



## **COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

**Quick Reference Guide  
Operation of  
Catholic School Community Councils  
Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division  
August 2017**

---

“The Handbook for Principal and Catholic School Community Councils” was created in June 2007. In addition to the Handbook, this Reference Guide will assist councils and principals with the most frequently referred to parts of the handbook in the day to day workings of your council. The following includes:

1. “To Do List” for CSCC’s/principals
2. Roles and responsibilities of Councils
3. Council Composition
4. Brief guidelines re: election procedures
5. Forms to be submitted annually
6. Roles and responsibilities of council officers
7. Learning Improvement Plan participation
8. Operating Grant guidelines and suggested used (addition to handbook information)
9. Fundraising account and activities

## **To Do List**

1. Provide a 4 week notice of Annual General Meeting
2. Determine nomination procedure to be used
3. Submit Elected Members form (includes 2 signatures used to give council access to portal and SCC operating grant; on school division email list)
4. Submit Appointed Members form (to be approved by Board annually)
5. Submit a budget to Administrative Services at the beginning of the year for projected revenue and expenditures. (Operating Grant and Fundraising Account)
6. Submit Annual Report form (financial statements attached)
7. Attend 2 meetings designed for liaison/networking opportunities between Board and CSCC members: October and May.

## **Catholic School Community Council Roles and Responsibilities**

(Handbook pages 5 - 7)

The Catholic school community council encourages and assists parent and community involvement. It is also required to help develop a framework that sees it share responsibility for the learning success and wellbeing of all children and youth.

The Catholic school community council shall:

1. Work within school board policy and administrative procedures;
2. Work to uphold the mission of Catholic education to “assist” parents and the local church community in the formation of students in heart, mind, body and spirit.
3. Undertake activities to enhance its understanding of the community’s economic, social and health needs, its aspirations for pupils’ learning and wellbeing and the resources and supports needed for the school, parents, guardians, and community;
4. Facilitate parent and community participation in school planning by cooperating with the principal and staff of the school to develop a Learning Improvement Plan that aligns with the division’s goals and directions; the plan is then presented to the board of education for its approval;
5. Take action to fulfill initiatives assigned within the Learning Improvement Plan;
6. Communicate its plans, initiatives and outcomes annually to parents, guardians and the community;
7. Account publicly for how money was spent, by the CSCC, in accordance with Board policy;
8. Meet at least five times per year plus an annual general meeting;
9. Participate in orientation, training, development, and networking to enhance the CSCC’s ability to fulfill its responsibilities; and
10. Not discuss or be given access to personal, confidential information, or complaints about any student, family member, guardian, teacher, administrator, employee or board member of Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools.

The Catholic School Community Council may at its discretion or when applicable:

1. Provide advice and recommendations to the board of education, through the assigned representatives of senior administration, respecting:
  - a. Programs and educational service delivery, including fundraising, school fees, pupil code of conduct, grade discontinuance, school closure, and language of instruction; but not including educational delivery by a specific teacher;
  - b. Locally determined course options; and
  - c. Innovative projects;
2. Provide advice and recommendations to the school by an annual review of school mission, vision and goals, programs and operations; and
3. Provide advice and recommendations to other organizations, agencies and governments on the learning needs and wellbeing of children and youth.

## **Composition of Catholic school community councils**

(Handbook pages 9 & 10)

### **A. Elected members** (following form to be submitted annually)

Catholic school community councils are designed to function as advisory bodies at the school level with a focus on enhancing student learning and wellbeing. There are two types of membership in a Catholic school community council:

There are to be up to nine and no less than five elected parents and/or community members. All parents are eligible to serve on Catholic school community councils. Community members must be of the Catholic faith to serve as an elected member or to vote in an election. The following outlines community member geographic eligibility:

- Elementary Schools – living within transportation attendance area for that school;
- High Schools – living within transportation attendance areas of schools recognized as “feeder” schools of that high school;
- French Immersion schools – as for all other elementary
- Cree bilingual – city wide
- Ukrainian bilingual – city wide
- Alternate settings:
  - Bishop Murray – Varsity View Area

The majority of elected members must be parents.

### **B. Appointed members** (form to be submitted annually for board approval)

Councils will also have a number of appointed members. The following people must be appointed to a council:

- Principal or designate
- Teacher
- First Nations representative(s) as applicable (as outlined in Policy – Appendix M)
- One or two high school students for secondary schools

Members of a council may choose to appoint additional members, subject to the approval of the board of education (Appendix L). Additional appointed members may include:

- Parish representative;
- Aboriginal Student Achievement Coordinator;  
Classroom representatives;

- Community association representative;
- Community service organization representative;
- Any other member whose participation would be considered an asset to the council's operation.

The maximum number of council members is 50, to allow for a school community to organize its council based on its needs and local traditions.

## **Election Procedures**

(Handbook pages 11 - 14)

All Catholic school community councils are called upon to establish a date and location for an annual general meeting. School community council members should be elected at this meeting if an election is required. The chair of the meeting should be pre-determined and should be someone who is comfortable with running the election and who would not be seen as having a conflict of interest. The past chairperson or the vice-principal may be suitable for this role.

1. Public notice of annual general meeting needs to provide 4 schools weeks prior to the meeting. If you are planning a meeting for the second week of September, notice of the meeting must be provided by mid-June of the prior school year.
2. Returning Officer – To facilitate the School Community Council Election process each school is required to appoint a Returning Officer.

As articulated in the published Catholic School Community Council Handbook, we recommend the role of Returning Officer be assigned to the Office Coordinator of the school.

Up to five (5) hours of over-time will be authorized for the Office Coordinators to complete the nomination process and to perform required duties during the election at the annual general meeting.

Should an election not be required, up to three (3) hours of over-time will be authorized for Office Coordinators who complete the nomination process.

Should the Office Coordinator not serve as Returning Officer the approved rate of pay for the staff member performing this service shall be the over-time rate provided to a Step 1 Office Coordinator. The number of hours compensated shall not exceed the totals articulated above.

### **Returning Officer Duties:**

1. Preparation for the Annual General Meeting and the election process
  - a. Providing public notice (Handbook-Appendix A)
  - b. Preparation and receiving of nomination documentation (Handbook-Appendix B)

- c. Preparation of ballots (Handbook – Appendix E)
  - d. Preparation of Voter Registration Sheet (Handbook – Appendix C)
- 2. Attendance at the Annual General Meeting for the election process
  - a. Supervision of Voter Registration Sheet
  - b. Distribution of ballots
  - c. Counting ballots
  - d. The Returning Officer may recruit two volunteers to witness the counting of ballots at the Annual General Meeting if an election should occur.
  - e. Destroying the ballots.

## **Providing Public Notice**

The Returning Officer shall ensure the provision of a public notice of the date of an Annual General Meeting at least four weeks prior to the meeting. The notice should be advertised or posted in such a way that it would be reasonably expected to reach the parents or guardians of students of that school and community members. Possibilities are school newsletters, notices and posters, church bulletins and posters, and community association newsletters (Appendix A).

The notice of the meeting shall state:

- 1. The meeting purpose, the attendance or geographic area for the school community council;
- 2. Where policies or procedures developed by the Board of Education respecting the election of school community councils can be reviewed;
- 3. The date and time of the meeting;
- 4. The method of nomination procedure that will be used;
- 5. The number of positions open for election; and
- 6. Voter qualifications.

## **Determining CSCC Financial Options**

Catholic School Community Council will need to decide if they are going to operate with:

- 1. School Controlled
  - a. The CSCC would participate in school fundraising activities but the accounting of revenues and expenses will be handled by the school division.

- b. CSCC and the school principal will work together to prioritize and allocate the revenue.
- 2. Set up a Friends of the School Community (Association)
  - ✓ The members of the Association can be CSCC representatives but the Association is not part of the CSCC
  - ✓ The Association is a Not for Profit Organization
  - ✓ The Association will be required to submit an annual fundraising application along with a budget.



## Guide for roles and responsibilities of council officers

The **chairperson** will:

- Conduct meetings of the council;
- Ensure that all members have input on discussion and decisions;
- Prepare meeting agendas in consultation with the principal and other council members;
- Oversee council operations council;
- Establish networks that support the council; and,
- Act as a spokesperson for the council.

The **vice-chairperson** will:

- Support the chairperson in his/her duties, taking over when the chairperson is unable to attend;
- Perform responsibilities assigned by the chairperson; and,
- Normally become the chairperson the following year.

The **secretary** will:

- Take minutes at council meetings;
- Receive and send correspondence on behalf of the council;
- Take charge of any official records of the council;
- Maintain a membership list of all council members; and,
- Ensure that appropriate notice is given for all council meetings.

The **treasurer** will:

- School Controlled
  - record all expenses and revenues
  - report to the school community council on a monthly basis by accessing a financial report showing all transactions through GSCS online web portal
  - prepare all monies for deposit;
  - reconcile Purchase Card each month

A council may also wish to include various committees within its structure. Councils may wish to have longer-term committees (standing committees) such as a fundraising committee, parent volunteering, committee or committees that are created to address some aspect of the learning improvement plan. Councils may also wish to create shorter-term (ad hoc) committees to address immediate issues.

Committees can be internal and composed exclusively of CSCC members or be external and include other parents, community members or interested and knowledgeable individuals. By using external committees, the CSCC can encourage more general parent and community involvement, draw on expertise of those within the school community and lighten the workload for individual council members. If operated effectively, committees can make council more

productive and its decisions that would impact on the work of the council and committee members must know that council may or may not accept their advice.

Councils should develop a committee communication/reporting strategy to ensure the valuable work committees do on behalf of the Catholic school community council is taken into account.

## **Developing and recommending the Learning Improvement Plan**

(Handbook pages 22 - 25)

The Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools policy for Catholic school community councils states that one role of the CSCC is to:

“Facilitate parent and community participation in school planning by cooperating with the principal and the staff of the school in developing and recommending, for the board of education’s approval, a learning improvement plan that aligns with the division’s goals and directions.”

Every school in our division is asked to annually prepare, submit, monitor and report on a Learning Improvement Plan for their school community based on the school division’s priorities.

CSCC’s are asked to determine how they can participate/support the Learning Improvement Plan development by:

- For each learning outcome, brainstorm how the CSCC might support the staff in its efforts;
- Consider which resources are available and needed;
- Develop an action plan/goal for CSCC involvement in the LIP based on a priority area

## **CSCC Operating Grant**

(Handbook pages 30-32)

The Board of Education helps offset expenses of Catholic School Community Councils through the provision of a grant, the amount to be determined annually. The grant money is to be used to cover the operating expenses of councils as outlined below:

### **Allocation of Funds**

- The board of education annually establishes a grant that provides operational funds for CSCCs.
- The grant is in the form of an established dollar level per CSCC per year.
- Funds are allocated for council operations only, not for school projects or to enhance the school’s decentralized budget.
- The CSCC is to establish an annual local budget based on the funds allocated.

## **Purpose of Funds**

- Vehicle expenses allowance for out-of-community events and meetings. *Per diem* is not included.
- Communication and public relations.
- Conference attendance and professional development.
- Incidental expenses such as postage and printing.

(From “A Handbook for Principals and Catholic School Community Councils – 2007”)

Since CSCC’s have been established, the majority of questions around the use of the operating grant money have centered on the scope of what is “operating”. The intent of this grant is that the monies be used to support the role of CSCC’s to assist parent and community involvement and in doing so, share in the responsibility for the learning success and wellbeing of all children and youth in the school community. Perhaps the key phrase is “to assist parent and community involvement”.

The following is a list of ways the grant money has been used. It is not intended to be a limited list. There may be other uses that your council sees as appropriate and viable.

### **Conference Attendance:**

Safe Schools Conference registrations  
Explosive Child Seminar

### **Parent Communication:**

Parent reference books  
Teacher and family BBQ  
Monthly newsletter to families, family handbook

### **Council Operation:**

Bank charges expenses  
Laptop computer  
Filing cabinet for CSCC records  
Cash boxes  
Photocopying  
Postage  
Coffee urn  
Meeting refreshments  
Childcare  
Vehicle allowance for out-of-community event

**Parent Education:**

Parent Education Evenings (Family Literacy Night, Math Parent Evening)

Refreshments, childcare costs for meetings

Speaker invited in for parent education

**School Community Promotion/Building Community/Public Relations:**

85<sup>th</sup> anniversary pens

A Christmas ad in a local paper

Parents used the money to promote what was happening at EDF to all students on the west side of the river in grades 6 to 8 through a mail out letter

Incentives for new members

Coffee on registration day

The principal and/or the two CSCC executive members identified on the “Elected Members Form” can access this account through the web portal. To review expenditures coded to this account:

- School Community Councils Account – Detailed Report
- In Start Date change to: 12/31/2004
- Page size – All (top right corner)
- Generate (bottom right corner)



## Catholic School Community Council Members and Meeting Dates

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_

Vice-Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

### \*Elected Members

### E-mail Address

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### \*Appointed Members

### E-mail Address

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

\* **Note:** The officers of the Catholic school community council must be elected members. Elected members do not need the approval of the board of education. See Appendix L of the Handbook for "Request for Approval of Appointed Members". This form must be completed and submitted as approved members are added or deleted from your council. Appointed members may include, but not limited to: Room Parents, Parish Liaison, Aboriginal Student Retention Worker, Aboriginal Student Achievement Coordinator, Students, etc.)

## Meeting Dates

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## Council Members with Signing Authority

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Please Print**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Please Print**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Principal Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

## **Annual Report**

All CSCC's are required to submit an annual report to the unit superintendent as outlined below. An annual financial statement of the fundraising account and the report from the Operating Grant should be attached.



# CSCC ANNUAL REPORT

**Name of School:**

---

**Reporting Date:**

---

**Members:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Position:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



**Meeting Dates:**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**How did you as a council support the goal(s) established for your school community in the Learning Improvement Plan?**

---

---

---

---

---

---

**How did you as a council facilitate parent and community participation for your school community?**

---

---

---

---

---

---

Please attach the Statement for the Operating Grant from the Web Portal

---