Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools

School Community Councils Operations Manual

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Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools would like to acknowledge and thank Prairie Valley School Division for allowing us to adapt resources they developed.

Welcome to Your School Community Council

Welcome to the School Community Council and thank you for contributing your time and talents. Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools is committed to developing positive parent, parish, student, and community partnerships. As a school community council member, you can help your council discover new and exciting ways to contribute to the education of students in your school. Education is a partnership involving parents, students, staff, the school board, parishes, and the community. Your involvement in the council gives you the opportunity to strengthen that partnership and to be part of a dedicated team working to ensure a high quality faith-based education for the students of Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools. Your participation will make a difference!

Introduction to School Community Councils

Background

In 2005, following province-wide school division restructuring, the Saskatchewan Minister of Learning appointed The Local Accountability and Partnerships Panel. Among the goals was a plan to encourage more complete parent and community involvement in school operations.

The result of this Panel's work was the creation of a School Community Council (SCC) for every school in the Province of Saskatchewan.

Prior to 2006, a variety of parent/school organizations were in place within Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools to encourage and facilitate parent and community participation in schools.

Definition of a School Community Council

School Community Councils are advisory bodies charged with the responsibility of supporting student achievement, opportunities and well-being at the school and community level. SCC activities are aligned with the Education Strategic Plan (ESSP), the Christ the Teacher Strategic Plan, and school Learning Improvement Plans.

School Community Councils are an integral, purposeful, and valued component of School Division governance. In their advisory capacity, they accept a shared responsibility for the learning success and well-being of all children and youth, while encouraging and facilitating parent and community engagement.

An SCC is a committee of parents/guardians working together for the benefit of students and the school community. SCCs serve in an advisory capacity, providing assistance in enhancing supports to learning.

An SCC is comprised of elected parents plus electors. At the high school level, a student also participates. These members must be elected or acclaimed at a public meeting. A teacher and the principal from that school must also be members.

SCCs build on the success of existing parent associations, but take involvement several steps further

by encouraging active involvement of electors who previously did not have a voice in activities of their local school. In addition to encouraging involvement in school activities and projects, SCCs will also work to identify ways to support the principal and staff in advancing the school's learning program. This focus on learning excellence is known as a school's *Learning Improvement Plan.*

The Learning Improvement Plan is intended to help teachers, administrators and other school staff provide the best possible learning environment for all students.

Legislation Governing School Community Councils

The legislation Governing SCCs is contained in Section 140.1 of *The Education Act, 1995, The Education Regulations 1986*.

In addition, School Community Councils work in accordance with Board policy, specifically *Board Policy 18 – School Community Councils*, and a number of Administrative Procedures that reference SCC's.

Expectations of SCCs

Every School Community Council is expected to:
- Each council shall develop and adopt a constitution and forward a copy to the division. A working outline for developing a constitution is found in Appendix A: An Outline for a School Community Constitution.
- Develop a Code of Conduct. A sample Code of Conduct is found in Appendix B.
- Facilitate parent and community participation in school planning.
- Provide advice to the Board.
- Provide advice to school staff through the principal.
- In cooperation with school administration, develop an SCC Learning Improvement Plan to support the school Learning Improvement Plan.
- Comply with Board policy.

Membership

SCCs are designed to function as advisory bodies at the school level, with a focus on enhancing student learning and well-being. Members of the council may be elected or appointed.

Any parent or guardian of a student who attends the school or any community member who is an elector (as defined in The Local Government Election Act) is eligible to run for an elected position on the SCC.

It is recommended that each SCC consist of five (5) to nine (9) elected members, the majority of which shall be parents or guardians of children in attendance at the school.

Elected members must be either:
- A parent/guardian of pupils attending the school(s) for which the individual wishes to serve.

- A Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools elector.

Additionally,
- No elected individual may serve on more than one SCC as an appointed member.
- Elected parents and guardians will serve for a two-year period and are eligible for re- election and/or acclamation. (During the first year of a new SCC, half the SCC will serve for one year for the first year only)

Appointed members can be suggested by the SCC or by the school division and are approved by the Board. Appointed members can include no more than one less the number of elected members. For example, if an SCC has 17 voting members, no more than 8 could be appointed members. It is, however, not likely that there will be such a large number of appointed members. The minimum number of appointed members includes:
- The school principal,
- One teacher from that school, and
- For high schools, 1 or 2 students from that high school.

Community members are appointed for a two-year term and are eligible for reappointment. Students are appointed for a one-year term and are eligible for re-appointment.

The SCC may also include members recommended by the SCC and appointed by the Board. These appointments are also for a two-year period and eligible for re-appointment.

Appointed members, with the exception of high school SCC students, cannot serve on the executive of the SCC (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer or Secretary.)

In the first year of an SCC's existence, half of the membership will be elected for one year and the other half for two years. Both are eligible for re-election. This step is taken to ensure continuity on the SCC. The SCC is responsible for determining, during the election process, which elected members will serve for one or two years.

SCC Duties

SCCs work co-operatively with the schools to:
- Promote Catholic Education.
- Provide input into the school's mission and values.
- Develop a *Parallel Learning Improvement Plan* to support the School's Learning Improvement Plan
- Communicate annually with parents, guardians, and community members about its plans, initiatives and accomplishments.
- Account publicly for the expenditure of funds related to the operation of the SCC.
- Participate in orientation, training and development opportunities to enhance capacity to fulfill its responsibilities.
- Participate in division planned SCC development events.

SCCs may provide advice to the school concerning:

- Student behaviour expectations.
- Fundraising activities, within the parameters noted in school division administrative procedures.
- The development of student fees, within the parameters noted in Board policy.

SCCs may provide advice to the Board concerning:
- Language of instruction.
- Grade discontinuance.
- School closure.
- Any other matter on which the Board seeks the perspective of the community.

SCCs Councils operate within the framework of School Board Policy. Its work does not include:
- Matters which are the responsibilities of the Board as outlined in the Education Act.
- Matters which are the responsibilities of the Principal and/or staff as outlined in the Education Act and Board Policy.
- Matters involving personnel or pertaining to specific students or families.

As well, it is not the role of the SCC to:
- Set policy
- Direct school procedures
- Manage school operations
- Discuss personal, confidential information regarding students, staff members, or other parents or families

SCC Activities

In executing their duties, typical SCC activities may include:
- Planning special events and information sessions at their school
- Recruiting and organizing school volunteers
- Discussing education-related and school-specific issues both for the current year and for the future of the school and school division
- Fund raising activities
- Identifying SCC representatives to attend and participate in division-wide activities/information sessions
- Recruiting parents and other subject experts to make presentations of interest and educational value to the school community
- Creating opportunities for parents and guardians and community members to become involved in the activities and life of the school
- Making recommendations to the Board on subjects relating to school facilities

Board Responsibilities

To help SCCs conduct their business and activities in a manner that is both convenient and that benefits the entire school community, Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools will provide SCCs with:
- Free space in the local school for SCC meetings and other public gatherings
- Orientation, training, development and networking opportunities for SCC members
- Public document storage and disposal, when appropriate.
- A draft constitution on which an SCC may model and develop its own constitution

To further assist SCCs a Superintendent of Education shall be available as a contact for SCCs and will provide ongoing feedback and support.

School Administration Duties

The school principal and teacher have all the duties of elected members. The school principal will serve as a liaison to the Superintendent and the Director of Education.

School Administration can provide the necessary resources and information to the SCC with respect to policy and procedures. School administration can also enact and apply any approved decisions made by the SCC.

Being *appointed members,* the principal and teacher on the SCC cannot serve as chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer, or secretary.

Student Fees & Fundraising
- The principal will annually review student fees with the SCC.
- The principal will review school fundraising activities with the SCC.

Review of School Activities
- School activities are to be reviewed and approved by the principal and shared with the SCC.
- Information on curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular activities is to be shared on an ongoing basis.
- SCC input is to be sought on specific activities such as graduation, extended school trips and excursions.

Parent/Guardian Duties

Elected parents or guardians have all the duties expected of a council member as described in **Council Duties**. Elected parents and guardians may also serve as chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer, or secretary. Parents and guardians may also be appointed members.

Non-elected and non-appointed parents and guardians may become sub-committee members as determined by the SCC. It is important to note that sub-committee members do not have the right to vote.

Community Members' Duties

Elected community members have all the duties expected of a council member as described in **Council Duties**. Elected community members may also serve on the executive as chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer, or secretary. Although public members of the school community may be elected, they may also be appointed to the SCC. Appointed members, with the exception of high school students, may not serve on the SCC executive. Non-elected and non-appointed members of the community may join sub-committees as determined by the SCC.
Sub-committee members do not have the right to vote.

Member responsibilities

A member of a SCC is required to vacate his/her office if the member is:
- Convicted of an indictable offence
- Absent from three or more consecutive meetings without the authorization of the SCC
- Ineligible pursuant to Board policy.

Board Policy requires every volunteer that works directly with students and without staff supervision to complete a Criminal Records Check. This policy may not apply to most SCC members. Members should consult the school principal for clarification.

Students

For high schools' SCCs, one or two high school student members of the Student Representative Council may be appointed to the SCC. Student SCC members have all the duties expected of a council member as described in Council Duties. Students may also serve as chairperson, vice- chairperson, treasurer, or secretary. Students may also serve as appointed members.

Non-elected and non-appointed students may join sub-committees as determined by the SCC. Sub-committee members do not have the right to vote.

Sub-committee Members

From time to time, SCCs may wish to create sub-committees for specific projects and initiatives. Individuals from the school community and others with expertise may be asked to join these sub-committees. These sub-committees may be formed without prior approval of the CTTCS Board. These sub-committees will report exclusively to the SCCs who have responsibility for them. Sub-committee members have no SCC voting rights.

Key Dates for SCCs

There are currently no set dates for any SCCs to conduct specific business. However, at a minimum, the SCC shall plan and conduct five regular meetings and an annual general meeting each school year. In addition, SCCs may plan and organize any number of sub-committee meetings as required.

The dates of meetings should be set on days that are convenient for the majority of elected and appointed members of the SCC.

According to policy, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) must include council elections and must be held between May and October of each year.

When planning meetings, it is important first to check with the school administration to ensure the school facility is available. It is equally important to communicate, when appropriate the timing of this meeting to the school community to ensure a good turnout.

Elections and AGMs

School Community Council elections must be held at the same time as the SCC's AGM and before the end of October of each year. Each school will communicate to its community:

- The purpose of the meeting
- Where electors can access approved election procedures; and
- The date, time and location of the meeting.

Prior to the AGM, the Board will appoint an electoral officer who will be responsible for running the election.

The electoral officer cannot be that school principal or a current member of the SCC.

At least five weeks prior to the AGM, the SCC must identify the number of vacancies, and/or number of individuals not running for re-election to the electoral officer.

Election processes and procedures will be made available to the schools by CTTCS. The SCCs should ensure that these documents are easily available to the school community.

This information may be posted on the CTTCS web site. It is recommended that individual schools

also post this information on their web sites for the school community's information.

At the AGM, the chairperson of the SCC or designate must present a list of candidates.

Individuals wishing to serve on a school's SCC and who wish to be included on the list of candidates must:

- Contact the school in the four-week period prior to the AGM and request that their name be included on the list of candidates.
- During the AGM, self-declare, or request that their name be placed on the list.
- During the AGM individuals may receive a nomination from the floor and agree to let their name stand for election. The nominated individual must be present at the AGM.

School principals must make arrangements with their clerical staff to accept requests from potential candidates and to forward these requests to the electoral officer.

Each SCC shall determine, in advance of the election, the process for determining which students will be recommended for appointment to the council. It is recommended that the high school principal and the SCC consult with their Superintendent of Education to develop this process.

The electoral officer will verify the eligibility of the candidates through signed declarations. SCC members are elected for a period of two years and are eligible for re-election if they have not been required to step down as a result of a breach of member responsibilities.

At the inaugural or first election of a new SCC, half of the elected members will serve a two- year term, while the other half will serve for one year. In subsequent years, all elected member will serve for two years. All SCC members in good standing are eligible for re-election.

The electoral officer will conduct a secret ballot and announce successful candidates, based upon highest vote counts to fill the number of position vacancies.

The electoral officer shall use paper ballots that should be collected in a suitable container for this purpose.

Once counted by the electoral officer, the electoral officer must then announce the elected members during the AGM.

It is important to note, that at the time of the AGM, if there are nine (9) or less proposed candidates for elected membership, these candidates may be acclaimed without the need of secret ballot election.

Elected members will then select, either by open ballot vote or consensus, the executive of the SCC.

The executive (chair, vice-chair, treasurer, and secretary) can only include elected members, but may include appointed high school students, in the cases of high school SCCs.

After the AGM

Within 10 school days after the election, the electoral officer will provide to the Superintendent of Education:

- A sealed envelope with all ballots cast at the election,
- The names of successful candidates and their terms,
- The list of officers' names (chairperson, vice-chair, treasurer and secretary),
- The list of all candidates,
- The list of recommended student appointments, and
- Any notification that the elected membership is less than the five person minimum.

Following consultation with the school principal and the SCC, the Superintendent of Education will prepare a list of recommended appointees for submission to the Board.

A report addressing all of the recommended appointees will be forwarded to the Board for approval prior to the start of the school year.

Minutes of SCC annual meetings are to be forwarded to the Director or designate as soon as is practicable after the meeting.

Meetings

SCC meetings will generally be conducted much in the same way as parent council meetings have been run in the past. Decisions are to be made by consensus.

The principal is to be in attendance at all meetings. If the principal is unable to attend a meeting s/he is to inform the Chair of the SCC and a designate may be named for that meeting.

Budgets

The Board annually establishes a grant, which provides operational funds for SCCs. The grant is in the form of an established dollar level per SCC per year. SCCs are accountable for ensuring all funds (self-generated, received through grant provisions, or other sources of revenue) are managed in accordance with Board Policy, Administrative Procedures, and recognized accounting practices.

Operating funds are intended for:
- Vehicle expense allowance for events and meetings.
- Communication and public relations.
- Memberships in provincial organizations.
- Conference attendance and professional development.
- Incidental expenses such as postage and printing.
- Support School Level Plans and SCC-related initiatives.

An annual statement of revenues and expenses for the period September 1st to August 31st will be provided to SCCs upon completion of the annual audited financial statement.

Accounting Guidelines

In order to exercise effective control over funds, a set of complete and accurate accounting records must be maintained and made available for use or review on a timely basis. Financial record management and maintenance shall be based on fundamental accounting principles that include:
- Receipting and recording all revenues in conjunction with Division Office staff.
- Safeguarding/control of cash:
  - all cash counted/verified by two people,
  - receipt issued for all cash,
  - use of a "cash count form", and
  - secure storage and regular deposits of cash.
- Authorization and recording all expenditures.
- Documentation to substantiate expenditures.
- Preparation of a year-end report.

The fiscal year for councils operates from September 1 to August 31.

Disbursement of Funds

- A cheque requisition form along with supporting invoices should be forwarded to the Division Office for payment. A cheque or Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) will be issued from the Division Office.
- Cash should not be used to pay expenses.
- Each SCC is issued a credit card that may be used for purchasing or payments. Receipts along with the credit card summary sheet should be forwarded to the Division Office no later than the 30th of each month.

Alignment of Goals

It is crucial that school and SCC improvement goals align with the goals defined by Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools. Details of this plan may also be found on the Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools web site www.christtheteacher.ca.

Linkage to the Board

To facilitate communication, the Board and the Director will develop procedures that allow for all SCCs to communicate with the Board or designated Board member at least once each year.

The Board values SCCs and to foster the flow of information within and across the school division, in keeping with approved lines of communication, the Board approves of individual Board members attending SCC meetings in order to:

- Enhance communication with SCCs.
- Enhance the development of educational governance across the school division.
- Create, develop and maintain an effective network between the various groups that are part of the school division.
- Help clarify and reinforce the Board's role, school division protocols, Board directions and initiatives.

When individual trustees attend SCC meetings they do so as observers and do not have the authority to speak for the Board, unless provided with such authority by motion of the Board.

To further facilitate communication:

- The Director encourages principals to inform parents and community members of SCC meetings through their school newsletters.
- SCCs always have the opportunity to address the Board using the Board's procedure to meet with delegations.
- SCC advice is to be provided to the Board corporate.

Communications to Schools and Parents/Guardians

The SCC must work with the school principal to coordinate any communications and/or meetings with the school community. These communications may include, but are not limited to:

- School newsletters
- Handouts for students to take home
- Posters
- Voicemails/talkmails to parent/guardians
- Community meetings.

It is vital that the SCC and the school principal remember that Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools has an obligation to protect individual's privacy. Telephone numbers, addresses and any personal information relating to staff, students or their families cannot be disclosed or shared by the school without the explicit (usually in writing) permission of the individual.

Communications to Public

As with communicating within the school community to parents and guardians, SCCs may also seek to communicate to the public to inform, to consult or to solicit and encourage participation.

These communications can be done through a variety of means including:
- Posters
- Advertising
- Billboards/school signs (with principal's approval)
- Community meetings
- Media advisories/releases
- Media Community Calendar notices

SCC should verify with the school principal regarding public communications.

Complaints or Grievances Brought to Council or Council Members

As a representative body, councils may receive complaints or grievances about their operations or broader operations of the school.

Any matter concerning a student or staff member should be immediately directed to the principal.

Where complaints or grievances about council operations are raised with a council member, that member should immediately refer the individual to the Council Chair and inform the Council Chair of the concern or grievance.

If the individual is not satisfied with the response from the Council Chair, the concern or grievance should be brought to the attention of the council in a more formal manner.

Formal concerns or complaints can be brought to the attention of council by:
- Addressing the concern in writing to the Council Chair, or
- Requesting that the Council Chair provide the individual with an opportunity to meet with council to discuss the concern.

In cases where a formal complaint or grievance has been raised, council will provide a written response regarding how the matter will be addressed.

Councils must include procedures for handling complaints or grievances in their constitution.

Annual Meeting Related Communications

CTTCS is responsible for the majority of public advertising concerning Annual Meetings. See **Elections and AGMs**.

SCCs are also welcome to advertise and communicate within their own school communities about the AGM by using any and all of the communications techniques noted above in this section.

Advertising

SCCs may advertise activities, events or other initiatives with any media. Please note that advertising can be costly – see **Budget** section.

APPENDIX A

An Outline for a School Community Council Constitution

1. Mission Statement

2. Guiding Principles or Values

3. Membership
   Define or list the number of representative members (5 – 9), and all other representative members on council.

4. Officers
   List officers and consider noting key roles or responsibilities.

5. Committees
   List any standing committees the council wishes to establish.

6. Meetings

   a. Annual Meeting
      Note stipulations council wishes to follow for the timing and conduct of annual meetings, staying within legislative and Board parameters.

   b. Regular Meetings
      Note when and how often council will hold regular meetings.

   c. Governance/Decision Making
      Note how decisions will be made in council meetings and what system of meeting management will be used.

7. General Operations
   Councils may wish to include some of these items in their constitution. If not, they are highly recommended as supporting documents.

   a. Code of Conduct (sample in Appendix B)
      This section would address how council members conduct themselves in relation to their role on council on internal and external levels.

   b. Consultation
      This section would describe the means by which council will communicate with the school, school community and school division.

   c. Conflict of Interest
      This section would highlight the need for council members to declare conflict of interest when certain matters come before council and opt out of discussion and decision making.

    d. Complaints or Grievances
    This section would describe how council (as individual members and as a whole) will deal with complaints or grievances directed toward council.

8. Assessment of Operations
   Council may wish to build formal assessment of operations into their annual routine. If so, it is recommended that this be part of their constitution. Supporting documents for assessment of operations are found in Chapter 8 of this manual.

9. Amending the Constitution
   Since the need for making amendments to a constitution is likely to occur over time, it is important to include this item in a constitution. This section describes when and how amendments can be made to the constitution.

APPENDIX B
Sample Code of Conduct

The following information constitutes a sample "Code of Conduct" for a council. Actual codes may vary to reflect local concerns and considerations.

1. The School Community Council is not a forum for the discussion of individual school personnel, students, parents, or other individual members of the school community.

2. 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, and in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.

3. A person who accepts a position as a member of the School Community Council shall:

    a. Support Catholic Education and the mission and values of the school division.

    b. Honour the role of the School Community Council.

    c. Be guided by the overall vision and purpose of the School Community Council.

    d. Perform duties with honesty and integrity.

    e. Endeavour to be familiar with the vision, mission and shared values of the school division and perform their duties accordingly.

    f. Work to ensure that well-being of students is of primary focus in all decisions.

    g. Respect the rights of all individuals.

    h. Encourage a positive atmosphere where individual contributions are valued.

    i. Contribute to consensus building.

    j. Encourage and support parents and students with individual concerns to act on their own behalf and provide information on processes for processing concerns.

    k. Work to ensure that issues are resolved through due process.

    l. Strive to be informed and only share information that is reliable and correct.

    m. Respect all confidential information.

    n. Declare any conflict of interest.

4. Intervention for an Initial or Minor Infraction of the Code of Conduct

    Where potential Code of Conduct infractions are raised, the Council Chair shall:

    a. Seek understanding regarding the nature of the allegation or concern.

b.   Discuss and resolve the concern with the member in confidence.

5.   <u>Intervention for Repeated or Major Infractions of the Code of Conduct</u>

Where infractions of this nature are clearly evident, council shall provide a written statement to the individual signed by the Council Chair, addressing the concern and indicating that the actions that brought about a violation of the Code of Conduct on the part of the member must cease.

6.   <u>Further Progressive Intervention for Repeated Infractions of the Code of Conduct</u>

a.   In continued incidents involving a violation of Code of Conduct council shall consider imposing sanctions on the member in question.

b.   In further continued incidents involving a violation of Code of Conduct, council shall consider seeking the resignation of the member in question.

APPENDIX C

School Community Council Annual Meeting Agenda

[Name of School] School Community Council Annual Meeting Agenda
[Date] [Time]
[Location]

1. Call to Order

2. Elections

3. Annual Report for the Previous Year[3]
   3.1 Activity Report
   3.2 Financial Report
   3.3 Other (as defined by the SCC, such as committee report)

4. Selection of Officers[4]
   3.1 Chair
   3.2 Vice-Chair
   3.3 Secretary
   3.4 Treasurer
   3.5 Other

5. Other Business
   (as established by the School Community Council, including meeting dates for the next year).

6. Open Discussion

7. Adjournment

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[3] Note that SCCs may use (and are encouraged to use) the Annual Activity Report and Annual Financial Report for this purpose. There is no need to prepare separate or different reports.

[4] The selection of officers may occur at the next regular council meeting following the annual Meeting. Officers are selected from parent representatives, elected community members, student representative or appointed First Nation representatives.

APPENDIX D

Processes for Conflict Resolution

The following points provide an outline for a conflict resolution process that councils may wish to adopt.

1. Build a Collaborative Climate – the council establishes a collaborative climate so that differences of opinion can be dealt with in an open manner. All members should agree to:
   - Respect the perspective of others.
   - Listen to what others have to say.
   - Prepare to problem solve.

2. Be Prepared – if differences of opinion cannot be worked out, have a procedure in place. Conflict resolution may include the use of the following:
   - The appointment of a mediator to develop a solution that will be satisfactory to both sides.
   - Establishment of a jointly agreed-upon panel to make a recommendation or a binding.
   - Development of a plan to refer to a dispute to school administrators.

3. Identify the Problem – by clearly defining the problem, a group can begin to resolve the underlying issues. Defining the problem involves clearly stating views, listening to others, trying to understand their views, and asking questions to clarify general understandings. At this stage, participants should avoid giving advice or judgments. Disputes usually occur because of disagreements on:
   - Facts
   - Resources
   - Perceptions
   - Values and beliefs
   - Styles

4. Brainstorm and Evaluate Options and Solutions – by working together to find solutions, individuals and groups are more likely to create an optimal situation going forward.

5. Create an Action Plan – the plan should identify timelines and responsibilities for actions.

APPENDIX E

School Community Councils – Assessment / Appraisal

General Considerations

Monitoring progress and effectiveness holds great potential for realizing improvement in the work of a School Community Council. Knowing how well your council is performing will improve its contribution to student well-being and learned success, and demonstrates public accountability.

Conducting a self-assessment will support School Community Councils by both:

- Serving as an *orientation and learning opportunity* for councils to clarify and strengthen their understanding of their role and responsibilities, and
- Providing an opportunity to gather and *interpret information about the effectiveness of their work* enabling them to strengthen their contribution and continuously improve.

It will assist your council to determine promising practices, understand current strengths and weaknesses, and identify realistic directions for improvement. The information gathered will also assist Boards of Education in understanding the challenges and successes being experienced by School Community Councils and what supports are needed.

Types of Assessments

There are many types of assessments that a council can use to help to determine their level of effectiveness. The type of assessment selected will be determined based on what the Council's area of focus is and who will be providing the feedback. For example, it is common for councils to desire to perform a general self-assessment in all areas of its operations. There are multiple methods that can be used to generate this general feedback.

1. School Community Council Effectiveness Rubric and Planning Template

One method of assessment designed for review of overall council effectiveness is *The School Community Council Effectiveness Rubric*. The rubric allows the council to compare their current level of functioning to exemplars based upon criteria of performance that councils may strive to achieve. The rubric provides five key areas in the role and practices of School Community Councils as follows:

1. Council Development
2. Learning Improvement Plan
3. Community Development and Partnerships
4. Communications
5. Monitoring Results and Planning to Improve

To use this rubric, council members identify the statements in the rubric which most closely reflect the council's current performance levels in each of the five areas. Council members may wish to engage in this individually or as a collective group. This comparison process will allow the council to determine the overall council effectiveness.

Complementing this rubric is a Planning Template that allows council members to further flesh out the strengths and areas for improvement for the council. In addition, the council members are provided with a template that allows the council to plan specific goals and actions for continual improvement.

The School Community Council Effectiveness Rubric and Planning Template are provided in this document.

2. On-line SCC Survey

A second method for self-assessment that is available is an online survey available by contacting the Division Office. Like the School Community Council Effectiveness Rubric, the survey addresses the five areas of council performance. Council members assess performance by indicating their level of agreement with a list of statements. Members complete the survey individually and the results are compiled and provided to the schools by Division Office staff. The online survey does not provide the exemplars provided in the rubric above and does not provide the template for planning for improvement. A copy of this survey is provided in this document.

Councils who wish to use the online survey may have their school principal communicate with the Superintendent of Education with responsibility for Community Schools.

3. SCC Self-Appraisal Specific Area of Interest Self-Assessments

School Community Councils may wish to perform other types of self-assessment directed at specific areas of council performance. Councils may create or use assessment tools that provide feedback specific to the performance area. This document provides samples of questionnaires for councils and council members to assess council meeting effectiveness and individual council member self-appraisal. Council members should be asked to complete the questionnaires and submit to the SCC Chair. The SCC Chair should compile the responses and use the results as a basis for discussion to strengthen council operations in future.

The assessment methods listed above are not exhaustive and councils and school administration are encouraged to collaborate to develop assessment tools to suit their specific needs. Division Office staff are available to assist with the creation of assessment tools as required by councils.

APPENDIX F

School Community Council Effectiveness Rubric and Planning Template

School Community Council Effectiveness Rubric: UNDERSTANDING EFFECTIVENESS – *How do we define and measure success?*

The following continuum describes criteria of effectiveness related to three stages of Council development in their key responsibility areas:
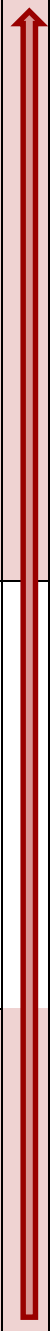
Stage 1:   The council is at the *initial development stage* and is primarily functioning to "inform" its public.

Stage 2:   The council is *progressing* in its development and is "involving" key representatives, as well as involved in the development of the Learning Improvement Plan and other key responsibilities.

Stage 3:   The council is working at *proficient* and *effective* level, "engaging" other meaningfully and engaged successfully in the critical work of enhancing student wellbeing and learning success.

For each column, select the level of development that best describes your current practices and operations. Feel free to add other indicators of effectiveness in the "other" line to describe your specific and unique situation.

Level of Development		Council Development	Learning Improvement Plan	Community Engagement & Partnerships	Communications	Monitoring Results & Planning to Improve
Stage 3 Proficient & Effective (Engaging)	↑	• Independent executive with interdependent leadership between principal and chair. • Principal advises, chair leads or co-leadership. • Representative membership. • All members understand roles and relationships. • Understands community issues, needs, aspirations, and resources. • Works well as a team. • Student and minority voice. • Productive meetings.	• Focused on supporting student learning and well-being. • School community involved in implementing Learning Improvement Plan (LIP). • LIP actions and results monitored for continuous improvement. • SCC responsibilities address key matters linked to the Division priorities and provincial CIF.	• Council is knowledgeable of the social, health, and economic conditions of the community and the needs, aspirations, and abilities of the students. • Council engages broad and diverse representatives from the school community to strengthen the learning program and provide supports for students' diverse needs.	• Communication tools in place to inform parents and community members. • Regular scheduled meetings between principal and chair. • Constructive relationship with community, staff, and board. • Informative and timely communications (Communications Plan). • Two-way communications, open and inclusive. • Student achievement data and key priorities shared.	• Annual report prepared on the activities, plans, and results. • Focused on measuring outcomes / results. • Outcome data is analyzed and used effectively and guides planning and reports. • Education, information available on the use of data. • Engages school community in celebrating successes. • OTHER?

Level of Development		Council Development	Learning Improvement Plan	Community Engagement & Partnerships	Communications	Monitoring Results & Planning to Improve
		• SCC is an integral, purposeful, and valued component of school division governance, integrated into Board of Education decision-making processes.	• The SCC uses evaluation and assessment information and data appropriately to inform and strengthen its planning and contributions. • OTHER	• Council provides advice to community agencies on the learning and well-being of students. • OTHER?	• Communication tools in place to inform parents and community members. • Regular scheduled meetings between principal and chair. • Constructive relationship with community, staff, and board. • Informative and timely communications (Communications Plan). • Two-way communications, open and inclusive. • Student achievement data and key priorities shared. • The SCC seeks out student perspective and those not traditionally heard. • Provides advice to the Board respecting student code of conduct, school closure, religious and cultural instruction, etc. • OTHER?	• Annual report prepared on the activities, plans, and results. • Focused on measuring outcomes / results. • Outcome data is analyzed and used effectively and guides planning and reports. • Education, information available on the use of data. • Engages school community in celebrating successes. • OTHER?
Stage 2 Progressive (Involving)		• Growing leadership from the executive. • Constitution developed. • Focused on key matters that make a difference in student learning and well-being. • Growing understanding of roles and responsibilities. • Development, training, and networking opportunities. • OTHER?	• Involved with principal, staff, parents, students, etc. in development of LIP and submitted to Board. • Limited knowledge of the use of data "Assessment Literacy". • OTHER?	• Inventory of community resources and assets in place. • Partnerships being established to support students' diverse needs. • Work underway to seek out hard to reach parents. • Advisory positions being filled by community representatives. • Council experiencing success in involving family and community members. • OTHER?	• Newsletter/communications with parents begun. • Council building climate of open and honest communication. • SCC providing advice to principal and staff regarding school programs. • Experiencing successes in involving family and community members. • Some opportunities to network with school board and administrative staff. • OTHER?	• Developing capacity in "assessment literacy" – knowledge of measurement, evaluation, and the use and interpretation of data. • Growing confidence in development of annual report. • OTHER?
Stage 1 Beginning Development (Informing)		• Reliant on principal leadership. • Learning about roles and responsibilities. • Constitution under development. • First Learning Improvement Plan developed. • Learning to work as a team. • Establishing relationships with principal and staff. • OTHER?	• The council has begun to work on the LIP. • Limited knowledge of community issues and needs. • OTHER?	• Limited knowledge of school board and provincial goals and priorities. • Limited success in involving hard to reach parents. • OTHER?	• Communication tools under development. • OTHER?	• Limited knowledge of measurement, evaluation methods, and use and interpretation of data. • Reports to parents of an informational nature on plan development; not progress. • OTHER?

Planning Template: FINDING ACTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT – *IDENTIFYING Next Steps and Intended Results*

Building on the information gained and discussions of the previous information, outline the actions your council is committed to for improving performance in each of its five key functions, including what you hope to achieve as results.

Areas of Council Effectiveness	Strengths	Areas for Improvement	Next Steps (Prioritized)	Intended Results / Outcomes
1. **Council Development**				
2. **Learning Improvement Plan**				
3. **Community Development and Partnerships**				
4. **Communications**				
5. **Monitoring Results and Planning to Improve**				

APPENDIX G
School Community Council Self-Monitoring and Improvement

Perspectives and Self-Reflection Tool

Description

Thanks you for taking time to complete this survey. This survey will be available until (April 30). Your responses will be kept confidential. Your feedback will help you to reflect on your SCC operations. Your feedback will help to plan future events that serve your needs. Upon completion, you will receive a summary of responses for your SCC and a comparison to the School Division averages.

Instructions

Council members are asked to complete the following survey individually. Five sections are provided, one for each of the key functions in the roles and responsibilities of effective School Community Councils: (I) Council Development; (II) School Learning Improvement Plan; (III) Community Engagement; (IV) Communications; and, (V) Monitoring Results and Planning to Improve. Based on your recent experience on the Council, rate each of the indicators of effectiveness below using a scale of Always, Usually, Sometimes, Never, or Not Sure.

Questions #5 through #15 relate to *Council Development: Building a Representative and Effective Council.*
Questions #16 through #21 relate to *School Learning Improvement Plan.*
Questions #22 through #24 relate to *Community Engagement and Partnerships.*
Questions #25 through #36 relate to *Communications: Relationship Building and Reporting.*
Questions #37 through # 40 relate to *Monitoring Results and Planning to Improve.*

1. Name of School Community Council:

2. Council Position Held:

3. Role:

- o   Staff Member
- o   Community Member
- o   Both

4. School:

- o Dreambuilders High School
- o St. Alphonsus School
- o St. Henry's Jr. School
- o St. Henry's Sr. School
- o St. Mary's School
- o St. Michael's School
- o St. Paul's School
- o Sacred Heart High School
- o St. Theodore School

5. Our SCC reflects the community and students in the school.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

6. I am clear about the roles and responsibilities of the SCC.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

7. I believe the roles and responsibilities are understood by all members.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

8. Our SCC develops an annual budget.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

9. Our SCC budget aligns with the School Learning Improvement Plan.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

10. Our SCC is respectful of confidentiality regarding information or complaints about any pupil, family member, guardian, teacher, administrator or other employee, or member of the Board of Education.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

11. Our SCC has participated in orientation opportunities.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

12. Our SCC has participated in networking opportunities to enhance our capacity to carry out responsibilities.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

13. Our SCC has a positive working relationship with the school principal and staff.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

14. Our SCC experiences success when we work together to achieve our goals.

    o   Always
    o   Usually
    o   Sometimes
    o   Never
    o   Not Sure

15. I typically attend the SCC meeting.

    o   Yes
    o   No
    o   Sometimes

16. Our SCC is engaged in the development of the School Learning Improvement Plan.

    o   Always
    o   Usually
    o   Sometimes
    o   Never
    o   Not Sure

17. Our SCC focuses its actions in support of student well-being and learning.

    o   Always
    o   Usually
    o   Sometimes
    o   Never
    o   Not Sure

18. Our SCC activities are aligned to the School Learning Improvement Plan.

    o   Always
    o   Usually
    o   Sometimes
    o   Never
    o   Not Sure

19. Special projects of our SCC are included in the School Learning Improvement Plan.

    o   Always
    o   Usually
    o   Sometimes
    o   Never
    o   Not Sure

20. How do you see your role in the development and implementation of the School Learning Improvement Plan?

21. Our SCC is actively involved in providing support to our school administration and staff to effectively carry out its responsibilities in the area of faith formation.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

22. Our SCC provides supports to parents to become more directly involved in their child's learning and development (e.g., parenting programs, family literacy, etc.).

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

23. Our SCC engages people who are not on the SCC itself to assist with programs and supports.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

24. Advisory positions on the SCC include community representatives to support partnerships with businesses, First Nations & Metis representatives, recreation, etc., to strengthen the capacity of school programming.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

25. Our SCC has developed a climate for open and honest communication where everyone has an opportunity for input and feels their views are heard and respected.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

26. Our SCC communicates with parents, community members, students, and school personnel through a newsletter.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

27. Our SCC communicates with parents, community members, students, and school personnel through the school website.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

28. Our SCC communicates with parents, community members, students, and school personnel through reports.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

29. Our SCC records minutes of SCC meetings and makes them available on the school website.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

30. Our SCC develops meeting agendas.

   o Always
   o Usually
   o Sometimes
   o Never
   o Not Sure

31. Our SCC seeks feedback from the school community.

   o Always
   o Usually
   o Sometimes
   o Never
   o Not Sure

32. Our SCC actively seeks the perspectives of parents.

   o Always
   o Usually
   o Sometimes
   o Never
   o Not Sure

33. Our SCC actively seeks the perspectives of students.

   o Always
   o Usually
   o Sometimes
   o Never
   o Not Sure

34. Our SCC actively seeks the perspectives of people not traditionally involved or heard from.

   o Always
   o Usually
   o Sometimes
   o Never
   o Not Sure

35. Our SCC is actively involved in providing advice and sharing our understanding of the school community to the School Division and Board of Education.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

36. Our SCC takes advantage of opportunities to network and dialogue with the Board of Education and administrative staff.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

37. Discussions at SCC meetings focus on how to strengthen student learning and well-being, as well as how to support the School Learning Improvement Plan.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

38. Our SCC members understand how the school plans to use achievement data for school improvement efforts.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

39. Our SCC provides opportunities for parents, students, teachers, and community members to give us feedback on our work.

- o Always
- o Usually
- o Sometimes
- o Never
- o Not Sure

40. Our SCC engages the school community in celebrating successes.

   o   Always
   o   Usually
   o   Sometimes
   o   Never
   o   Not Sure

The overall scores in each category will provide you with an indication of areas to celebrate success in and to target for improvement. A report will be generated for your SCC by Division Office.

School Community Council Member Self-Appraisal

Do I conduct myself in a manner that:

	Consistently	Occasionally	Rarely
Supports the vision, mission, and goals of the school			
Services the overall best interests of the school rather than any particular constituency			
Brings credibility and good will to the school			
Respects principles of fair play and due process			
Demonstrates respect for individuals in all manifestations of their cultural and linguistic diversity and life circumstances			
Respects and gives fair consideration to diverse and opposing viewpoints			
Demonstrates due diligence and dedication in preparation for and attendance at meetings, special events, and in all other activities on behalf of the school			
Demonstrates good faith, prudent judgment, honesty, transparency, and openness in my activities on behalf of the council and school			
Ensures that the financial affairs of the council are managed in a responsible and transparent manner			
Avoids real or perceived conflicts of interest			
Conforms to the constitution approved by the council and in particular the Code of Conduct			
Publicly demonstrates acceptance, respect, and support for decisions legitimately taken in transaction of council business			

School Community Council Meeting Appraisal

Instructions: Please take the time to complete this survey. This is an opportunity to improve future meetings.

Evaluation Scale – "1" denotes "not at all" and "5" denotes "very much"

	1	2	3	4	5
Was the agenda of this meeting clear?					
Were you encouraged to contribute?					
Did the atmosphere allow for free discussion?					
Was there enough time for discussion?					
Are you clear on what, if any, decision(s) was reached?					
Are you clear on the next steps being taken?					
Are you clear about who is responsible for taking the next steps?					
Do you think the purpose of this meeting was fulfilled?					

What aspects of this meeting were most appealing?

a.

b.

What aspects of this meeting were least appealing?

a.

b.

How did the SCC Chair conduct the meeting?

Do you have any suggestions for improving future meetings?

Name (optional)   Date