the community to support learners in achieving the Catholic School Graduate Expectations.
- 1.2 It is the goal of the Board:
  - 1.2.1 to ensure that the distinct Catholic character of the system is fostered by positive, working links with the Church through its parishes and other organizational bodies in the community;
  - 1.2.2 to develop and sustain internal and external communication and consultative processes that:
    - inform all key partners within the Catholic education system;
    - assist parent/guardian involvement in their children's learning;
    - solicit partner input on key issues;
    - develop partnerships with other sectors of the community;
    - raise the profile of the Catholic school system in the community; and
  - 1.2.3 to develop an organizational structure that is functionally efficient and fosters participation throughout the organization.
- 1.3 The Board, therefore, directs that each school annually re-establish and maintain a Catholic School Council that will assist in realizing the goals of the Board and will provide a direct communication channel among home, school, Church and community.
- 1.4 The Catholic School Council will operate within the parameters established by the Ministry of Education Regulations 612/00 and 613/00, Board policies and the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board School Council Handbook.

**B: GUIDELINES**

**2. Purpose of the Catholic School Council**

- 2.1 The purpose of the Catholic School Council is, through the active participation of parents/guardians, to:
  - improve pupil achievement,
  - enhance the accountability of the Catholic education system to parents/ guardians, and
  - support and enhance the Catholic faith dimension of the school.
- 2.2 Working within the Board's mission statement, policies and goals, the Catholic School Council has the advisory authority to provide its members the opportunity and means to make recommendations to the Principal and the Board on any matter.

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### 3. **Membership Composition**

#### 3.1 **Parent/Guardian Members**

A majority of the members of the Catholic School Council shall be Catholic parent/guardian members elected by parents/guardians of students attending the school.

3.1.1 The number of parent/guardian members determined by this policy:

3.1.1.1 eight (8) parents/guardians; or

3.1.1.2 seven (7) parents/guardians if there is no student representative; or

3.1.1.3 the Catholic School Council's by-law, if the Catholic School Council has a by-law that specifies the number of parents/guardians.

#### 3.2 **Other Members**

The Catholic School Council shall include as members the following:

3.2.1 School Principal

The principal of the school.

3.2.2 Teacher

One teacher who is employed at the school, other than the principal or vice-principal, who is elected by the teaching staff of the school in exclusion of the principal or vice-principal;

3.2.3 Non-Teaching Staff

One non-teaching staff member who is employed at the school, other than the principal or vice-principal, who is elected by the non-teaching staff of the school in exclusion of the principal or vice-principal;

3.2.4 Student

3.2.4.1 Secondary

i) one pupil enrolled in the school who is appointed by the student council, if the school has a student council, or

ii) one pupil enrolled in the school who is elected if the school does not have a student council;

3.2.4.2 Elementary

One pupil enrolled in the school who is appointed by the principal of the school, if the principal determines, after consulting with the other

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members of Catholic School Council, that the Catholic School Council should include a pupil;

3.2.5 Catholic Church Representative

One Catholic Church Representative appointed by the other members of the Catholic School Council;

3.2.6 Community Representative

One community representative appointed by the other members of the Catholic School Council or more if designated by the Catholic School Council by-laws;

3.2.7 Association Representative

One person appointed by an association that is a member of the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education, if the association is established in the school.

3.3 **Employees and Members of the Board**

3.3.1 Member

A member of the Board of Trustees of the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board is not eligible to be a member of a Catholic School Council within the Board.

3.3.2 Employee

3.3.2.1 A board employee who works at the school that his/her child attends is not eligible to serve as a parent/guardian member of the Catholic School Council;

3.3.2.2 A board employee who works at the school that his/her child attends may be elected as either the teaching or non-teaching staff representative;

3.3.2.3 A board employee who does not work at the school his/her child attends may be elected as a parent/guardian member as long as he/she takes reasonable steps to notify the other parents/guardians that he/she is employed by the school board prior to the election;

3.3.2.4 A board employee who works at the school that his/her child attends is not eligible to serve as a community member of the Catholic School Council. If the individual is employed elsewhere by the Board, he/she must inform other Catholic School Council members of his/her employment prior to appointment.

3.4 **Officers**

3.4.1 The Catholic School Council shall have a chair or, if the by-laws of the council so provide, two co-chairs.

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- 3.4.2 A chair or co-chair of the Catholic School Council must be a parent/guardian member of the council and shall be elected by the members of the council.
- 3.4.3 The Catholic School Council may have such other officers as are provided for in the by-laws of the council.
- 3.4.4 An employee of the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board cannot serve as the Chair or Co-Chair of any Catholic School Council established within the Board.
- 3.4.5 Subject to Section 3, vacancies in the office of chair, co-chair, or any other officer of the Catholic School Council shall be filled in accordance with the by-laws of the council.

### 3.5 Elections

All election of members of the Catholic School Council shall be held during the first thirty (30) school days of each school year by secret ballot in accordance with Regulation 612.

### 3.6 Term of Office

- 3.6.1 A person elected or appointed as a member of the Catholic School Council holds office from the latter of:
  - 3.6.1.1 the date he/she is elected or appointed; and,
  - 3.6.1.2 the date of the first meeting of the Catholic School Council after the elections held in the school year,
 until the date of the first meeting of the Catholic School Council after the election is held at the beginning of the next school year.
- 3.6.2 A member of the Catholic School Council may be re-elected or re-appointed, unless otherwise provided by the by-laws of the council.

### 3.7 Vacancies

- 3.7.1 A vacancy in the membership of a Catholic School Council shall be filled, subject to Section 3, by election or appointment in accordance with the by-laws of the council.
- 3.7.2 If an election is held to fill a vacancy in the membership of a Catholic School Council Section 3 applies, with necessary modifications, to the election.
- 3.7.3 A vacancy in the membership of a Catholic School Council does not prevent the council from exercising its authority.

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### 3.8 **Committees**

3.8.1 The Catholic School Council may, in accordance with its by-laws, establish committees to make recommendations to the council.

3.8.2 Every committee of the Catholic School Council:

3.8.2.1 must include at least one parent/guardian member of the Catholic School Council;

3.8.2.2 may include persons who are not members of the Catholic School Council; and

3.8.2.3 shall conduct meetings in accordance with Section 8.4 and Section 10.2.

### 4. **Written Declarations**

All members of the Catholic School Council will be asked to sign a written declaration that they will support and promote the Board's mission statement and Catholic philosophy of education.

### 5. **Incorporation**

Catholic School Councils, established by the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board, shall not be incorporated.

### 6. **Remuneration**

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

6.2 The Board shall reimburse members and officers of the Catholic School Council for expenses they incur as members or officers of the council.

6.3 Reimbursement of expenses shall be in accordance with established Board procedures.

### 7. **Duties of the Board of Trustees and Board Administration**

7.1 The Board may collect and make available to the Ministry of Education the names, mailing addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of all members of the Catholic School Council, for the Ministry's purpose of consulting and communicating directly with members of councils.

7.2 The Board shall solicit the views of the Catholic School Councils with respect to the establishment or amendment of Board policies and guidelines that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents/guardians including:

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- 7.2.1 policies and guidelines established under Subsection 302(1) of the Education Act with respect to the conduct of persons in schools within the Board's jurisdiction;
  - 7.2.2 policies and guidelines established under Subsection 302(5) of the Education Act with respect to appropriate dress for pupils in schools within the Board's jurisdictions;
  - 7.2.3 policies and guidelines with respect to the allocation of funding by the Board to Catholic School Councils;
  - 7.2.4 policies and guidelines with respect to the fundraising activities of schools and Catholic School Councils;
  - 7.2.5 policies and guidelines with respect to conflict resolution processes for internal Catholic School Council disputes; and
  - 7.2.6 policies and guidelines with respect to reimbursement by the Board of expenses incurred by members and officers of Catholic School Councils.
- 7.3 The Board shall solicit the views of the Catholic School Councils with respect to the development of implementation plans for new education initiatives that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents/guardians, including:
- 7.3.1 implementation plans for policies and guidelines established under Subsection 302(1) of the Education Act with respect to the conduct of persons in schools within the Board's jurisdiction; and
  - 7.3.2 implementation plans for policies and guidelines established under Subsection 302(5) of the Education Act with respect to the appropriate dress for pupils in schools within the Board's jurisdiction.
- 7.4 The Board shall solicit the views of the Catholic School Councils with respect to 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.
- 7.5 The Board shall solicit the views of the Catholic School Councils with respect to the process and criteria applicable to the selection and placement of principals and vice-principals.
- 7.6 This policy does not limit the matters on which the Board may solicit the views of Catholic School Councils.
- 7.7 The Board shall consider each recommendation made to it by the Catholic School Council(s) and shall advise the council(s) of the action taken in response to the recommendation.

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## 8. **Duties of the Principal**

### 8.1 The Principal shall:

- 8.1.1 Distribute promptly to each Catholic School Council member, materials sent and identified by the Ministry or the Board as for distribution to the members of the Catholic School Council;
- 8.1.2 Post any materials distributed to members of the Catholic School Council in an area of the school that is accessible to all parents/guardians.
- 8.1.3 Make the names of the Catholic School Council members known to the parental community within thirty (30) school days following the election and/or appointment of parent/guardian members to the Catholic School Council;
- 8.1.4 Attend every meeting of the Catholic School Council other than for reasons of illness or unforeseen circumstance;
- 8.1.5 Act as a resource person to the Catholic School Council and assist the council in obtaining information (legislation, regulations and policies) relevant to the functions of the council; and
- 8.1.6 Consider each recommendation made by the Catholic School Council and advise the council of the action taken in response to the recommendation.

### 8.2 The Principal shall solicit the views of the Catholic School Council with respect to, but not limited to:

- 8.2.1 The establishment or amendment of school policies and guidelines that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents/guardians, including:
  - 8.2.1.1 a local code of conduct established under Subsection 303(1) or (2) of the Education Act governing the behaviour of all persons in the school; and
  - 8.2.1.2 school policies or guidelines related to policies and guidelines established by the Board under subsection 302(5) of the Education Act respecting appropriate dress for pupils in schools within the Board's jurisdiction.
- 8.2.2 The development of implementation plans for new education initiatives that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents/guardians, including:
  - 8.2.2.1 implementation plans for a local code of conduct established under Subsection 303(1) or (2) of the Education Act governing the behaviour of all persons in the school; and

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8.2.2.2 implementation plans for school policies or guidelines related to policies and guidelines established by the Board under Subsection 302(5) of the Education Act respecting appropriate dress for pupils in schools within the Board's jurisdiction.

8.2.3 School action plans for improvement based on Education Quality and Accountability Office's (EQAO) reports on test results of pupils, and the communication of these plans to the public.

8.3 With regards to the election of Catholic School Council members, the Principal shall:

8.3.1 Give written notice of the date, time and location of the election to every parent/guardian in the school at least fourteen (14) calendar days before the date of the election; and

8.3.2 Ensure that the newly elected Catholic School Council meet within the first thirty-five (35) school days of the school year after the elections are held on a date fixed by the principal.

8.4 The Principal shall give written notice to every parent/guardian of the school of the dates, times and locations of:

8.4.1 all Catholic School Council meetings; and

8.4.2 all Catholic School Council committee meetings.

8.5 The Principal shall, on behalf of the Catholic School Council, give a copy of the annual report to every parent/guardian of a pupil who, on the date the copy is given, is enrolled in the school.

8.6 Subject to Section 8.1, the Principal may delegate any of his or her powers or duties as a member of the Catholic School Council to a Vice-Principal of the school.

## 9. **Duties of the Catholic School Council**

9.1 The Catholic School Council shall consult with parents/guardians of pupils enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by the council.

9.2 The Catholic School Council shall make and maintain by-laws governing the conduct of its affairs, to which the following are mandatory:

9.2.1 A by-law that governs election procedures, subject to Section 3, and the filling of vacancies in the membership of the Catholic School Council;

9.2.2 A by-law that establishes rules respecting participation in Catholic School Council proceedings in cases of conflict of interest; and

9.2.3 A by-law that, in accordance with any applicable Board policies, establishes a conflict resolution process for internal Catholic School Council disputes.

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9.3 Every Catholic School Council shall submit annually a written report on its activities to the Principal of the school and to the Board not later than June 15<sup>th</sup>.

## 10. **Meetings**

### 10.1 Catholic School Council Meetings

10.1.1 The Catholic School Council shall meet at least four (4) times during the school year and:

10.1.1.1 hold its first meeting within the first thirty-five (35) school days of the school year, after the elections have been held, on a date fixed by the Principal of the school;

10.1.1.2 hold all meetings at a location that is open and accessible to the public; and

10.1.1.3 be entitled to hold its meetings at the school.

10.1.2 A meeting of the Catholic School Council cannot be held unless:

10.1.2.1 a majority of the current members of the Catholic School Council are present at the meeting;

10.1.2.2 a majority of the members present are parent/guardian members; and

10.1.2.3 the Principal or delegated Vice-Principal, subject to Section 8.1.4, is in attendance.

10.1.3 A meeting of the Catholic School Council does not include a training session or other event where the council does not discuss or decide matters that it has authority to decide.

### 10.2 Committee Meetings

10.2.1 A committee of the Catholic School Council shall:

10.2.1.1 hold all meetings at a location that is open and accessible to the public; and

10.2.1.2 be entitled to hold its meetings at the school.

### 10.3 Decision Making

10.3.1 It is intended that all decisions of the Catholic School Council and its committees be reached via consensus.

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10.3.2 In the event that consensus may not be obtained, a vote may be taken and the following shall apply:

10.3.2.1 each member of the Catholic School Council, other than the Principal, is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the council; and

10.3.2.2 each member of a Catholic School Council committee, other than the Principal, is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the committee.

#### 10.4 Minutes of Meetings

10.4.1 The Catholic School Council shall keep minutes of all of its meetings available at the school for examination without charge by any person for a period of four (4) years.

### 11. **Fundraising**

11.1 A Catholic School Council may engage in fundraising activities in accordance with Board Policy 709 - Participation in Fundraising Activities and is subject to the discretion and approval of the Principal, or the appropriate Senior Official in the case of a system wide activity, if applicable.

11.2 The Catholic School Council shall not engage in fundraising activities unless the council ensures:

11.2.1 the provisions of Section 11.1 of this policy are met; and

11.2.2 the funds raised by the Catholic School Council are used in accordance with any applicable Board policy.

11.3 If the Catholic School Council engages in fundraising, then the council shall:

11.3.1 include a report on those activities in the Catholic School Council's annual report, and

11.3.2 keep an accurate record of all of its financial transactions at the school for examination without charge by any person for a period of four (4) years.