

**Toronto Catholic District School Board**  
**Blessed Sacrament Catholic School Parent Council**  
**Bylaw**

**Name:** The name shall be *Blessed Sacrament Catholic School Parent Council*, herein referred to as “**The Council.**”

**Purpose:**

In the spirit of the Mission and Vision Statements of the Toronto Catholic District School Board, The Council shall function in an advisory role to enrich, enhance and improve student education and achievement. As well, The Council will enhance the accountability of the education system to parents by making recommendations to the Principal and, where appropriate, the Board on any matter in accordance with the Education Act and the Policies, Guidelines and Operating Procedures of the Board.

**Governance:**

The *Education Act*, Ontario Regulation 612/00 and Regulation 298 together address the purpose of the school councils, operational matters and the obligation of boards and principals concerning school councils. The Ontario Ministry of Education created the “School Councils, a guide for Members” document as well as Toronto Public School Board’s “Parent Involvement Advisory Committee.”

**Code of Ethics:**

The code addresses the matters such as boundaries of the role and responsibilities of The Council, conflict of interest and the manner in which members are expected to interact, in preserving democratic principles and minimizing and/or managing conflict.

**A member shall:**

- consider the best interest of all students
- be guided by the school’s and the board’s mission statements
- act within the roles and responsibilities of the school council, the board and the Ontario Ministry of Education
- become familiar with the school policies and operation practices and act in accordance with them
- maintain the highest standard of integrity
- recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community
- treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption
- encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued
- acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the council
- respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitation that may place on the operation of the council
- limit discussions at The Council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole
- not disclose confidential information
- use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise
- promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community
- not accept any payment or benefit financially through The Council involvement
- declare any conflict of interest

## **1. THE COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

The Council will consist of the following members:

- parent members, of which, are the majority
- the principal or vice principal
- one teacher employed in the school other than the principal or vice principal, elected by the teachers
- one non-teaching employee of the school
- one or more community representatives, up to 3, appointed by the elected council
- one person appointed by an association that is a member of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education, or the Parents Partenaires en Education, if the association is represented at the school
- a Pastor or parish representative
- one person, where possible, who has a special interest in Special Education

## **2. THE COUNCIL STRUCTURE**

### **2.1 Elected Voting Members**

- parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school. The minimum number of elected and/or appointed council members that are parents/guardians must be 7, and must not exceed a maximum of 9. Parents must form the majority of The Council membership.
- a teaching staff, elected by teachers employed at the school
- a non-teaching staff representative, other than principal or vice principal, elected by persons other than the principal, vice principal or any other teacher employed by the school.

### **2.2 Appointed Voting Members**

- the Pastor or parish designate
- one or more, up to 3, community representatives
- one person to act as a liaison with the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE T.O.). The school is affiliated with the association by virtue of the Board membership.
- one person, where possible, who has a special interest in Special Education.

### **2.3 Non-Voting Members**

- the principal or vice principal
- the school's trustee and Superintendent of Education
- ex officio members of the Council

### **2.4 Other**

- school board trustees are not eligible to be council members
- if a parent member is a board employee, disclosure must be provided. This person cannot serve as chair or co-chair.

While any parent can and is encouraged to attend and participate in school council discussions, only elected members may vote on matters before The Council.

### **3. THE COUNCIL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All Council members have the following responsibilities:

- attend and participate in meetings of The Council and activities of The Council
- act as a link between The Council and the school community
- encourage others within the school community to participate in the activities of Council, and work towards removing barriers to the participation of all members of the school community
- hold at least 6 meetings/year, including the Annual General Meeting
- coordinate parent-led school fundraising initiatives throughout the school year and ensure that each fundraising dollar is invested prudently and disbursed effectively, for the benefit of all students at Blessed Sacrament
- all parent-led fundraising initiatives and parent-led committees must include at least one parent member of the Council in addition to persons not on council.

#### **3.1 CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

A conflict of interest is any situation in which the individual's private interests may be incompatible or in conflict with his or her school council responsibilities.

- each Council member shall avoid situations that could result in an inconsistency between the overall goals and vision of The Council and a personal or vested interest, that arise in connection with her or his duties as a school council member, and;
- any time The Council does business with the potential for monetary gain/loss with any person, agency or company, and a member of the council has a vested interest in any way with that particular person, agency or company, that member shall declare a conflict of interest and shall not discuss or vote on any situation relating to the matter.

#### **3.2 REMUNERATION**

Members will not be paid for their work on The Council but can be reimbursed for expenses incurred as part of Council business.

#### **3.3 COUNCIL MEMBER ROLES**

##### **3.31 Chair or Co-Chairs (Executive position)**

- arranges meetings
- prepares agendas
- chairs council meetings
- ensures that minutes of council meetings are recorded and maintained
- facilitates the resolution of conflict
- participates as ex-officio member of all committees established by The Council
- communicates with the school principal on behalf of The Council
- prepares and presents the annual report

##### **3.32 Secretary (Executive position)**

- keeps minutes of meetings of The Council or arranges for minutes to be kept, if unable to attend a meeting

- maintains a complete set of minutes of meetings, Bylaws and any policies passed by The Council or school community. A set of these materials shall be available at the school for examination by any person without charge
- helps facilitate communication of information from The Council to the school community
- ensures that agendas and minutes are posted in the school and on-line in an area accessible to the school community
- assists in the preparation of the annual report

### **3.33 Treasurer (Executive position)**

- maintains the financial records of The Council
- makes regular reports to The Council and the school community regarding financial matters related to the business of The Council
- chairs the Budget Committee (if appropriate), which may consist of Council members and members of the general parent community

### **3.34 Principal**

- acts as an important source of information re: Education Act, regulations, ministry directives, laws, school policies, board policies, school improvement plans and other new initiatives.
- receives and responds to The Council recommendations
- attends The Council meetings
- delegates authority
- ensures The Council is in place and active
- works collaboratively with The Council to move forward on goals and shared purposes
- publishes names of The Council members no later than 30 days following the election
- notifies the community of the date, time and location of the council elections 10 days prior to election date, the results of the election, the dates time and locations of all regular meetings, the annual school council report

### **3.35 School Staff representatives (teaching and non-teaching staff)**

- contributes to the discussions of The Council
- solicits views from the staff groups to share with The Council
- participates on any committees established by The Council (if appropriate)
- communicates information back to their staff groups

### **3.36 Parent Representatives**

- participate on any committees established by The Council
- contribute to the discussions of The Council
- solicit the views of other parents and members of the community to share with The Council

## **4. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

### **4.1 ELECTIONS**

Elections must be held annually within 30 days of the start of the school year.

Prior to Elections, all prospective Nominees will be informed on council expectations via letter.

## **Election of The Council Executive**

An Election Committee is determined before the start of the school year prior to elections. The Election Committee's responsibilities include:

- ensuring that the school community is notified of election procedures, election date(s), location, and time, at least ten days in advance of the election.
- distributing the nominee letter to all prospective candidates
- informing nominees that they require endorsements of 2 standing parent members of The Council
- ensuring that nomination forms given to the principal and/or the Election Committee to be made available to the school community.
- informing nominees that they must prepare a brief summary of themselves and what they can contribute to The Council, and present that summary at the Annual General Meeting
- providing secret ballots, if required
- counting completed ballots, if required
- helping the principal notify all candidates of the results, if required
- keeping all voting results and related information confidential

In addition, the Election Committee will ensure that the following election protocols are followed:

- if the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of parent member positions, then the Election Committee can do a ballot vote by show of hands. If the total number of those running is more than the number of positions vacant, then elections shall be conducted by secret written ballot.
- casting more than the maximum number of votes permitted in the category shall constitute a spoiled ballot
- if there is a tie for the final position for a representative on the School Council, the winner shall be decided by lot.
- appeals related to The Council election process or results shall be resolved by the Election Committee. If the situation is not resolved, the principal and the chair of the outgoing council shall jointly make a ruling.

Following election of The Council, Council members will elect from amongst their ranks the following Executive positions: Chair (or Co-Chairs), Secretary, and Treasurer.

Where there is more than one person standing for election to a specific position on the Executive Committee, the election will take place by secret ballot. Where only one person is standing for election to a specific position, the individual will be elected by acclamation. An individual may be nominated for subsequent positions if they are not successfully elected to a previous position.

### **4.2 Election of the teaching staff representative**

- the principal, in consultation with the election committee, will make the necessary arrangements for the teaching staff representative to be elected
- anyone assigned to the teaching staff of the school (full or part-time) other than the principal or a vice principal may be a candidate

#### **4.3 Election of the non-teaching staff representative**

- the principal, in consultation with the Election Committee, will make the necessary arrangements for the non-teaching staff representative to be elected
- anyone assigned to the non-teaching staff of the school (full or part-time) may be a candidate

#### **4.4 Selection of community representatives:**

- all appointments of community representatives to The Council are to be by majority vote at a meeting of the new Council members

#### **TERMS OF OFFICE**

All elected members are committed to a minimum two-year term and may be elected/appointed for up to three consecutive two-year terms. When no other Council member is willing to serve in an Executive position, the member who has already held the position for the maximum term may be appointed by the Council for up to 3 additional one-year terms.

#### **4.5 FILLING VACANCIES**

Should an elected Council position become vacant prior to the next election, The Council shall fill the vacancy by appointment from remaining council members (as long as parent majority remains) or elect a new member from either the non-elected candidates from the previous election or by request for interested parents from the community. The interested parents can submit their names for consideration. The Council shall decide who fills the vacancy. If a new member is appointed, their term shall expire at the time of the next election.

#### **5.0 THE COUNCIL MEETINGS**

The principal shall, on behalf of The Council, give written notice of the dates, times and locations of the council meetings to every parent/guardian.

- council meetings shall be chaired by one of the chair or co-chairs
- each elected member of The Council shall have a vote at council meetings
- quorum for a council meeting is 50% plus one of voting council members (selected or appointed members do not have a vote). A meeting may proceed in the absence of quorum, but no decisions may be made.
- an agenda for the meeting shall be circulated prior to or at the meeting. Items for the agenda shall be sent to the chair / co-chairs 5 days prior to the meeting.
- if any Council member cannot attend a meeting, they should send their regrets in advance
- if a Council member fails to attend three consecutive meetings without communicating a good reason, they shall be deemed to have resigned
- all meetings of The Council shall be conducted in a collaborative and consensus-oriented approach, embracing an informal decision-making process that is both approachable and effective, except in the case of spending/financial decisions or if a contentious or conflict arises. In the case of spending/financial decisions and when dealing with any conflicts, The Council will move to using the most recently published Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, except as may be otherwise stipulated in these bylaws and Ontario Regulation 612/00.
- wherever feasible, The Council members will try to reach a consensus in decision-making
- motions are carried by The Council when there is quorum, and a majority of parent members of The Council approve the motion
- all meetings of The Council are open to the community
- additional general meetings may take place through the school year as determined by The Council

## **6.0 FUNDRAISING AND FINANCES**

### **6.1 FUNDRAISING**

#### **Policy:**

The Toronto Catholic District School Board permits fundraising to be undertaken by its schools. All fundraising activities shall be related to charitable, humanitarian, educational, or service activities consistent with the tenets of Catholicism.

#### **Regulations:**

1. All fundraising shall be carried out under the jurisdiction and supervision of the principal and may be a joint project with The Council
2. Participation of students in fundraising in schools shall be voluntary and consideration shall be given to factors such as the age and safety of the students. Fundraising activities shall not interfere unduly with the learning experiences in the curriculum
3. The school principal must approve the content, and/or posting on school property, of any advertising materials, or the distribution of notices dealing with school fund raising events
4. Individuals and organizations, approved under policy S.13, Approved Access to Schools by Individuals and Organizations, who wish to raise funds on school property and/or with the assistance of school staff and students, must do so in accordance with the fundraising policy and its regulations
5. Funds raised under this policy shall not be used to purchase textbooks, learning materials and resources for regular classroom programs which would normally be funded through Board and school-based budgets
6. When fundraising is a joint project with The Council, it is understood that the decision making as to the disbursement of funds is also a joint responsibility. The following shall be authorized to sign cheques (one person from each of groups (a) and (b) shall sign each cheque):
  - a) two parents on the Executive Committee of the Parent Council - usually the Treasurer and the Chair;
  - b) two representatives from the school namely the principal , vice principal or superintendent (where no vice principal exists) and
  - c) The signature of the Treasurer of TCDSB will be required only under exceptional circumstances such as suspected misappropriation of funds
7. The school principal shall sign all cheques and only in the absence of the principal will the vice principal or superintendent sign
8. Appropriate record keeping procedures for all funds raised or donated to the school shall be maintained in accordance with those prescribed by the Treasurer of the Board
9. An annual financial summary of all fundraising activities conducted during the school year shall be prepared and presented to the community at the Annual General Meeting in the fall. The statement should be kept on file at the school

### **6.2 BUDGET PLANNING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

At the beginning of each school year, the Treasurer, on behalf of The Council and in collaboration with the principal, will present a budget framework. The annual budget shall contain provisions for allocated items (based on needs, proposals, commitments and parent feedback) and may contain a further discretionary budget to be allocated, as Council decides, during the upcoming school year.

Should any parent-led committees require Council-raised funds at any point during the school year, they are required to present their budget requests to the Council Treasurer within 60 days of the start of the

school year for assessment and consideration by the Council, and potential inclusion in the budget for the upcoming year by the Treasurer.

## **7. CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

The Board's Conflict Resolution Policy Regulation and guideline shall govern conflict resolution between staff and the community and among members of the community at large. The resolution of disagreements between members of The Council on any issue, for which no specific provision is made in these bylaws, shall be governed by the rules and practices of Roberts Rules of Order. The Council may also contact the Conflict Resolution Department at the TCDSB.

- every school council member will be given an opportunity to express their concern or opinion about the issue at dispute and how the dispute has affected them
- speakers to an issue with maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times
- speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption (within reasonable time frames at meetings)
- the chair is responsible to clarify statements made by all speakers, to identify common ground and to set out joint interests of all members
- if no common ground is found, the chair will seek to clarify preferences among all members
- if resolution is unsuccessful, the chair and/or principal, shall request the intervention of a superintendent or other senior administrator to facilitate a resolution to the conflict
- if all efforts to restore order at the meeting fails, the chair may direct the parties involved to leave the meeting, citing the reasons for the request. This removal does not apply to all meetings moving forward. The chair can also move to adjourn the meeting even if Council business is not concluded.
- the incident shall be recorded and submitted to the Superintendent of Schools within one week of the meeting
- any resolutions eventually found by The Council, will be signed and respected in full by all parties involved

## **8. AMENDMENTS TO THESE BYLAWS**

The Council may add or change these bylaws through a motion submitted by a member and duly seconded at a Council meeting.

In order to add or change a bylaw, a motion must be approved by The Council during two consecutive school council meetings. The motion will detail the proposed rationale for the change and requires majority approval in both meetings.

The motion and any supporting documents will be posted in the school in an area accessible to the School Community and made available electronically no fewer than 4 business days before both school council meetings (barring no IT issues).

Motions may be amended at the second meeting without requiring further approval at a subsequent meeting.

## **9. INCORPORATION**

Catholic School Parent Council **shall not** incorporate.

## **10. REPEAL AND DISSOLUTION**



### **10.1 Repeal**

Previous bylaws of The Council are hereby repealed and replaced by this bylaw and any amendments thereto.

### **10.2 DISSOLUTION**

Council shall be dissolved and cease to exist in the event that Blessed Sacrament ceases to operate as a school.

In the event of dissolution of The Council, the disposal of funds and assets will be in accordance with the direction of members in attendance at a Special General Meeting of The Council called for the purpose of dissolution. Written notice of the purpose of such meeting shall include disclosure of the amounts and assets to be dispersed at such meeting. The notice shall be sent to all members of the Blessed Sacrament Catholic school community at least 14 days prior to the date of the Special General Meeting. Disposition of assets are to be distributed to neighbouring schools based on percentage.

**School Name: Blessed Sacrament Catholic Elementary**

**School Address: 24 Bedford Park Avenue Toronto, ON M5M 1HN**

**Dated: June 1, 2019**