



NIAGARA CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

"The Niagara Catholic District School Board, through the charisms of faith, social justice, support and leadership, nurtures an enriching Catholic learning community for all to reach their full potential and become living witnesses of Christ."

Niagara Catholic District School Board

Notre Dame Catholic Elementary School Council

By-Laws

Revised: September 2012

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL BY-LAWS

Everything that follows in these By-Laws for the Notre Dame Catholic Elementary School Council must be in keeping with Ontario Regulation 330/10 School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees, Ministry of Education: School Councils, A Guide for Members: www.edu.gov.on.ca and the Niagara Catholic District School Board Complaint Resolution Policy No. 800.3.

These Catholic School Council BY-LAWS must be in place within sixty (60) days of the school year and reviewed annually.

1. NAME OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

The name of this advisory body is “*Notre Dame Catholic Elementary School Council*”

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Catholic School Council, as an advisory body, through the active participation of parents is:

- to advocate and strengthen Catholic Education,
- to provide recommendations to the Board and/or Principal to improve student achievement and the well-being of all students,
- to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents, and
- to support the Mission Statement, Vision 2020 Statements, Strategic Directions and Enabling Strategies from the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan.

3. COMPOSITION (see Board Guideline section 3)

The Parents/Guardians of students who are enrolled at ND shall form the majority of the ND Catholic School Council to a maximum of thirty (30) members.

The membership shall be comprised of:

- Parents/Guardians of a students enrolled in the school
- A person is not qualified to be a parent member of the Catholic School Council if,
 - he/she is employed at the school; or
 - he/she is employed elsewhere by the Board and fails to take reasonable steps to inform persons qualified to vote of that employment.
- The Principal and/or Vice-Principal of the school, (non-voting member)
- One Teacher who is employed by the school,
- One non-teaching staff member who is employed by the school,
- A parish priest or representative from the local parish,
- One secondary student representative enrolled in the school, (if applicable)
- One elementary student representative enrolled in the school, (if applicable)
- One parent/guardian representative of a special needs child within the school, (if applicable)
- Community representation (as determined by the CSC)
- A school that is for adult students, students enrolled in the school may act as “parents” on a Catholic School Council.

4. ELECTIONS & TERM OF OFFICE

- Elections shall be held within the first thirty (30) calendar days of the start of the school year.
- The Principal shall at least fourteen (14) calendar days before the date of the election give written notice of the date, time, and location and availability of election forms to every parent who has a student enrolled at the school.
- Self-nominations are acceptable.
- The elections will be organized by the Principal and any outgoing council members to: review and finalize nominations, confirm names on ballots, run the election, and communicate the results.
- The election of parent members shall be by secret ballot.
- In order to encourage increased parent involvement and leadership it is recommended that a term for elected officer positions of the Catholic School Council will not exceed two (2) consecutive years.
- Names and addresses, and contact information of the Chairperson of the Catholic School Council shall be forwarded to the Director of Education within thirty (30) calendar days of the election.
- Names of Catholic School Council members will be published to the school community by the Principal no later than thirty (30) calendar days following the election.
- Members of the Catholic School Council will not receive an honorarium or payment for general expenses.

5. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS

The role of the Catholic School Council member carries with it certain responsibilities.

Catholic School Council Chairperson/Co-Chairperson (**voting members**) shall:

- Call Catholic School Council meetings in consultation with the Principal.
- Plan the agenda with the Principal.
- Chair the meetings.
- Ensure the minutes of the meeting are recorded, maintained, and submitted to the Principal for review.
- Participate as ex-officio members of all committees established by the Catholic School Council.
- Ensure that any views presented by the Chairperson represent the position of the Catholic School Council.

Parent Representatives (**voting members**) shall:

- Attend and participate in meetings.
- Solicit views of other parents and members of the community to share with the members.
- Participate in information and training sessions.
- Respond to requests from the Board.
- Observe the Catholic School Council's Code of Ethics and By-Laws.
- Maintain a school focus on all issues.

School Principal (**non-voting member**) shall:

- Facilitate the operation of the Catholic School Council.
- Attend every meeting or direct a designate.
- Plan the agenda and communicate with the Catholic School Council Chairperson.
- Support and promote the Catholic School Council.
- Seek input from the Catholic School Council.
- Act as a resource on laws, regulations, Board policies and collective agreements.
- Act as the secretary/treasurer.
- Prepare and present a report at each Catholic School Council meeting including a financial statement of the Catholic School Council.
- Ensure that copies of the approved minutes of the meetings are kept at the school and posted on the school website.

School Staff, Community, Student, Special Needs, and Parish Priest Representatives (**voting members**) shall:

- Contribute to the discussions of the Catholic School Council.
- Solicit views and report where applicable at each Catholic School Council meeting.

6. MEETING PROCEDURES

- Meetings will open with a prayer.
- The first meeting of the new school year, the Catholic School Council shall elect a parent/guardian to serve as Chairperson and may choose to elect a Co-Chairperson.
- The Catholic School Council shall meet a minimum of four (4) times during the school year.
- Catholic School Council meetings shall not proceed unless there is a quorum in attendance. A quorum is fifty percent plus one (50% + 1) of members, but at all times there must be a majority of parents at the meeting as well as the Principal and/or his or her designate.
- The Principal shall give written notice or post on the school website of the dates, times and location of the meetings of the Catholic School Council.
- Meetings will commence on time and not last more than 1 hour unless the members agree to a longer meeting.
- All meetings shall be held at the school and are open to ALL members of the school community.
- Substitutes or proxies are not permitted.
- The Principal will make every effort to distribute the agenda to members in advance.
- Minutes of the Catholic School Council meeting are to be recorded and maintained at the school site, posted on the school website, and made available at the office of the school.
- The Catholic School Council may establish committees to carry out specific functions but at least one parent member must be on the committee.
- Consensus shall be the usual method for developing recommendations and plans. If voting becomes necessary, a simple majority will be sufficient for a vote on any issue.

7. VACANCIES

- The expectation of Notre Dame Catholic Elementary School Council is for members to attend meetings regularly. The Chairperson and Principal shall address incidents of member's irregular attendance to determine the member's intent or ability to continue serving on the Catholic School Council.
- There will be no discretionary removal of a duly elected or appointed Catholic School Council member before the end of his or her term.
- If a vacancy of a parent member occurs, and only if this vacancy changes the simple majority of parents, notification will be given to all families and interested parents will be asked to submit their names to the Principal.
- If a vacancy of a community representative occurs, the Catholic School Council may request that the agency appoint another member, may choose a different organization, or, choose not to fill the position.
- If a student, teacher or non-teaching representative vacancy occurs, the Principal shall arrange for a replacement where possible.
- Individuals filling a vacated position shall hold the position until the term for that position expires.
- A vacancy in the membership of Catholic School Council does not prevent the Catholic School Council from exercising its authority to fill the position.

8. CODE OF ETHICS

A member shall:

- Consider the best interest of all students.
- Be guided by the Mission Statements of the Board and school.
- Become familiar with the Education Act according to school and Board guidelines, and Ministry of Education Regulations.
- Maintain the highest standards of integrity, recognizing and respecting the personal integrity of each member of the school community.
- Treat all other Catholic School Council members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared, without interruption.
- Create a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
- Acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the Catholic School Council for recommendation to the Principal.
- Respect the confidential nature of some school business, respect the limitations this places on the operation of the Catholic School Council, and not disclose confidential information.
- Focus discussions at Catholic School Council meetings to those items that fall within the mandate of Catholic School Councils.
- Use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise.
- Promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community.
- Not accept any payment for their Catholic School Council involvement.
- Refrain from making any negative statements about any individual or groups.
- Declare any conflict of interest.

10. DELEGATIONS

- Individuals may approach the Chairperson or the Principal to be placed on the agenda. This request must be in writing and received at least two (2) weeks before the meeting.
- The Chairperson, in consultation with the Principal, may approve or deny such requests.
- Delegations will be limited to ten (10) minutes.

11. RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS

If the Principal, after discussion with the Catholic School Council Chairperson, determines that the Catholic School Council or any of its members have contravened Regulation 330/10 or Board Policy 800.1, the Principal or Chairperson will discuss the matter with the Family of Schools' Superintendent of Education. Please see the Complaint Resolution Policy No. 800.3.

Conflict Resolution Process (adapted from School Councils-A Guide for Members)

- If a member becomes disruptive during a meeting, the Chairperson shall ask for order.
- If all efforts to restore order fail or the unbecoming behaviour continues, the Chairperson may direct the individual Catholic School Council member to leave the meeting, citing reasons for the request.
- The removal of member for one meeting does not prevent the member from participating in future meetings of the Catholic School Council.
- The incident shall be recorded and submitted to the appointed Superintendent of Education by the Principal within one week of the meeting.
- It is recommended that parties involved in the conflict follow the Board's Complaint Resolution Policy No. 800.3.
- Upon removal of a member, a special meeting shall be called, the purpose of which will be to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution to the dispute.
- Such a meeting shall be a private meeting and not construed as a meeting of the Catholic School Council.
- Any resolution reached at the meeting to resolve the conflict shall be signed and respected in full by all parties to the agreement.

12. FUNDRAISING

- Fundraising activities may be conducted as long as they are in accordance with Board policies and guidelines.
- Funds raised are to be used for a purpose recommended by the Catholic School Council and approved by the Board and/or Principal.
- Any funds and assets generated through fundraising activities assisted by the Catholic School Council are the property of the Board.
- All fundraising activities conducted by the Catholic School Council must be included in the annual report prepared by the Catholic School Council.

13. ANNUAL REPORT

- The Catholic School Council shall submit an annual written report on its activities to the Principal of the school and to the Board (Appendix A).