CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

School: _____

Principal: _____

Revision Dates

YCDSB CONSTITUTION

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All York Catholic District Schools are expected to review the Constitution at the first meeting after Catholic School Council elections.

YCDSB CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

The education of our children is a shared responsibility which involves the schools, students and their families and the Church. The main goal of [ ] Catholic School Council is to “promote the best interests of the School Community”. This Constitution and the following By-laws are drafted in accordance with the Education Act and Regulations.

The [ ] Catholic School Council operating as an advisory council will strive to provide an opportunity to build community, strengthen the home/school/parish partnership and work together as a community of believers committed to putting the values of our faith into practice in the education of our children.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this Catholic School Council is the [ ] Catholic School Council, hereinafter referred to as the “Council”.

ARTICLE II - COUNCIL GOALS

The purpose of school councils is, through active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents [O.Reg. 612/00, S. 2(1)].

A school council’s primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations in accordance with Ontario Regulation 612/00 to the principal of the school and the Board that established the council [O. Reg. 612/00, s. 2(2)].

Council members are to maintain a school-wide focus on all issues. Council meetings are not a forum of discussion about individual parents, students, staff, Trustees or other council members.

The Council will work within the policies, mission statement and goals of the school, the York Catholic District School Board (Board), hereinafter referred to as the “Board”, and the Education Act and Regulations. Council is an advisory body. The Council will provide advice to the school principal, and where appropriate, to the school board on matters such as:

- development/promotion of faith community;
- local school calendar of events;
- school code of conduct behaviour;
- student dress code;
- recruitment of school volunteers;
- parent engagement opportunities;
- curriculum and program goals and priorities;
- the process and criteria applicable to the selection and placement of principals and vice-principals;

- school budget priorities, including local capital-improvement plans;
- school-community communication strategies;
- school-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational and nutrition programs;
- local co-ordination of services for children and youth;
- development, implementation, and review of board policies at the local level;
- learning partnerships;
- corporate sponsorships within the parameters established by the Board.

ARTICLE III - COMPOSITION

SCHOOL COUNCIL

(a) All members on a Council are valued and equal partners. Each elected or appointed member receives one vote.
  (i) The principal does not participate in votes taken by the school council or by a committee of the school council.
  (ii) If more than one Parish Representative is designated from the affiliated Parishes, it must be understood that only one vote is allocated to this position.

(b) The Board encourages all Councils to have student representation.

(c) A school council shall be composed of the following people:
  (i) Parent members shall be elected by Parents and Guardians of students enrolled in the school;
  (ii) In the case of a school with one or more secondary school grades, one pupil enrolled in the school who is appointed by the student council, if the school has a student council, or one pupil enrolled in the school who is elected in accordance with section 5 of Ontario Regulation 612/00, if the school does not have a student council. In the case of a school with no secondary school grades, one pupil enrolled in the school who is appointed by the principal of the school, if the principal determines, after consulting with other members of the school council, that the council should include a pupil.
  (iii) One teacher who is employed at the school, other than the principal or vice-principal.
  (iv) One person who is employed at the school, other than the principal, vice-principal or any other teacher (i.e.: Secretaries, Custodian Educational Assistants, Educational Intervenors, Designated Early Childhood Educators, Lunchtime Supervisors, Office Support Workers);
  (v) One School Community representative shall be appointed by the Catholic School Council;
  (vi) One Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE) representative if the school council elects to be a member of OAPCE and pays the applicable membership fee directly to OAPCE. The designated OAPCE representative shall be a Catholic Parent/Guardian of a student currently enrolled in the school as per the OAPCE By-Laws;
  (vii) Parish Representative(s) designated by the Parish or Parishes affiliated with the school;

(viii) The Principal shall be a designated, non-voting member.

(d) Parent/Guardian(s) shall form the majority of members of the Council.

(e) The Principal will communicate with the Pastor of the Parish or Parishes affiliated with the school to confirm a Parish Representative who will be designated as a member of the Council. In a situation where a school is affiliated with more than one Parish, representation must be sought from all Parishes concerned. If more than one Parish Representative is designated from the affiliated Parishes, it must be understood that only one vote is allocated to this position.

(f) A person is not qualified to be a parent member of the Council if they are employed at the school their child attends, and may only be elected as either the teaching or non-teaching staff representative (i.e.: An Office Support Worker is a Board employee, part of a Union and has a permanent position. Therefore, this person would qualify for election only as a non-teaching representative).

(g) A person who fulfills a staff's absence on an emergency basis but is not a certified teacher of the Board and is not part of a Union nor holds a permanent position, may be elected to the Council as a parent member.

(h) A parent, who is employed by the board but does not work at the school their children attend, may be elected as a parent member as long as they declare to other parents that they are employed by the school board prior to their election. This information shall be recorded in the minutes of the first Council meeting.

(i) A person elected or appointed as a member of a school council holds office from the later of, the date he or she is elected or appointed; and the date of the first meeting of the school council after the elections held in the school year, until the date of the first meeting of the school council after the elections held in the next school year.

A member of a school council may be re-elected or reappointed, unless otherwise provided by the by-laws of the council.

The membership of a Council shall not exceed 25 persons. The maximum number of parent members shall be 18. If there is no student representative, the maximum number of parent members shall be 19.

In the event that the number of voting parent members (including OAPCE representatives), does not constitute a majority of the Council, the composition of voting non-parent members will be adjusted in consultation with the appropriate Superintendent.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

The Officers of the Council shall be the Chair/Co-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Past Chair(s) and such other Officers as Council deems are required to carry out the activities of the Council. All Officers of the Council shall be parents/guardians of students in the school. No person shall hold more than one office in any given school year. The members shall elect from the established Catholic School Council, the Officers of the Council at the first council meeting.

SECTION I STRUCTURE OF COUNCIL

1.1 Elections

An election of parent members of a school council shall be held during the first 30 days of each school year, on a date that is fixed by the chair or co-chairs of the school council after consulting with the principal of the school. The principal of a school shall, at least 14 days before the date of the election of parent members, on behalf of the school council, give written notice of the date and time of and the location or means to access the election to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school. The written notice shall be delivered to the parent by email or by electronic means and by posting the notice on the school's website.

The election of parent members of a school council shall be held in person, at a location accessible to all members of the school community. If for any reason a nominated parent cannot attend the election, the parent member must provide a reason and notify the Principal of the school one week prior to the election.

The Principal shall:

- provide nomination forms;
- At least 14 days before the date of the election of parent members, on behalf of the school council, give written notice of the date and time of the location or means to access the election to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school;
- Request a profile from all candidates and make these available to the electorate;
- Conduct the elections by secret ballot;
- Count the ballots;
- Notify all individuals standing for election of the results before the results are released to the school community.
- Release the names of successful candidates on the school website. A list of candidates and the vote results will be kept on file for use in the event of vacancy on the council.

The council of the previous year will remain established until the new council is formed.

The election procedure shall be as follows:

(a) The Principal shall prepare and distribute ballots to all parents attending the Election Meeting, including all candidates. Each ballot shall contain a list of all the candidates.

(b) The election shall be by secret ballot cast by parents present at the Election Meeting.

(c) Ballots shall be counted by the Principal in a public process.
(d) If there is a tie in the number of votes between two (2) or more candidates, the tie will be broken by the Principal drawing the names of the tied candidates until all of the Parent Member positions are filled.
(e) The Principal shall announce the names of those elected as Parent Members at the Election Meeting.
(f) All ballots and related information shall be retained by the Principal for one (1) year and shall be kept confidential.

1.2 Term of Office

At the first election of the properly constituted Council, newly elected members of Council shall be elected for a term of one (1) year, from the date they are elected or appointed until the date of the first meeting of the School Council after the elections held in the next school year.

A member of the School Council may be re-elected or re-appointed for additional terms.

1.3 Meetings

The first meeting of the newly elected members of Council shall take place in person within the first 35 calendar days of the school year, after the elections held and on a date fixed by the principal of the school. The Council shall hold a minimum of four (4) meetings per year and shall be held either in person, at a location that is accessible to the public, and/or by electronic or telephonic means.

A member of a school council who participates in a meeting through electronic or telephonic means shall be deemed to be present at the meeting.

All meetings of a school council shall be open to the public. The principal of the school shall, on behalf of the school council, give written notice of the date and time of and the location or means to access each meeting of the council to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school. The notice will be given to the parent by email or by other electronic means and by posting the notice on the school's website. The Council may choose to stream their meetings to the public.

The school community may be invited to provide input to the Council. In its role as an Advisory body, it is the responsibility of the Council to come to a final decision/position with respect to the issue/topic being addressed. The Principal of a school shall consider each recommendation made to the Principal by the school council and shall advise the council of the action taken in response to the recommendation.

1.4 Quorum

A meeting cannot be held unless quorum is met. Members are encouraged to notify the Principal and/or Chair if they will be absent in order for meetings to be rescheduled in a timely manner if quorum is not met.

A meeting of the council cannot be held unless,

(a) a majority of the current members of the council are present at the meeting; and
(b) a majority of the members of the council who are present at the meeting are parent members.

1.5 Voting and Decision Making

Each member of the Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the Council. Each member of a committee of the School Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the committee. If there is a student member, they can vote and must count towards quorum. If a student member leaves early it is the obligation of the Principal/Chair to check that quorum still remains.

The principal is not entitled to vote in votes taken by the School Council or by a committee of the School Council. If more than one Parish Representative is designated from the affiliated Parishes, it must be understood that only one vote is allocated to this position.

1.6 Vacancies

If any elected position becomes vacant, the Council shall appoint the necessary number of eligible person(s) to serve the balance of the term of office. First consideration of appointees shall be given to any unsuccessful candidate(s) who ran in the last election, in order of finish, followed by outreach strategies. If the appointment fails to fill all positions, the Council shall proceed to operate as long as a parent/guardian majority exists.

A vacancy in the membership of the School Council does not prevent the Council from exercising its authority.

1.7 Attendance

Council members shall make every effort to attend meetings. Council members who find they are unable to attend meetings on a regular basis, shall be asked to reconsider their commitment. Notice in writing shall be sent to any Council member who has missed three (3) consecutive meetings to reconsider their commitment and position as council members.

1.8 Consultation

The Council shall communicate regularly with parents/guardians and other members of the School Community to seek their views and preferences with regard to matters being addressed by the Council so that these are reflected in the advice the Council provides to the school Principal, to the Board and to the Ministry.

1.9 Consultation by the Board

In addition to its other obligations to solicit the views of Councils under this act, the Board is obliged to solicit the views of the council with respect to the matters outlined under section 19 of O. Reg 612/00.

1.10 Minutes and Financial Records

a) A council shall keep minutes of all of its meetings and records of all of its financial transactions.
b) The minutes of the Council meetings and records of financial transactions shall be accessible by any person at the school for examination.
c) The recorded minutes of all the Council meetings and records financial transactions shall be submitted to the Principal of the school.
d) Accurate accounting shall be maintained by the Principal and the Treasurer of the Council to comply with the requirement of accountability and transparency to the school community.
e) (a) and (b) do not apply to minutes and records that are more than four (4) years old.

1.11 Annual "Year-End" Report

The School Council shall annually submit a written report on its activities to the principal and to the Board by September 20th each year. This report will include a report from all committees, including all fundraising activities. Councils should use the template provided here by the Board. The report will be made available to the entire school community by delivering the notice to the parent by email or by other electronic means and by posting the notice on the school's website.

SECTION II - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

2.1 Chair/Co-Chair

The Chair/Co-Chair of the Council shall:

- New members to the Council Executive should attend the Council Orientation Workshop offered by the York Catholic Parent Involvement Committee held annually in the Fall
- Prepare, in concert with the Principal, the agenda for Catholic School Council, Executive or Subcommittee meetings
- Chair Council meetings
- Ensure that the minutes of Council, Executive or Subcommittee meetings are recorded, maintained and kept for four years

- Participate in information and training programs
- Communicate with the school Principal as required
- Ensure that there is regular communication with the school community posted on the Council section of the school website
- Consult with senior board staff and Trustees, as required, and submit annually a written report of the Council activities to the Principal and the Board. This Year-End Report will be posted on the school website
- Respect the confidentiality of all information that may be received regarding any pupils or staff while being a volunteer and/or Council member and refrain from releasing that information to any person in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

2.2 Secretary

The Secretary of the Council shall:

- Ensure that the minutes of the Council meetings are recorded and retained for a minimum of four years
- Keep a record of the proceedings of all other Council meetings (i.e.: Executive or Sub-Committee meetings) for a minimum of four years
- Attend to all official correspondence and communication, posting of notices and filing of records as directed by the Council in collaboration with the Chair and Principal, and in accordance with Board policies and procedures.

In the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair at meetings of Council, the Secretary shall call the meeting to order and preside until the Council elects an acting Chair for that meeting.

2.3 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- Entrusted with the receipt, care and management of all Council funds in accordance with Board policies and procedures
- Prepare all deposits and ensure that they are signed by both the Treasurer and Chair or Co-Chair
- Ensure that all deposits are prepared by a minimum of two (2) Council members, one being the Treasurer, to confirm deposit amounts
- Prepare all documentation for the payment of invoices authorized by the Council
- Provide an account of all transactions and a current financial statement (budget vs. actual analysis) at regular Council meetings, or whenever required
- Ensure that all financial records of the Council remain at the School and are available for audit purposes
- Prepare a full Financial Statement prior to the Council's Annual General Meeting
- Develop budget proposals based on Council approved expenditures
- Retain all financial records for four years.

A full financial statement of the Council year shall be prepared by the Treasurer and presented at the AGM.

2.4 Principal

The Principal of the school shall:

- Give written notice of the date and time of and the location or means to access each meeting of the council.
- facilitate the establishment of the Council and assist in its operation;
- support and promote council's activities that are consistent with the board's Policy 606, *Catholic School Councils;*
- 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 all parents/guardians and of other people within the community;
- assist the Chair in developing the agendas;
- perform the duties as outlined in Ontario Regulation 613 - Operation of Schools.

2.5 Council Members

The members of the Council shall:

- Provide informed advice to the Principal on matters related to student achievement, well-being and continuous school improvement
- Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues
- Participate in Council meetings
- Participate in information and training programs
- Act as a link between the Council and the school community
- Encourage the participation of all Parent/Guardian(s) and of other people within the school community
- Respect the confidentiality of all information that may be received regarding any pupils or staff while being a volunteer and/or Council member and refrain from releasing that information to any person in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

SECTION III - COMMITTEES

The Council shall make appointments to such Standing Committees of the Council (committees which exist year after year and meet regularly) and Ad Hoc Committees of the Council (committees appointed to deal with a specific issue, report on it and then are disbanded) as may be required to carry on the activities of the Council and shall, where possible, appoint a Chair of each such committee from among the Council members. Committee membership shall be drawn from the members of the School Community. The Chair of the Council and the Principal, or their designate, shall be members of each Standing and Ad Hoc Committee. All Committees shall report to the Council to obtain final approval of the committee's recommendations.

BY-LAWS

SECTION IV - CONFLICT OF INTEREST & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

In accordance with section 15 (2) of Ontario Regulation 612/00, every school council shall make a by-law that establishes rules respecting participation in school council proceedings in cases of conflict of interest and establish a conflict resolution process for internal school council disputes.

Pursuant to Section 3.1.18 of *Policy 606 Catholic School Councils*, the York Catholic District School Board reserves the right to disband a Council in the event of a conflict that cannot be resolved, and/or behaviour contrary to the Council's role and responsibilities.

SECTION V - FUNDS

All fundraising activities shall be conducted in accordance with Board Policies and Guidelines (Policy 603A *School Fundraising*, Policy 603B *Fundraising for External Charitable Purposes* and Policy 803 *School Generated Funds)*.

a) Funds raised are to be used for a purpose approved by the Board and/or Principal. Catholic School Councils shall ensure that Council funds and school resources are not used to promote a particular viewpoint.
b) Any funds and assets generated through fundraising activities assisted by the Council are the property of the Board.

SECTION VI - EXPENDITURES

All Council funds shall be held in the school bank account in designated Council subledgers.

In exceptional circumstances, where the Council has their own bank account, the Chair and Treasurer shall have cheque signing authority on the Council bank account, with only the aforementioned signatures necessary to validate cheques.

Expenditures shall be defined as money outlay without expectation of monetary return.

Expenditures for events wholly or partially funded by the Council are to be presented in budget form for approval by the Council.

Receipts must be furnished for all expenditures.

General count of money must be done by two people at the same time.

All fundraising activities must be in accordance with Board Policy 603A and 603B on FundRaising.

The Council shall not operate in a deficit.

The year-end balance of the Council sub-ledger account shall be kept to provide for a sufficient operating balance to initiate Council activities in the following school year.

SECTION VII - AUDITORS

The Council shall arrange for an independent review of its books and records by a trusted member of the school community at the end of Council's term if a major, Board approved fundraiser has taken place during the term (built into the sub-ledger oversight of the school Board).

SECTION VIII - REMUNERATION

There will be no honorarium paid to members of the Council. A person shall not receive any remuneration for serving as a member. Reimbursement for expenses incurred as members of the School Council shall be in accordance with relevant procedures established by the Board and Section VII above.

SECTION IX - DISSOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL

The York Catholic District School Board reserves the right to disband a Catholic School Council in the event of a conflict that cannot be resolved, and/or behaviour contrary to the Council's role and responsibilities. Elections to reconstitute a new Council will be held in accordance with Ontario Regulation 612/00.

SECTION X - AMENDMENTS

The Constitution and the By-Laws of the Council may only be amended by the York Catholic District School Board.

Appendix A

[ ] CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

NOTICE OF ELECTION

Catholic School Council members have a special commitment to their school. They demonstrate enthusiasm, a desire to make a difference and a willingness to contribute in a meaningful way to strengthen the partnership between school, home and parish.

If you would like to put your name forward and become an active participant in your child's education, please call the school office at [ ] for a declaration package. It may be sent home with your child, or you may choose to pick up a package in the main office. Successful candidates will hold their elected position for a term of one year and will be expected to attend the monthly meetings. We as parents can make a difference to our children's education. Being a member of council provides us with an opportunity to make recommendations to the school, the school board and interact with other parents and staff. No one is singularly responsible for decisions. A representation of parents who reflect the diversity of our school population is needed.

Deadline for submission of nomination forms:

Communications of candidate's names to the school community:

Election Day:

First council meeting:

[ ] CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL
NOMINATION FORM

Please fill in the appropriate section below to declare your candidacy, or to nominate someone else, for an elected position as a parent member on the [ ] Catholic School Council.

☐ I wish to declare my candidacy for an elected position as parent/guardian representative on the school council.

☐ I wish to nominate _____ for an elected position as parent/guardian representative on the school council.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Business phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

I am the parent/guardian of _____ who is currently registered at this school.

I am an employee of the board: ☐ yes ☐ no

The person I have nominated is the parent/guardian of _____ who is currently registered at the school.

The person I have nominated is an employee of the board: ☐ yes ☐ no

Please include a brief bio of yourself or the candidate you have nominated which will be published for election purposes:
e.g. occupation, background, interests, volunteer work

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Return this form to the school office by _____

You will be notified when your nomination has been received.