



REPORT TO

## GOVERNANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

### APPENDIX C CATHOLIC SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL POLICY S.10 FOLLOW-UP (REPORT).DOCX

*For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Romans 12:4-5*

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March 2, 2015	March 10, 2015	<a href="#">Click here to enter a date.</a>
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<b>RECOMMENDATION REPORT</b>		

**Vision:**

*At Toronto Catholic we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.*

**Mission:**

*The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community rooted in the love of Christ. We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge and to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.*



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## A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Catholic School Advisory Policy S.10 and the corresponding Operational Procedures were presented to Board for approval on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015. At that time eighteen different amendments were approved. The amendments approved were not linked or identified specifically to a particular document. That is, there is a CSAC Policy, Operational Procedures and CSACs also have a CSAC handbook and By-Laws. For clarity and to ensure the amendments are both implemented as intended and also that they are not contradictory, this report presents staff's suggested action in terms of the amendment. Further, the amendments approved requested that the process for removing a member of a Catholic School Parent Council be brought back to Governance for review. This report presents staff's follow up on that request.

## B. PURPOSE

Catholic School Parent Councils have a presence in all of our TCDSB schools and have an important role to play in parent engagement. The councils have their foundation in Ontario Regulation 612/00, which provides significant guidance and parameters for related policy. In an effort to support schools, the TCDSB has, over time, also provided school councils with a number of support tools/resources to assist them in their governance and operation. In addition to the policy and operational procedures, there is a CSAC handbook (to be renamed and re-distributed) and by—laws. The 23 amendments suggested at the February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015 meeting of the Board need to be situated in one of the 4 referenced documents and for clarity and precision, this report offers commentary in that regard. Further, it specifically follows up on the Board motion:

*That Criteria be established to remove a member of Council that may include: A member of the school Parent Council may be removed based on criteria to be developed by staff and sent to the Governance committee for review. The criteria may include considerations of attendance, non-performance of duties, conflict of interest.*

## C. BACKGROUND

1. At the Board meeting held on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015, trustees considered the report, *Policy S.10 Catholic School Advisory Council Consultation Feedback*, along with the Operational Procedures to support CSACs in their work at TCDSB schools. The policy was approved with 23 proposed amendments.
2. For clarity and to ensure the amendments are both implemented as intended and also that they are not contradictory, this report presents staff's suggested action in terms of the amendment.

## D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. At the Board meeting of February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015, the following amendments were made to the S. 10 Catholic School Council Policy. Following each amendment is commentary regarding how staff recommends proceeding on the amendment.

Amendment	Proposed Action / Analysis
1. That the name change to Catholic School Parent Council from Catholic School Advisory Council and that at least one of the co-chairs must be Roman Catholic	<p>Policy Regulation 1 amended. (<i>Note this still allows for Chair – if there is only one – to be non-Catholic. Please confirm intent has been captured.</i>)</p> <p>Operational Procedures, (new) 6 (b) added in section on Officers.</p> <p>Title of council amended in all locations where it is used.</p>
<p>2. That Criteria be established to remove a member of Council that may include:</p> <p>A member of the school Parent Council may be removed based on criteria to be developed by staff and sent to the Governance committee for review. The criteria may include considerations of attendance,</p>	<p><b>Concern:</b> Please see analysis that follows this table.</p>

non-performance of duties, conflict of interest.	
3. That the composition of the Council will be consistent with the Education Act and will also include the local pastor or designate, a parent representative from the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education (OAPCE) Toronto	<p>This is consistent with what was already in the operational Procedures under Composition of Council (#2). It is also cross-referenced in Policy – regulation 9.</p> <p><b>Concern:</b> It might be prudent to use the language “where possible” as in other regulations, as it may not be possible to always enforce the participation of the identified members.</p>
4. That a minimum number of members on the committee shall be seven. (This number includes school personnel, community representatives and the pastor)	<p>This has been incorporated in Regulation 9 of the policy and 3 c) of the Operational Procedures, but it needs to be noted that it is problematic.</p> <p><b>Concern:</b> Per Regulation 612, the majority of council members must be parents. If the minimum number of council members is 7 inclusive of all of the various roles, it is entirely possible parents would be in the minority.</p>
5. That as per legislation an annual report will be submitted by May of every year to the principal and local trustee. Trustees will determine if this should be shared with the board. The annual report will be posted to the website.	<p>A revised regulation 22 has been included in Policy and a revision has been made to #11 in Operational Procedures.</p> <p><b>Concerns:</b> May is early in the year for the report. In order to be ready for a May CSAC meeting, the report may have to be completed in April, but in any event is likely to exclude any events or funds spent/used in the months of May, June, July or August. May and June can be busy months of school activity. It is</p>

	<p>recommended that the report be given at the Annual General Meeting in September so as to give a full report on the previous year.</p> <p>The second part of the motion is somewhat unclear - suggested wording: The local trustee will determine if this should be shared with the full Board of trustees. (or that the intent be given greater clarity).</p>
<p>a) Any and all approved recommendations from Council can be included in this report.</p> <p>b) Any and all approved recommendations can be placed on the agenda at the request of the council at any time throughout the year.</p> <p>c) As per legislation the board will consider each recommendation and advise council of the action taken in response to the recommendation.</p> <p>d) That a template be developed and distributed to Councils on preparing an annual report.</p>	<p>Each of these can be included in #11 of Operational Procedures (and CSAC handbook)</p> <p>OK</p> <p>Need to clarify which “agenda” – School Council agenda or Board agenda (or CPIC or OAPCE)</p> <p>Already in #9 in Operational Procedures.</p> <p>Already available; will be located in the revised TCDSB CSPC Handbook, in addition to on Board website.</p>
6. That at the start of each school year, the information package provided to CSACs will include links to the board and committee	<p>This is an established practice, but will be embedded in the TCDSB CSPC Handbook</p>

minutes and agendas, their local trustees page and public consultations pages.	
7. That the TCDSB policies, operational and financial procedures will govern the respective activities of all school councils.	Guidelines will be consolidated and provided within the TCDSB CSPC Handbook. (Financial Guidelines currently housed on the Budget/Financial Page of the Board website will also be consolidated in the CSPC handbook)
a) The Parent School Council will govern their activities within the ministry, board policies, school mission and the tenets of the Catholic faith.	Language was in Operational Procedures 7 (a) iii but has been augmented.
b) There shall be no proxy votes at Council meetings	Added as new Regulation 10 in Policy and 3.h) in Operational Procedures.
c) No member of the school parent council will participate in proceedings if they have a conflict of interest	Language was already embedded in Policy Regulation 17 ii) but a stand- alone regulation (#18) has been added to the Policy.
d) All activities of the council will be reported to the parents on an annual basis.	Was embedded in policy; wording revised and found in Regulation 22 of Policy.
e) The parent school council may engage in fundraising activities related to charitable foundations, educational or services consistent with the tenets of Catholicism.	Was already present in policy. See Regulation 21.
f) As per legislation, fundraising revenue cannot be spent on programs, services, instruction, staffing, materials or equipment that should be provided by the Board.	The revision as been amended to Operational Procedure 7 viii) (adding additional detail to what was already present). Will also be embedded in CSPC Handbook.

g) All funds raised will be reported to the parent community.	Amendment added to Regulation 21 in Policy; also cross-references Operational Procedures 11 on Annual Report.
h) Consolidate to one document	Financial Guidelines will be placed in the revised CSPC Handbook.
8. Under Diversity Include " <i>Where possible</i> " to Regulation 10	Included – see Regulation 11 (one new regulation above has affected numbering)
All meetings including inaugural meeting are open to the public.	Was in policy (former regulation 12). See revised wording – Policy Regulation 13.
9. Under Regulation 17 All funds collected by the CSC shall be retained at the school for preparation and deposit to a CSC account.	See Policy Regulation 19 (two new regulations above have affected numbering)
10. Under Regulation 18 CSC will maintain a bank account, separate from a school account, under the name of the school CSC. The school and CSC accounts will be held at the same institution & location.	See Policy Regulation 20 (two new regulations above have affected numbering)  <b>Note</b> – staff understand that there is no obligation for the 40% of schools who have already merged bank accounts to reverse that action, if they are satisfied with the merged accounts.

2. Staff would like to highlight some additional considerations before acting on the recommendation that *Criteria be established to remove a member of Council that may include: A member of the school Parent Council may be removed based on criteria to be developed by staff and sent to the Governance committee for review. The criteria may include considerations of attendance, non-performance of duties, conflict of interest.*

Regulation 7 vi) of the Operational procedures mandates a by-law that establishes rules respecting participation in proceedings in cases of conflict of



interest. Those rules would govern non-participation but do not currently contemplate removal.

Regulation 3 b) of the Operational Procedures identifies those persons who may not be qualified to be a parent member of the Council and Regulations 1, 2, 4 and 6 of the Operational Procedures give additional qualifications for members of council. Thus it is felt that the criteria for removal due to “conflict of interest” is sufficiently addressed in the existing Operational Procedures.

Criteria for removal due to non-attendance is not contemplated in Regulation 612, however nor does the regulation preclude such a consideration. A possible guideline in this regard might be failure to attend 3 meetings, similar to the obligation for Trustees. This is a clear guideline that can be enforced, while potentially leaving room for discretion in an extenuating circumstance such as illness. That said – the current CSAC By-Laws on attendance (7.2) indicate that council member “*may be asked by Council to forfeit his/her position within the council. This request may occur if the members missed attendance seriously impacts the present year CSAC business.*” This By-Law is recommended as sufficient.

Determining non-performance of duties and any other criteria for removal will be challenging and is not recommended. Challenges include identifying who will be the arbiter of “non-performance” and against what standard? Catholic School Council members are assuming voluntary positions. Catholic School Parent Councils can involve complex personality dynamics and opening a door to “removal of a member” could exacerbate some local tensions. It also opens the door to legal challenges and costs associated with such challenges.

The board has policies dealing with conflict resolution which continue to be the recommended avenue for dealing with local relationship dynamics that might become aggravated.

Further, it should be noted that developing such criteria for removal would require consultation with stakeholders.

## E. ACTION PLAN

1. The CSAC Policy and Operational Procedures are now ready to move forward to the policy register with the amendments approved by Board.



The table above identifies where the amendments will be found. The following additional actions/(amendments to the amendments) coming out of the analysis above are recommended:

- a. Do not provide criteria for removal of a member, or if the board approves such a regulation, limit it to non-attendance (eg., missing 3 meetings).
  - b. Amendment 3 regarding Composition – use the language “where possible”.
  - c. Amendment 4 regarding minimum number of members – change language to reflect “minimum number of council members is 7 and parents must form the majority”. (Do not list various roles in this regulation)
  - d. Amendment 5 regarding Annual report – change month report is presented to September and clarify who will determine if the report is shared with the board.
  - e. Amendment 5b) regarding approved recommendation on agendas – clarify which agenda is being referenced.
  - f. Amendments 9 and 10 – communicate to schools that while Policy allows for separate bank accounts, there is nothing to prevent schools which have merged their accounts from continuing to do so.
2. The CSAC Handbook will be revised to include TCDSB Financial Procedures, as well as templates for annual reports.
  3. It is recommended that schools use a consistent banking program, for example “Quick Books”, if they have not merged their bank accounts with school bank accounts. In cases where this has been done, templates are provided and assistance in reconciliation at the local school and from the board level can be provided.

## **F. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

1. Amendments to the S.10 CSAC policy will be communicated to all principals, CSACs and school communities using various modalities of communication.
2. Regulations placed in policy need to be enforced.

3. Parents welcomed and were receptive to the CSAC Consultation process used to solicit feedback and, as such, can be repeated on an annual basis in order to solidify successes and target challenges. A Board report based on subsequent consultations and recommendations based on the feedback would be provided.

## **G. IMPLEMENTATION, STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

1. Once the revised Policy and Operational Procedures are approved in their entirety, a broad-based communication strategy to all stakeholders will ensure awareness regarding the updates. This can include Communication Department e-Blasts, tweets, e-News, as well as email communication to all CSAC Chairs and updates at Principal Meetings.

## **H. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

That the Board adopt the revised Policy S. 10 Catholic School Advisory Council (Appendix A) and the revised TCDSB Catholic School Council Operational Procedures Protocol (Appendix B) with the amendments identified in the Action Plan above.