

Mother Teresa Catholic School Community Council Constitution

1. Mission

The Mother Teresa Catholic School Community Council (MTCSCC) holds the following to be its mission:

- To create a community with a common vision between the Church (Spirit), School Community (Mind), Parents (Heart), and Students (Body).

2. Guiding Principles/Code of Conduct

Our guiding principles are to:

1. Encourage an environment that is inviting, warm and welcoming.
2. Encourage a positive atmosphere where individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
3. Recognize and respect each member of the community council.
4. Be respectful of all members of our school community by not discussing information or complaints about a specific student, parent, staff member or any other employee of the board.
5. Be guided by the overall vision and purpose of Catholic Community School Council.
6. Consider the best interests of all students.

For *Code of Conduct* and *Code of Ethics*, see Appendix 1.

3. Membership and Officers

3.1 Membership

3.1.1 Elected Officers

The Catholic school community council will have the following elected officers:

- A minimum of five and maximum of nine parent and community members elected at the annual general meeting. Their roles are defined in Section 3.2
- Parent members must be in the majority of elected officers

3.1.2 Appointed Members

The Catholic school community council will have the following appointed members:

- the school principal
- the school vice principal
- a teacher
- a parish representative
- a community association representative
- a Mother Teresa preschool representative
- classroom representatives

3.1.3 Other Participants of MTCSCC

The MTCSCC follows a town-hall model in which members are elected. However, regular meetings are open to the entire school community. Any member of the school community can participate in the meeting and be involved in the decision making process of matters brought before the MTCSCC.

3.2 Officers

3.2.1 Terms

Each elected officer will hold a term of 2 years and is eligible for re-election. In the event that an officer is required to vacate his/her office before the 2 year term is complete, a designate will be elected to finish this assigned term.

These terms ensure that in alternate years, elections will be held for the following positions:

Year 1: Chairperson, vice-chairperson, 2 officers

Year 2: Treasurer, secretary, 3 officers

The goal of this schedule is to allow for a turn-over of officers on a regular basis. The vice-chairperson ideally puts their name forward to be voted the chairperson after completing a term.

3.2.2 Roles and responsibilities of elected officers

Each elected officer is expected to regularly attend the MTCSCC meetings. Their specific duties are outlined below.

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
- establish networks that support the council
- 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

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
- ensure that appropriate notice is given for all council meetings

The treasurer will:

- record all expenses and revenue
- report to the school community council on a monthly basis
- prepare all monies for deposit
- maintain a bank account with dual signing authority
- prepare an annual report

Officers (ideally 5) will:

- support the chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary and treasurer in their duties
- attend MTCSCC meetings as they are needed to establish quorum in voting (see Section 4.6)

4. MTCSCC Meetings

4.1 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The AGM will be held in September of each year. During this meeting, an election for officers will be held if required. Other orders of business will include the delivery of an annual report, other business as established by the MTCSCC and open discussion.

4.2 Meeting Schedule

The MTCSCC will meet a minimum of five times per year.

4.3 Model of governance

The MTCSCC has chosen the town-hall model of governance (see Section 3.1.3).

4.4 Decision Making Process

The MTCSCC has chosen the majority vote model as a preferred decision-making process. Although some decisions, like adopting a constitution, will require a motion and formal vote, not all MTCSCC business will require this process.

Majority vote model:

The issue is discussed and a vote is taken. The majority vote decides the issue. On matters requiring a formal vote (motion on the floor), all people present may vote.

Note: It is advisable that the principal and teachers vote only in clearly defined circumstances. They should however, be expected to participate fully in the discussions and provide their advice.

4.5 Voting

On matters requiring a formal vote, all people present may vote. A formal vote is required if action is put forward to the council by way of a formal motion.

4.6 Quorum

A quorum of the MTCSCC shall be a majority of elected members.

4.7 Special meeting

A special meeting of the MTCSCC shall be called by the chairperson of the MTCSCC if required to do so by the board of education or a request in writing signed by no fewer than 25 persons who have a child attending that school or who are electors (as defined in the CSCC Handbook). Only business pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of the MTCSCC can be considered at a special meeting.

5. Public consultation and communication

The MTCSCC will communicate with the school community through the following strategies:

- school newsletter
- parish bulletin
- community association newsletter
- posters, flyers
- school sign

The MTCSCC will communicate with the broader community and the board of education through the following strategies:

- its principal, who will communicate with the senior administrator representative (unit superintendent)
- its representative trustee liaison board member
- regional meetings of the CSCCs sponsored by the board

5.1 Notice of AGM

The returning officer (the office coordinator or a staff member) shall provide notice of the AGM of the MTCSCC in the June school newsletter, as well as in a special notice sent home with students in the first week of the school year. The notice of the meeting shall state:

- the meeting purpose
- the date, time and location of the meeting
- that advance nominations will be formally collected prior to the annual meeting with a cut-off date of one week prior to the meeting. This is to provide the returning officer with time to prepare ballots for an election, if required.
- the number and descriptions of positions open for election

6. Conflict of Interest

A MTCSCC member may occasionally find him/herself in a conflict of interest position in terms of an issue under consideration by the MTCSCC. When this happens, the member should declare that he/she is in a conflict of interest situation and leave the room for this portion of the meeting, thus refraining from participating in the discussion. The member should not vote on any decision on the issue.

7. Dispute resolution protocol (complaints/concerns procedure)

7.1 Complaints or concerns about an individual student or staff member

Any matter concerning an individual student or staff member must be directed to the staff member or principal. It is never the responsibility of the MTCSCC to deal with concerns or complaints about individuals other than to direct the concern to the appropriate individual (See Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools document: "Parents, Guardian and School Working Together: Conflict Resolution Protocol").

7.2 Complaints or concerns about MTCSCC initiatives or activities

7.2.1 Informal complaints or concerns

Provided the MTCSCC members are comfortable in their knowledge and feel at ease expressing it, concerns or questions about MTCSCC initiatives and activities expressed informally to members of the MTCSCC may be addressed immediately by the member. If a member is unsure of the appropriate response, he/she should say so but indicate that he/she will check and get back to the individual. If such a commitment is made, the member must follow through. After responding to the complaint or concern, the member should always ask if the response has been satisfactory. If the individual is not satisfied with the response, the member should explain how the concern or complaint could be brought to the attention of the MTCSCC in a more formal manner.

7.2.2 Formal complaints or concerns

Concerns or complaints can be brought to the attention of the MTCSCC by addressing the concern in writing to the chairperson or by requesting that the chairperson provide the individual with an

opportunity to meet with the MTCSCC at an upcoming meeting. The MTCSCC will provide a written response regarding how it has addressed or plans to address the concern or complaint.

8. Evaluating council operations

MTCSCC will periodically evaluate and assess, throughout the school year, through formal and informal measurement tools their effectiveness.

9. Amending the constitution

The MTCSCC may amend its constitution by sending suggestions for change in writing to the Board of Education through the senior administrator.

10. Various committees and the MTCSCC

The fundraising and parent volunteering committees are considered to be within the structure of the MTCSCC. Additional committees may also be created to address immediate issues of the school.

Committees are open to MTCSCC officers, to parents within the school, community members or interested and knowledgeable individuals. General parent and community involvement is encouraged as this will lighten the workload for individual council members. In all cases, committees are advisory to the council. They are not empowered to make independent decisions that would impact on the work of the council, and council may or may not accept their advice.

Appendix 1

Code of Conduct

MTCSCC has determined a code of conduct and code of ethics that will guide how members will work together in a way that gives value to the importance of their work and outlines important elements of serving as a council member.

MTCSCC Code of Conduct

- The MTCSCC is not a forum for the discussion of individual school personnel, students, parents or other individual members of the school community.
- A council member who is approached by a parent with a concern relating to an individual is in a privileged position and must treat such a discussion with discretion, protecting the confidentiality of the people involved.
- A parent who accepts a position as a MTCSCC member:
 - works to uphold the mission of Catholic education
 - upholds the constitution and bylaws, policies and procedures of the school community council
 - performs his/her duties with honesty and integrity
 - works to ensure that the well-being of students is the primary focus of all decisions
 - respects the rights of all individuals
 - takes the direction from council, ensuring that the representation processes are in place
 - encourages and supports parents and students with individual concerns to act on their behalf and provides information on the process for taking forward concerns

MTSCC Code of Ethics

As a member of the MTCSCC I shall:

- be guided by the policy, vision, goals and principles of the school program
- know and work toward the vision for Mother Teresa School
- endeavor to be familiar with school policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them
- practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth
- encourage a positive atmosphere where individual contributions are encouraged and valued
- recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community
- apply democratic principles
- consider the best interests of all students
- respect and maintain the confidentiality of student information
- limit discussions at council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole
- use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise
- promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community
- accept accountability for the decisions of the council