



École Mother Teresa Catholic School School Council

Operating Procedures 2020-2021

Approved 

1. DEFINITIONS

In these Operating Procedures:

- A. "School" means École Mother Teresa Catholic School;
- B. "Council" means the School Council for the School;
- C. "Parents" means parent, guardian or primary caregiver of any child enrolled in an educational program at the School;
- D. "Regulation" means the School Councils Regulation as provided through Alberta Provincial Legislation;
- E. "School community" means persons other than parents (as defined in 1C above) who have, in the opinion of the majority of the Members of the School Council, an interest in the well-being of the students and the School;
- F. "Operating Procedures" means the governing document serving the same purpose as Bylaws referenced in the Regulations.

2. AUTHORITY

The École Mother Teresa Catholic School Council derives its authority to participate in the education of our students through Alberta Provincial Legislation, hereinafter referred to as "legislation".

3. MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

School Vision: "Nurturing The Spirit, While Feeding the Mind - Nourissant l'esprit, en dirigeant l'intellecte"

School Mission: École Mother Teresa Catholic School philosophy is based on the teachings of our namesake and hero, Saint Teresa of Calcutta. The spiritual, academic, and emotional needs of every child are at the forefront of all that we do. The school community welcomes the input from our parents and recognizes them as their children's primary advocate and educator. The school and families work in union for the ultimate success of all children. With the contribution and support of Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, we strive to provide the highest quality Catholic education to every child in our school. As a Catholic school, we endeavor to foster within each child the Christian values of the Catholic Church and to encourage the application of these values in the child's daily interactions with others. Through permeating Christ's teachings in our curriculum, applying the Eight Characteristics of Catholic Identity, and infusing the Christian values in our words and actions with parents and children, we see every member of



the community as a valued and precious child of God. It's our mission to provide the highest quality Catholic education to every child we serve in a safe and caring environment. With the cooperation of our families and our parish, we take great pride to set an example of excellence and unlimited potential for all.

The Mission/Philosophy of the École Mother Teresa Catholic School Council is:
School Council will undertake discussions and activities that will enhance student learning and foster the well-being and effectiveness of our Catholic school community and the greater community of Sylvan Lake.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the School Council, in keeping with the legislation are to:

- A. Represent the parent perspective by providing advice to and consulting with the Principal and the School Board on matters relating to the School such as: the School philosophy, mission and vision, policies, faith, improvement plans, programs and directions, and budget allocations to meet student needs;
- B. Foster a positive, collaborative faith based environment with a variety of opportunities for meaningful engagement by Members of the School community;
- C. Support special events that will support and enhance student learning and faith life which encourage participation and promote the well-being of the School community, home and church;
- D. Facilitate a performance evaluation of our School Council and communicate the results of this evaluation to the School Board and the School community;
- E. Develop a communication plan to share information with parents and the community and facilitate communications with all educational stakeholders;
- F. Adhere to School Council's Code of Ethics;
- G. Consult with other School Councils and provincial organizations;
- H. Support an approach to education in which decisions are made collaboratively, through a faith based lens;
- I. Advise School Boards, Alberta Education or other provincial organizations on broader educational issues;

5. GOVERNANCE, MEMBERSHIP and DECISION MAKING

****Town Hall Model**

École Mother Teresa Catholic School Council uses a Town Hall Model.

- A. The membership of the School Council shall consist of:
 - 1) All parents, as defined in 1C above
 - 2) The Principal of the School
 - 3) One or more teachers and staff of the School, elected or appointed by the teachers
 - 4) Others (list) as decided by the School Council (optional)
- B. The voting Members of the School Council shall consist of: executive council members, parent, guardian or primary caregiver of any child as identified in the School Information system, enrolled in an educational program at the School.

- C. The non-voting Members of the School Council shall consist of: Principal, Trustee, Teacher Representative, and anyone who is in the school community who is not a member of 1C.
- D. The parent/other ratio may vary at times, but the number of parent Members must always exceed the number of administration, staff, students and/or community representatives.

6. DECISION MAKING

Decisions at School Council meetings will be made by consensus as much as possible.

- A. A decision made by consensus must be stated clearly and recorded as such in the minutes of the meeting.
- B. If a decision is made by a vote, the motion must be moved, seconded and passed by the majority of School Council voting Members present (defined as face to face, virtual(email, Zoom and/or Google Meet), correspondence, digital surveys approved by school council) at the meeting at which the vote was taken.
- C. There will be no voting by proxy.

7. QUORUM

- A. Quorum will be attained when the majority of voting Members present at any meeting are parents of students enrolled in the School, and the Principal or designate is present.
- B. In the absence of a quorum:
 - 1) If the parents and School Council Members present agree to proceed in the absence of a quorum, the School Council may continue for the purposes of discussion of issues.
 - 2) No motions shall be considered or approved.
 - 3) No decisions by consensus shall be reached.
 - 4) School Council Members can vote if they need to access funds for events, but they will have to obtain consent from the principal prior to purchase.

8. EXECUTIVE and TERMS of OFFICE

The positions of the Executive shall consist of: Chair, Vice-Chair (or Co-Chair), Secretary and Treasurer.

- A. All Executive positions must be filled by parents as defined in 1C above.
- B. Every parent is eligible to be elected to an Executive position on the School Council.
- C. The terms of office are from the close of the Annual General Meeting to the close of the following Annual General Meeting. Any elected Member may serve 3 consecutive terms in the same position.
- D. The Executive of the School Council will be elected by parents attending the Annual General Meeting or in the event of vacancies after the Annual General Meeting, elected by the voting Members present at a subsequent School Council meeting;
- E. Any Executive Member may resign his/her position by providing written notice to the Executive and the Principal.

- F. Any Executive Member may be removed from the Executive at any time with cause by a majority vote of the Executive whenever, in its judgment, the best interest of the School Council will be served.
- G. Unless authorized at any meeting and after notice for same shall have been given, no Member of School Council shall receive any remuneration for his/her services.
- H. The Executive will carry out the day-to-day operation of the School Council.

9. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

A. Chair

It is expected that the School Council Chair will be a parent of a student enrolled in the School. Unless otherwise delegated, the Chair of the School Council will:

- 1) Chair all meetings of the School Council;
- 2) Coordinate with the Principal to establish meeting agendas;
- 3) Communicate with the Principal on a regular basis;
- 4) Decide all matters relating to rules of order at the meetings;
- 5) Ensure that the School Council Operating Procedures are current and followed;
- 6) Be the official spokesperson of the School Council;
- 7) Ensure that there is regular communication with the whole School community;
- 8) Be an ex-officio member of all committees;
- 9) Review any communication to the School community prior to distribution and include the Principal in same;
- 10) Stay informed about School Board policy that impacts School Council;
- 11) Comply with the School Councils Regulation by providing the School Board with an annual report that summarizes the School Council's activities for the previous School year, including a financial statement relating to money, if any, handled by the School Council, no later than September 30th;
- 12) Have general responsibility for all activities of the School Council.

B. Vice-Chair

Unless otherwise delegated, the Vice-Chair of the School Council will:

- 1) In the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the Chair, fulfill the Chair's responsibilities;
- 2) In the absence of the Chair, supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the School Council;
- 3) Work with and support the Chair in agenda preparation;
- 4) Ensure the appropriate management, in compliance with PIPA, of any personal information collected on behalf of the School Council;
- 5) Assume responsibility, in consultation with the School Council, for communicating with the Fundraising Association or other parent groups within the School;
- 6) Promote teamwork and assist the Chair in the smooth running of the meetings;
- 7) Keep informed of relevant School and School Board policies;
- 8) Prepare to assume the position of Chair in the future;
- 9) Assist the Chair and undertake tasks assigned by the Chair.

C. Secretary

Unless otherwise delegated, the Secretary of the School Council will:

- 1) Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure that the minutes are prepared accurately to reflect the directions agreed to at the meeting;
- 2) Keep minutes, correspondence, records and other School Council documents, and ensure that all relevant documents (as per legislation) are available to the public in an accessible location in the School, for a period of 7 years;
- 3) Maintain a dated record of all the Members of the School Council who have knowingly provided their contact information, in compliance with PIPA;
- 4) Distribute, as determined by the School Council, agendas, minutes, notices of meetings and notices of other events;

In the absence of the Secretary, the School Council shall choose a recording Secretary for the meeting.

D. Treasurer

Unless otherwise delegated, the Treasurer of the School Council will:

- 1) Keep accurate records of all financial transactions;
- 2) Present a full, detailed account of receipts and disbursements to the School Council as required by the School Council, and prepare the financial statements for the annual report;

E. Members at Large/ECS Parent Representative/Classroom, Grade or Division Representatives/ASCA School Council Engagement Task Force Rep/Community Members/Fundraising Association Liaison/Others as decided by the School Council

These Members will:

- 1) Share their professional knowledge, expertise and life experience;
- 2) Encourage feedback and participation from community groups and individuals;
- 3) Communicate information of interest to the School Council and the School community;
- 4) Share information from School Council meetings with the community;
- 5) Have a clear understanding of the School Council's objectives;
- 6) Attend School Council meetings;
- 7) Identify possible topics for agendas;
- 8) Serve as a liaison between the School Council and their organization or area of responsibility.

10. VACANCIES

With the exception of the School Council positions filled by the Principal and teacher representative, any vacancy of the School Council will be advertised to the parent community. The School Council may appoint School Council Members and/or School community members to fill vacancies until an Election for a vacant position has been held at a subsequent meeting of the School Council.

11. MEETINGS

A. Annual General Meetings

Where the School Council has not been operational the year prior, a Establishment Meeting will be held in accordance with legislation; otherwise, an Annual General Meeting of the School Council will take place once each School year.

- 1) The School Council will hold an Annual General Meeting within 30 instructional days following the first instructional day of each School year. Notice of the Annual General Meeting will be given to parents and the School community not less than 14 days before the date of the meeting via posters, website, social media, email, and/or newsletter. The notice will be given in the manner determined by the School Council. The notice will describe the matters to be dealt with at the Annual General Meeting.
- 2) All parents as defined in 1C above are eligible for election.
- 3) All parents as defined in 1C above are eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting.
- 4) The business of the Annual General Meeting shall include:
 - a. the election of School Council (Representative) and/or Executive Members (Town Hall);
 - b. any proposed amendments to the Operating Procedures;
 - c. presentation of the financial statement of the previous year, if any.
- 5) And may also include:
 - a. plans and budget for the upcoming year;
 - b. discussion of any major issue in which all parents should have input such as changes to the Vision or Mission of the School or School Board, School policy, or other major changes in the School program or focus;
 - c. any evaluation of the School Council.

B. Special General Meetings

- 1) Upon receipt of a written request of at least 10 parents, with a description of the purpose for a Special General Meeting, the Chair must ensure a Special Meeting will be called within 14 days.
- 2) A notice stating the time, date and place of the meeting, the names of the parents calling the Special General Meeting, and a description of the matters to be dealt with will be provided to the School community at least 5 days before the Special General Meeting.
- 3) At any Special General Meeting all parents in attendance at the Special General Meeting shall have the right to vote.

C. Regular Meetings

A minimum of four (4) regular School Council meetings will be held per School year or as called by the Executive. It will be decided when these meetings will take place at the Annual General Meeting. The meetings will take place at the School, unless otherwise advertised.

Any School Council Member may be suspended or expelled for the duration of the School year from attendance at any Regular School Council meetings, if, upon a majority vote of voting Members present at Special General Meeting called for that purpose, it is determined to be in the best interests of the School Council to do so.

12. MEETING AGENDAS

The Chair will work in partnership with the Principal to establish the agendas for all meetings. Agenda item requests must be made through the Chair, who will, if necessary, consult with the Executive and Principal as to the appropriateness of the item requested.

13. COMMITTEES

The School Council may appoint committees that consist of School Council Members and/or School community members. Committees will meet outside of School Council meetings to complete their assigned tasks as per the direction of the School Council and report on their activities at School Council meetings.

14. POLICIES

Subject to any provincially or School Board-mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may make and implement its own policies that it considers necessary to carry out its functions.

- A. The policies of the School Council will be reviewed at the beginning of every new School Council term to decide if each policy will be implemented for the new School Council and its term.
- B. Topics on which School Council may wish to develop guiding policies include, but are not limited to: Elections, Communication (Internal and External), Record Keeping, Fundraising, Privacy, Location of Meetings, Official Correspondence Address, New Member Orientation, School Council Evaluation, and Social Media.

15. SCHOOL COUNCIL FUNDRAISING

Subject to any provincially or School Board-mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may raise funds that do not require incorporation to obtain (e.g., not casinos, bingos, raffles).

- A. School Council funds given to the School will be subject to the School Board's policy on School Council fundraising and/or School-generated funds.

16. CODE OF ETHICS

All School Council Members shall:

- A. Abide by the legislation that governs them;
- B. Be guided by the mission statement of the School and School Council;
- C. Endeavour to be familiar with School policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them;
- D. Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth;
- E. Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the School community;

- F. Declare any conflict of interest;
- G. Encourage a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
- H. Apply democratic principles;
- I. Consider the best interests of all students;
- J. Respect the confidential nature of some School business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the School Council;
- K. Not disclose confidential information;
- L. Limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the School community as a whole;
- M. Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise;
- N. Promote high standards of ethical practice within the School community;
- O. Accept accountability for decisions;
- P. Not accept payment for School Council activities.

17. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The School Council shall abide by the Conflict Resolution Procedures outlined in the School Board's policies and regulations. If none exist, the School Council shall apply every effort to resolve internal conflicts using the steps outlined in these Operating Procedures.

- A. If at any time, 10 parents of the School Council are of the opinion that the School Council is in a state of conflict such that its operation is significantly impaired, they may deliver a signed written letter to all Executive Members and the Principal requesting a Special General Meeting, and the following will apply:
 - 1) The Chair will call a Special General Meeting of the School Council.
 - 2) The Secretary will provide a minimum of 5 days' written notice to all parents and School Council Members of the date, time, place and purpose of the Special General Meeting.
 - 3) At the Special General Meeting, all parents and School Council Members present will have an opportunity to hear and discuss the issues causing conflict.
 - 4) On motion, a vote shall be taken respecting a proposed resolution to the conflict.
 - 5) If a majority of voting Members present vote in favour of the resolution proposed, the School Council will immediately act upon it.

18. PRIVACY

The School Council shall adhere to the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) and shall not use or share personal information for purposes other than those of School Council business.

19. DISSOLUTION

As per Alberta Provincial Legislation, only the Minister of Education has the authority to dissolve a School Council. If the School Council is dissolved, the Principal may establish a Principal's Advisory Committee to perform some or all of the duties of the School Council until the next school year. The Principal will perform the duties as outlined in Alberta Provincial Legislation with respect to the re-establishment of the School Council within forty (40) School days after the start of the next School year.

