EDMONTON
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Administrative Procedure 110

SCHOOL COUNCILS

Background

The Division recognizes the rights of parents to be involved in their children's education and for parents, community members and school staff to be involved in key decisions about the education of students. In each school in the Division, parents and the school community are to be provided with the opportunity to establish and maintain a school council. School councils have a role in advising and consulting with the Principal on any matter relating to the school.

Definition

A school council is a collective association of parents, teachers, principals, staff, students (where appropriate), and community representatives who seek to work together to promote the well-being and effectiveness of the entire school community and thereby to enhance student learning. A school council provides a means to facilitate cooperation among all the concerned participants in the local school.

Procedures

1. Governing Law

    1.1. All school council activities are governed by and subject to the provisions of the *School Councils Regulation*, Alta. Reg. 94/2019 (hereinafter the "*Regulation"*), and the *Education Act*, S.A. 2012, c. E.0.3, as amended. The *Regulation* governs the establishment of a school council or advisory committee in circumstances where one is not already in existence, membership of the school council and executive, responsibilities, operations and duties. School council executives must at all times be familiar with the Regulation and other applicable legislation.

2. Membership

    2.1. In circumstances where no school council has been established and one is required to be in existence, the school shall provide for the establishment of a school council in accordance with the *Regulation.*

    2.2. The majority of members of a school council must be either parents of students enrolled in the school or parents of children enrolled in an Early Childhood Services program at the school. A school council must include the following members:

        2.2.1. The Principal of the school;

        2.2.2. At least one person who is a teacher at the school, and who is elected or appointed by the teachers of the school; and,

2.2.3. If the school includes a senior high school program, at least one person who is a student enrolled in the high school, elected or appointed by the students enrolled in the high school.

2.3. It is also expected that there be an opportunity for representation in the membership from the parish and broader community, and the school council must establish a process allowing for the appointment of these persons as members of the school council.

3. Focus and Role

3.1. The central focus of the school council must be the desire to create a strong learning environment for all students enrolled in the school, recognizing that the foundation of what we have today has been built upon the characters of community, hospitality, justice, tradition, sacramentality, humanness, rationality, and spirituality. The school council itself must welcome and accommodate diversity in its membership, and strive to embody the Division's core values of dignity and respect, honesty, loyalty, fairness, and personal and communal growth in all its actions, endeavors and goals.

3.2. The school council may advise the Principal and the Board respecting any matter relating to the school. Areas that a school council will typically address are school planning, budgeting, communications, community relations, programming, the school plan for continuous growth and the three-year strategic education plan. In the event that a school council conducts fundraising activities and maintains a bank account, the Principal of the school shall not be a signing authority on any bank accounts maintained by the school council. Further guidance on school community fundraising activities can be found in Administrative Procedure 520 - School Community Fundraising Activities.

4. Council Governance

4.1. Once established, the school council must make bylaws respecting the conduct of its business and affairs including but not limited to:

4.1.1. The number, location, and calling of regular, special and organizational meetings;

4.1.2. The election or appointment of members of the school council and the executive;

4.1.3. Prescribing the offices of the executive, the roles of the offices and the process by which a member is nominated and elected to office; and,

4.1.4. Respecting the number of members required to be present at a meeting in order to constitute a quorum.

4.2. Bylaws proposed pursuant to s. 17(2) of the *Regulation* do not come into force unless approved by a majority of:

4.2.1. The parents of students enrolled in the school; and,

4.2.2. The parents of children enrolled in Early Childhood Services programs at the school, who vote at a special meeting of the school council called for that purpose.

4.3. Bylaws shall continue in force from year to year unless they are amended at a special meeting of the school council called for that purpose, and approved in accordance with the voting requirements set out in s. 17(3) of the *Regulation*.

4.4. The school council must hold its first meeting of any school within twenty (20) school days following the start of that school year, unless otherwise specified in the bylaws of the school council.

4.5. The school council must provide to the Principal a copy of the minutes for each meeting of the school council. The Principal may then make them available to the Board or public on request. Once the minutes are provided to the school, they become of the property of the Division. The school council shall also maintain a copy of the minutes for each meeting at the school, the custody and control of which shall be with the Chair of the school council. The school council and the school shall independently retain the minutes for each meeting for at least seven years.

5. Reporting Requirements

5.1. The school council shall annually receive reports from the Principal which shall include the following information:

5.1.1. Five years of achievement test and/or diploma examination results based on those writing in relation to local targets and provincial standards;

5.1.2. Percentage of students in grades 6 and 9 who write provincial achievement tests and /or student participation in diploma examinations;

5.1.3. A description of the school budgeting process and the school budget by no later than November 30 of any school year;

5.1.4. A copy of the three-year education plan; and,

5.1.5. A copy of the school's current plan for continuous growth.

5.2. The Chair of a school council must prepare and provide to the Board by September 30 of each year a report that:

5.2.1. Summarizes the activities of the school council in the previous school year; and,

5.2.2. Includes a financial statement relating to money handled by the school council in the previous school year, if any, and how funds were used.

5.3. The Chair of a school council may also prepare and provide to the Board advice regarding the development of the school's mission, vision, philosophy, policies, annual education plan, annual results report and budget.

6. Fundraising

6.1. School councils may fundraise, but may not engage in any activities that require a gaming license provided that:

6.1.1. Fundraising must be for predetermined purposes decided upon in consultation with the Principal. Funds must be expended as agreed to by both the school council and Principal.

EDMONTON
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

6.2. A school council must not incorporate under the *Societies Act* or part 9 of the *Companies Act.* Parents wishing to incorporate as a society or non-profit corporation for the purpose of holding a gaming license may do so under the *Societies Act* or part 9 of the *Companies Act* provided that:

6.2.1. The society or non-profit company is identified at all times as a separate legal entity from the school council; and,

6.2.2. If the proposed society or non-profit company bears a direct relationship to the school community in name or in function, a copy of the proposed charter must be approved, in writing, by the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the Division.

Adopted: April 3, 2000
Reviewed/Revised: June 13, 2000, June 12, 2002, March 15, 2005, November 6, 2007, June 28, 2013, June 30, 2017, December 10, 2018, February 5, 2021

Reference: Education Act, Sections 32, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 197
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Personal Information Protection Act
School Councils Regulation A.R. 94/2019
School Council Handbook