



School Council Handbook



Welcome!

Welcome to the St Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic School Division (STAR Catholic) School Council handbook and resource guide. This handbook is designed to help educate, support, and guide School Council activity across the Division. Your School Council involvement supports the success of not only your child, but the entire community. Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by creating a home where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for education in the virtues.

Choosing a Catholic school is an extension of this environment, and one of the greatest bridges between the home and school is the School Council. STAR Catholic School Division is a large urban-rural school division in central Alberta with more than 4,500 students and 400 staff. We have 12 schools in six communities and offer programming from pre-school to Grade 12 through the Alberta Education curriculum. School councils are foundational to achieving the Mission, Vision, and Values at STAR Catholic:

Our Mission: Rejoicing in the way of Christ, we nurture a love of learning in faith-filled Catholic schools!

Our Vision: Souls seeking Christ on a journey of faith, learning and love.

Core Values: We are dedicated to dignity, love of God and each other, the Gospel message, excellence, and Catholic education for life!

We truly hope and trust that this School Council Handbook will help you in your role on your School Council to guide and positively impact the community, building bridges between the home, school, and parish. Within the handbook you will find general guidance with specific and useful resources. School Councils exist by legislation in Alberta, but our Catholic perspective deepens their meaning as a collaborative venue between home and school.

Message from the Board of Trustees

All we do in a Catholic school is rooted in Catholic teaching. Catholic schools are Christ-centered and educate the whole child: spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and physically. The Board of Trustees, administrators, staff, parents, and caregivers all contribute to the formation of the students in a Catholic school setting.

In 1995, at the time of school board amalgamations in Alberta, School Councils became part of new legislation to formalize school communities as important stakeholders in education. School Councils have evolved to be part of significant consultation processes and opportunities for collaboration.

School Council is the opportunity for parents and caregivers to serve and present their views in an effort to continuously support and improve the faith experience and the educational outcomes of the students in their school. The role of School Council is integral to the faith, culture, and learning environment of the school.

Parents and caregivers are the first educators of their children, and your collective input is highly respected and contributes to the fullness of the faith and education experience for your children. Talents and gifts are always revealed in the context of serving and we hope your time serving in this capacity is rewarding.

At St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Schools, your commitment to Catholic education at the School Council level is sincerely appreciated by the Board of Trustees. As our partners in education, your input is valued, and we look forward to opportunities to enhance student learning with you. Catholic education is a blessing and is entrusted to all of us to uphold and serve with gratitude.

Yours in Catholic Education,
Board of Trustees, St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Schools

"To love is to will the good of the other."
- Saint Thomas Aquinas

Prayer for School Councils

God, the source of every good gift,

We pray that all of us will experience a sense of warmth and welcome, and that there will be a rich sharing of ideas, talents and enthusiasm as together we go about our work of helping our children to grow and learn.

Help us recognize your presence in one another. Inspire us to listen with attention and patience, to share with courage and generosity, and to welcome the ideas of all.

May this meeting of ours strengthen our friendships, build our communities and increase our confidence in ourselves and our schools.

Amen

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What is the Role of the School Council?



A School Council is a collective group of parents, principal, staff, secondary students (where applicable), and community representatives as mandated by the Alberta Education Act that work together as a team to advise on and develop solutions to enhance student experience and learning, both at the local school level and the district level.

School Councils provide a means for parents and community to work together with administration, staff and high school students to promote the wellbeing and overall effectiveness of the school community, to enhance student learning and to facilitate cooperation among parents and participants in the local school. Its main purpose is advisory; School Councils provide an opportunity for members of the school community to provide advice and consult with the school principal. A secondary purpose of the School Council is to support education through advocacy.

What School Councils are Not

As the primary role is advisory, School Councils are not eligible to incorporate as societies. It is also not the primary intent of School Councils to fundraise or lobby.

Roles that are not to be taken on by a School Council include:

- School governance and management: School Councils do not have any authority to direct administration on how to run or manage the school but may provide advice in this area.
- School Councils do not involve themselves in school employment issues.
- Listening or dealing with complaints: School Councils are neither a place for complaining, nor to discuss specific people, staff, or students.
- School Councils are not a fundraising group.

How does the Board of Trustees value School Councils?

The Board values the relationship with School Councils through their input in school-based decision making, their partnership in working towards the goals of the Division, and their voice for concerns. The Board values opportunities of engagement and consultation through regular School Council meetings, Council of School Council meetings, annual Community Consultation engagement, and any other opportunities that become available. Schools Councils are bound by all policies and procedures of the Division.

How School Councils Differ from Other School-Associated Groups

School Councils exist to advise the principal and the Board on school matters. School Councils are governed by the Education Act, the School Council regulations, and any applicable policies or administrative procedures.

Parent societies or fundraising associations are a formal group of people incorporated under the Societies Act for the purpose of raising funds for the school. A society is a separate legal entity from the School Council. The principal should not be a part of this group. School Council business and meetings must be kept separate and distinct from the meetings and business of other groups.

Objectives of the School Council



As previously stated, the purpose of a School Council is outlined in the Alberta Education Act and other applicable policies. In addition, School Councils can contribute to a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe environment at the school. Each School Council can decide how to fulfill this responsibility in the school community by:

- Seeking the views of the school community and representing the parent perspective by providing advice to and consulting with the principal and the Board on matters relating to the school such as: the school philosophy, mission, and vision; policies; improvement plans; programs and directions; and budget allocations to meet student needs.
- Fostering a positive, collaborative environment with a variety of opportunities for meaningful engagement by members of the school community.
- Supporting special events that will support and enhance student learning, encourage participation, and promote the well-being of the school community.
- Facilitating a performance evaluation of the school council and communicating the results of this evaluation to the Board and school community.
- Developing a communication plan to share information with parents and the community and facilitating communications with all educational stakeholders.
- Adhering to the School Council's Code of Ethics.
- Consulting with other School Councils and provincial organizations.
- Supporting an approach to education in which decisions are made collaboratively.
- Advising the Board, Alberta Education, or other provincial organizations on broader educational issues.

Adapted from ASCA Handbook (2016)

Partnerships

Parish Relations

The School Council is part of the whole education of the child, including home, school, and parish. Local parishes/churches are a vital partner in support of Catholic education. School Councils need to be mindful of this relationship and that there may be different levels of engagement from one community to another. The triad of home, school, and parish benefits students, their families, and the community.

When opportunities exist, consider inviting a parish member to your School Council meeting.

Fundraising Society

A good working practice suggests a fundraising society should maintain high ethical standards, that align with the school councils, the school's and the board's mission and vision. The society's purpose should be in direct relation to the school to which the fundraising society wishes to contribute funds. The STAR believes that the goals of these societies go beyond money to reflect the creative and collaborative efforts of parents, students, and the school community for the support of school initiatives, enhanced student learning and enriching school programs.

Board Governance Documents



It is important for a School Council executive to be aware of documents that regulate and guide the work of School Councils so that regulations and requirements are adhered to. The three most important of these are:

1. Alberta Education Act

The Education Act sets in law the powers and responsibilities of the Minister of Education and School Boards, the authority of principals and teachers, and the rights and responsibilities of parents and students. (Schooladvocacy.ca).

School Councils are regulated provincially by the Education Act.

STAR Catholic School Board Policies

School Board Policies are the governing framework documents that guide the Superintendent and administration in the work of the Division. School councils should be familiar with the following policies:

- [Policy 2 - Role of the Board - 3.7, 3.8, 3.9](#)
- [Policy 18 - School Fundraising](#)

2. STAR Catholic Administrative Procedures

STAR School Councils are further governed by Administrative Procedures that guide the operations, assist with resolving conflict, and are overseen by the Superintendent.

- a. AP 110 - School Councils
- b. AP 110 Appendix - Annual Report Revenue & Expenses Template

As mandated by Alberta Education in Section 14 of the School Councils Regulation, School Council Chairs must prepare and provide an annual report to the Board by September 30 of each year. The Board recognizes that all our School Councils have different processes they follow in regard to year end reports and as such, here are some best practices:

The Board receives the School Council's reports as information to ensure accountability of the School Council. Providing reports also highlights the activities and engagement of the school communities.

- c. [AP 111 - School Council Conflict Resolution](#)

School Council Operations

Governance Documents

1. Your School Council Operating Procedures/Bylaws

As per the Education Act and the School Councils Regulations, School Councils may create and implement their own governance documents, including bylaws or operating procedures. These documents are used to guide the School Council as it conducts its business. As School Councils have their own regulation that provide a governing framework, they are not required to submit bylaws to Service Alberta for approval.



Operating procedures are less formal governing documents that serve the same function as bylaws. Operating procedures can be changed any time throughout the year with proper notice given and procedures followed. This could be beneficial for new School Councils or those that are writing their governance document for the first time as they learn and respond to events and issues.

Bylaws are more formal governing documents that can generally only be changed through a special resolution that requires notification to the membership. These changes are generally made once a year at Annual General Meetings (AGMs) unless otherwise stated in the bylaws.

Generally, the operations of a School Council are impacted by past culture and procedures, as well as the relationship between the Chair and the school principal. As governing documents guide the School Council's functions, it's important to them in collaboration as a group, and to create a timeline for regular follow-ups/check-ins between the School Council and the principal.

Information and Privacy



[Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy \(FOIP\)](#): School Boards and employees are governed under FOIP, which defines the nature of personal information that can be shared and for what purposes.

[Personal Information Protection Act \(PIPA\)](#): School Councils are governed under PIPA, which outlines the collection and use of personal information (i.e., membership database, websites or apps that collect names and financial information for fundraisers, email address for surveys, etc.).

It is recommended that School Councils decide how to communicate with their membership (either by their own means or through the school) and create a process and/or policy for collection of information, if applicable.

[PIPA - Frequently Asked Questions for School Councils and School Fundraising Societies](#)

Insurance and Liability

School Council members participating as volunteers in activities of the school under the direction of the principal or staff are insured under the Division's insurance policies for any unintentional acts that cause damage to property or harm to other people.

If you are contemplating forming a separate entity for fundraising, perhaps under the Societies Act, we urge you to obtain the appropriate insurance to protect yourselves and others.

The Division may provide you with the name of a broker for insurance, but you are also free to find your own broker. Please ensure you discuss with them the activities you intend to undertake so that there are no exclusions within the policy.

BEST PRACTICES

- ✓ Be sure to post your procedures.
- ✓ Create a process for collection of personal information.
- ✓ Be mindful of relationships with parishes.
- ✓ Understand engagement will vary from one community to another.
- ✓ Keep school council business separate from that of other groups.
- ✓ Use social media responsibly.

Business of a School Council

Meetings

School Council are where the group generally conducts its business. During meetings, decisions are made about the direction, events, and projects of the Council. School Council activities also happen between meetings; it's not always about the meetings.

Meetings can be a place where the School Council and larger school population learn about school activities and provide opportunities to provide feedback to the administration, staff, and sometimes Trustees if they are in attendance.

Agendas

An agenda is a document that the group agrees will guide the order of business during a meeting. It is best practice to consult with the principal while creating an agenda, as well as with other School Council members while considering the local context and needs of the Council.

Agenda items can include: reports from elected and executive members; reports from the principal, staff, and student members; reports from Trustees; committee reports; feedback from parents and stakeholders; events at the local and Division levels that may be of interest to School Council members; special cultural, and sporting event information; and guest presentations that meet School Council goals or further its mission.



Agendas should include:

- Acceptance of the agenda
- Acceptance of the last meeting minutes
- Reports of Admin
- Report of staff
- Report of Trustee
- Reports of executive and committees
- Room on the agenda to discuss new projects, ideas, feedback/advice
- Notice of next meeting

Minutes

Minutes should reflect what happened during the meeting and serve as a record of the business conducted during a meeting. This official record of the meeting must be accessible to all who request it. Meeting minutes should not be so detailed as to include quotes from those present, but should reflect the general theme of discussions, the ultimate decisions made, and how those decisions were made. The attached sample minutes provide information on the purpose of minutes, items to consider, and items to not forget.

Chairing

A parent should chair School Council meetings. The Chair will encourage and allow opinions and ideas to be shared for each topic as well as direct and recap “to-dos” from meetings. The Chair manages the discussion to ensure all attendees receive fair opportunity to share opinions and thoughts and does not let any one person overtake the meeting.

Member Roles and Responsibilities

* Adapted from Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools School Council Handbook

The Chair

- Is from the parent/guardian school community who has been on the council previously. This is helpful for continuity but may not always be possible and a new member is welcome to volunteer for the position.
- Consults with the principal and executive regarding agenda items and meeting dates;
- Calls and chairs meetings;
- Attends all School Council/trustee meetings or sends a designate(s) from school council or interested parents, and presents a report regarding each School Council /trustee meeting at the following local school council meeting;
- Follows the existing school council bylaws/operating procedures, district policies and AP's and any provincial legislation;
- Is familiar with School Council Handbook;
- Is familiar with all school council roles and what they entail;
- Mentors the Vice-Chair in preparation for assuming role of chair;
- Performs other related duties as outlined in the School Council Handbook.
- Oversees all committees;
- Solicits input from all members.



A statement about the relationship between the Chair and the Principal:

The relationship between the Chair and the principal is key to the success of the School Council. An important responsibility is regular, professional, and ongoing communication with the principal. This relationship of mutual trust and respect must be nurtured and supportive with common goals and purpose for the school community.

The Principal

- Fostering Effective Relationships: a principal is a leader who builds positive working relationships with members of the school and local community.
- Understanding and Responding to the Larger Societal Context: the principal understands and appropriately responds to the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural contexts impacting schools and the school authority.
- It is imperative that a School Council have an effective working relationship with their respective administration, who believes in the purpose of school council and the engagement of parents, to be successful in its endeavors.
- The school principal is the instructional leader who manages the day-to-day operations of the school and is a key member of the School Council who promotes cooperation between the school and the community.
- The principal is responsible for creating collaboration, occasionally membership recruitment, sharing data and its interpretations, and communication to and from the Council to the Board and the wider school population along with creating the culture and the continuity of the School Council.
- A school principal may often seek advice on local and relevant topics with the School Council.
- The school principal is encouraged to foster and maintain open communication and working relationships with the school council and the Fundraising Society.

- The school principal is responsible and accountable to the Superintendent for all activities taking place at the school. The principal implements the regulations of Alberta Education and the School Board's policies and administrative procedures.
- In consultation with the chairperson and/or executive, it highlights the need for working relationship. School Council chairs generally lead in setting agenda and meeting times in collaboration with the principal/executive (not the other way around);
- Ensures copies of school council documents are held and available at the school for seven (7) years, or in line with legislation requirements;
- Has final responsibility for all school activities;
- Engages the School Council on school budget and annual reports for understanding and advisement but has ultimate responsibility for all school budget decisions;
- Engages in discussion for understanding about the schools assurance reporting;
- Reports on current events and upcoming events;
- Consults to improve the learning and faith environment and development of the school;
- Supports and advises the council from an administrative perspective; and
- Participates in reviewing the financial information and standing for any fundraising or financial efforts by the school council on an on-going basis, if the school council participates in fundraising activities.

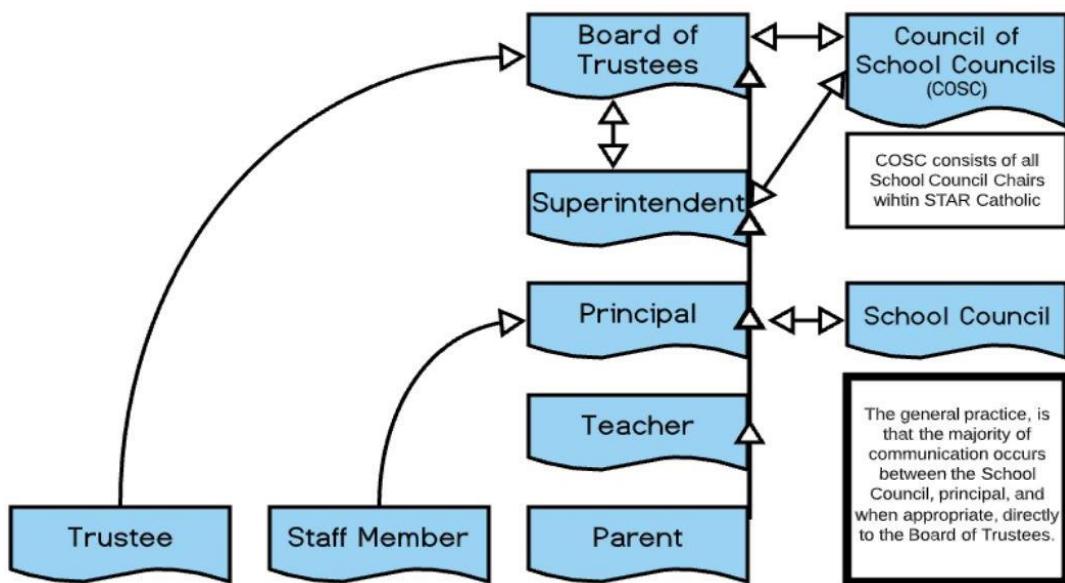
Flowchart of Communication

The Board of Trustees

The Board consists of elected community members known as Trustees who serve a term of four years. The Board establishes policy and sets goals to guide education in the School Division. The Board of Trustees governs with an emphasis on an outward vision, encouraging diversity in viewpoints, strategic leadership, collective decisions, the future, and proactivity. As a Catholic School Board, the STARCatholic Board of Trustees is accountable to the provincial government, the local bishop, and the local Catholic community.

The Superintendent

As the sole employee of the Board of Trustees, the Superintendent of Schools serves as the chief executive and education officer of the Board. Generally, the Superintendent establishes and implements accountability measures and upholds the Education Act, School Council Regulations, and other related policies.



Website and Social Media Use



The school website can be used as a communication tool to share School Council information with the community. This can include upcoming meeting schedules and events, approved minutes, contact information, links to information for parents about School Councils, roles and responsibilities, copies of the School Council governance documents, etc.

Social Media can be a great way to connect with the rest of the school population and share information. Remember that we all wear different hats when representing ourselves on social media. If you are posing for a School Council, you may be seen as a leader in the community. Be mindful of that, even when posting on your personal social media accounts.

The school most likely will have a social media account that can be used to share information or link to a School Council page or group. If you create a School Council page or group, invite administration to be a member or follower. Though it is a parent forum, School Council is a team that includes both the administration and teachers. A social media page, specifically Facebook content, should include announcements, meeting dates and times, and engagement opportunities. We all know that sometimes there will be negative comments or engagement from the community. Below are some tips and best practices for dealing with those scenarios. It is important to remember to consult with your principal if you are unsure about responding to any negativity.

Social Media Best Practices and Tips

Responding to Negative or False Comments

- Seeing negative or false comments about our schools can be frustrating but responding with another isn't always the answer.
- If the site or page the comment was made on is not credible and has few followers, is known for bashing or degrading others, is a rant/rage page, or satirical in nature, avoid responding to specific posts. Instead, monitor for relevant information/comments or any misinformation. If the post contains blatant misinformation or lies, you may respond with factual information directly on the comment thread.
- If the post is the result of a negative experience, you may consider contacting the person who made the post directly to have a personal conversation. After the conversation takes place, you may consider posting a clarification.
- Be mindful of "trolls" and baiting comments; respond only to misinformation and avoid engaging in a back-and-forth once the correct information has been shared.

When You Respond

- Be transparent about your connection to the school.
- Cite the sources of your information with hyperlinks, photos, and other references.
- Take your time when thinking about a response. Do not rush and do not respond out of frustration.
- Respond in a respectful, empathetic professional tone that represents your school well.
- Don't debate an issue or get into a negative conversation online. Offer to continue the conversation via other means (such as a phone call).

Answering Questions Via Social Media

- When responding to inquiries made via social media, try to respond in a timely manner, but to not sacrifice accuracy for speed. Ensure only accurate and up to date information is shared. If you do not immediately know the answer to a question, respond with something like "That's a great question. Let me look into that and get back to you."

Mindful Sharing and Engagement

- On your personal Facebook page, as long as privacy settings are set accordingly, only "friends" can see the content you share. Twitter pages default to public unless the user sets it as otherwise.
- Avoid sharing controversial and potentially offensive topics. Adding phrases like "retweets do not equal endorsements" are not enough to separate an individual from the content they choose to share.
- Ask yourself "Why am I posting this?", "Would I say this in a parent council meeting?" and "Do I want to be publicly associated with this person/organization?".
- Friends may also see content you engage with but don't necessarily want to share to your personal page. Every "like" you give and comment you make could potentially appear in a friend's newsfeed; for this reason, you should be mindful of what contact you choose to engage with.

Etiquette and Copyright Law

- When sharing content, be sure to use the "share" option on Facebook and the "retweet" button rather than downloading/screenshotting and reposting content. This way, the original poster receives credit and increased post reach.
- Be mindful of copyrighted images and be sure to not alter original messaging when sharing another user's content.
- When taking photos at a school or Division event, be aware of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act that may prohibit some students' images from being posted on social media. Always check with your school's administration before posting pictures of people.

Hashtags

- Hashtags are used to sort and search content. When using hashtags, choose ones that are popular and well-known or specific enough to be easily searched (ex. #MindfulMonday, #STARCatholic, #IBelieveInCatholicEd. Avoid long and obscure or overly basic hashtags (ex. #School, #Learning, #STARCatholicIsTheBestDivisionEver). Be sure to check what your local schools' hashtags are, so that you can utilize them in your posts.



Toolkit Appendix

Other Links to Reference

- [Alberta School Councils Association \(ASCA\)](#)
- [STAR Catholic Administrative Procedure \(AP\) 110](#)

Guiding Questions for Building Governance Document

Topic	Question	Options/Details	Decision
Mission and vision statements	Does your school council have a mission/vision statement that guides its work?	If yes: these statements should be considered when building your document. If no: consider creating these statements.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, we have a mission/vision statement that will be included in the document. <input type="checkbox"/> No, we do not have a mission/vision statement for the school council but will commit to creating them.
Decision-making process	What type of decision-making process would your school council like to follow?	Town Hall Model: School Council and the executive carry out the wishes of the larger group, which gets to vote. Representative Model: only elected members get to vote and carry out the day-to-day operations of the School Council.	<input type="checkbox"/> Town Hall Model <input type="checkbox"/> Representative Model
Decision-making process	How will decisions at the meeting be made?	Consensus: Everyone agrees to a final outcome. Majority Vote: An official vote is taken and the final decision is made by the majority.	<input type="checkbox"/> Consensus <input type="checkbox"/> Majority Vote <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid Model
Decision-making quorum	How many voting members need to be in attendance to be able to conduct a vote?	Quorum: A set number of voters who must be in attendance to conduct official business, move motions, or take votes.	Our School Council quorum will be: <hr/>
Meetings	How many times a year will the school council meet to conduct its business?	Select a minimum number of times the School Council will meet throughout the year to carry out its business. This number should include the Annual General Meeting (AGM).	Our School Council will commit to meeting _____ times a year at the minimum.

Topic	Question	Options/Details	Decision
Meetings	Besides an AGM where elections take place, will the School Council need special meetings outside of the regular meeting schedule?	During a special general meeting, all defined members will get to vote on unexpected business. A notice of meeting to the members is required.	Special general meetings will be allowed and will require _____ days notice to the membership via _____. (email, written notice, etc.)
Membership	Who will be the “members” of your School Council?	Are members elected, or is every parent considered a member?	<input type="checkbox"/> Every parent/guardian will be considered a member. <input type="checkbox"/> Only elected School Council directors will be considered members.
School Council Roles and Responsibilities	What are the roles and responsibilities of the School Council members and executive?	<p>General positions are chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, and three members at large.</p> <p>Other positions could be: volunteer coordinator, communications director, and fundraising coordinator.</p>	Our School Council will require the following positions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair • Vice-Chair • Treasurer • Secretary • Members at large • Other positions:
Roles & Responsibilities	What responsibilities will each of the School Council directors have?		
Roles & Responsibilities	Does the executive have decision-making power beyond other members?		
Roles & Responsibilities	How will vacancies be filled outside of the Annual General Meeting?		
Roles & Responsibilities	If your School Council will handle funds, who will have signing authority?	School Councils generally have a “2 to sign” system with three people having signing authority. If your school has a fundraising society, this may not be required.	<input type="checkbox"/> The following positions will have signing authority: <hr/> <input type="checkbox"/> We do not require signing authority.

Topic	Question	Options/Details	Decision
Roles & Responsibilities	Does your School Council collect or handle funds?	What is the policy of the School Board in this regard? What will be the purpose of fundraising or handling funds? How will School Council decide how to distribute funds? Who is responsible for managing and reporting funds?	
Roles & Responsibilities	Will your School Council set goals for itself?	Are these overarching goals that can be met on a continuous basis? Will your School Council set annual goals? How will you evaluate if those goals are being met?	
Roles & Responsibilities	Will your School Council create or require committees to carry out its' work?	How will these committees function? What powers will they have? Who will be on them?	
Roles & Responsibilities	If your school has a fundraising society, what will be the relationship between the two groups?		
Roles & Responsibilities	What will the relationship between the School Council and the Parish be?	What roles does each play in the success of the School Council? What considerations should be made when carrying out School Council business?	
Roles & Responsibilities	Are there any reporting requirements that your school has or would like to have?	Ex. Reports to the School Board, or from the principal, staff, or executive, etc. How will School Council create an annual report for the School Board? Will it be created by one person, or in partnership with SchoolCouncil members and the Principal?	

Topic	Question	Options/Details	Decision
Roles & Responsibilities	How will your School Council handle minutes of the meeting?	What will be included or excluded from the minutes, how will they be approved, and when?	
Roles & Responsibilities	How will the School Council amend its governing document if needed?	If your School Council is using bylaws, this must clearly be laid out in the document with notice of change timeline and process. If your School Council is using operating procedures, changes can be made by writing a broad statement about the required process for changes.	
Roles & Responsibilities	Will your school council create policies to guide its work?	How will these policies be created?	
Roles & Responsibilities	Will your School Council have a code of ethics or code of conduct for members?		
Roles & Responsibilities	What will be the process for handling conflict within the School Council?	Does this mirror what the School Board has written in their administrative procedures? Are there extra steps your School Council would like to implement at the local level?	
Roles & Responsibilities	How does your School Council define, “conflict of interest”?	How will a member declare a conflict of interest? What is the process for dealing with a conflict of interest?	
Roles & Responsibilities	Will your School Council require “Rules of Order” to run meetings efficiently and effectively?	Rules of order can help manage discussions, debates, and decision making.	

Board Chair Transition Checklist

Person Responsible	Action	Completed Date
Chairperson	Notify School Division, in writing, of all new and returning Executive members.	Timeline: 30 days after the AGM
	Meet with outgoing Chairperson (if available) and principal to become familiar with practices, processes, and promises, and to receive relevant historical records for smooth transition.	Timeline: 2 – 3 weeks
	Ensure that the School Council Annual Report was submitted to the School Board by September 30th (for previous year).	
	Attend any orientation sessions offered by the School Council, School, or the School Board.	Timeline: 30 – 60 days
	If your School Council is a member, Notify ASCA, in writing (form on ASCA website), of new Chair and contact information.	Timeline: 30 days after the AGM
Vice-Chairperson	Arrange updating of website with new names and contact information (if needed).	Timeline: 2 weeks
	Source and distribute information on resources, support, and training available for executive (if needed) such as ASCA, or the School Division.	Timeline: 30 days
	Meet with outgoing vice-chairperson to become familiar with practices and processes.	Timeline: 2 – 3 weeks
Treasurer (if necessary)	Meet with outgoing treasurer to become familiar with financial records, processes, practices, and to receive historical records.	Timeline: 2 – 3 weeks
Secretary	Provide summary (or draft minutes) of meeting to all members and interested parties.	Timeline: 2 – 3 weeks

School Council Duties Checklist

Timing	Duties	Chair	Principal	Check Complete
Pre-AGM	Be familiar and establish a School Council in accordance with the School Council Regulation. (See Appendix A)		X	
Pre-AGM	Identify members of the community who may be interested in School Council executive.	X		
Pre-AGM	Identify a staff member to join School Council.		X	
Pre-AGM	High Schools Only: identify a student to join School Council.		X	
Pre-AGM	Set first School Council meeting in accordance with legislation.	X	X	
Pre-AGM	Prepare and send invitation for the first School Council meeting of the year to all parents/community members	X	X	
Pre-AGM	Identify a mail slot in the school office that can be used for School Council.	X	X	
At AGM	Set a regular School Council meeting schedule for the school year.	X	X	
Post-AGM	Ensure the school office has contact information for all of the School Council executive.	X		
Post-AGM	Establish a method of regular communication to the school community (SchoolMessenger, bulletin boards, school website, newsletter, etc.)	X	X	
Post-AGM	If the School Council handles money, ensure the treasurer is trained in financial record keeping requirements and reports all financial transactions accurately/with transparency.	X	X	
Post-AGM	Provide the School Council executive with the Division's Goals, Annual Education Results, and Education Plan, as well as School's Education Plan and Annual Education Results.		X	
During the Year	Monthly review and verification of School Council financial transactions.	X	X	
During the Year	Ensure meeting agendas, attendance, and minutes are prepared, circulated, and kept on record.	X	X	
Pre/Post-AGM	Be familiar with/review the School Council bylaws and operating procedures. Share these documents with the School Council.	X		

Timing	Duties	Chair	Principal	Check Complete
Pre/Post-AGM	Establish a system for retaining School Council records at the school for seven (7) years, either by hard copy or electronically.		X	
Post-AGM	Identify the school's local trustee and establish an invitation protocol for the trustee to attend School Council meetings.	X	X	
During the Year	Ensure representation at the annual Council of School Council Meeting (COSC).	X		
During the Year	Identify community members who may want to be in touch with your School Council and ensure they have the Chair's contact information (ex. local Parish, MLA, etc.).	X	X	
During the Year (January)	Plan and prepare for the Community Consultation Day hosted by the Board of Trustees. Ensure Division goal topics are available for discussion prior to the consultation event.	X	X	
During the Year (April-May)	Assurance Engagement: Principal should bring forward the Education Plan for feedback.		X	
Post-AGM	Plan the AGM and prepare an Annual Report. Annual Reports are due to the Board of Trustees by Sept. 30th. A request for the Annual Report is made by the Division Secretary-Treasurer in June in order to have it created prior to the potential change of the School Council executive in the new school year. Submit reports to the Superintendent or the Secretary-Treasurer.	X	X	

Sample School Council Minutes

(Name of School Council) Regular Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting

(date) _____, 20

In attendance: Please list names here

Recording secretary: Name the recording secretary for this meeting

Chair: Name the chair of this meeting

1. Call to order: _____
2. Welcome
 - 2.1 Welcome and introductions
 - 2.2 Regrets: _____
3. Presentation of agenda-
 - 3.1 Additions: List any additions agreed upon.
 - 3.2 Motion to accept the agenda as ***presented/amended (list one)***
_____ moves to accept the agenda as ***presented/amended***
4. Presentation and adoption of Minutes
 - 4.1 **date of minutes being presented**
Additions, corrections: List any here
_____ moves to accept the minutes as ***presented/amended***.
5. Reports – the following reports are attached
 - 5.1 Principals Report: Name
 - 5.2 Staff Report
 - 5.3 Trustee Report
 - 5.4
 - 5.5
 - 5.6
6. Discussion Items
 - 6.1 Title: Person presenting the topic. Brief description and general notes on the topic/discuss
7. Next Meeting date : _____
8. Adjournment: _____

Chairperson

Date accepted

Sample School Council Agenda

Name of School Council Regular or Annual General Meeting

Date: _____, 2021

Location/Virtual link: _____ Agenda

1. Call to Order (time)
2. Welcome 5 min
 - 2.1 Welcome – and opening prayer
 - 2.2 Regrets
3. Presentation of agenda 2 min
 - 3.1 Additions, deletions
 - 3.2 Motion for approval of the agenda
"I move to accept the agenda as presented/with the agreed additions"
4. Presentation and Adoption of minutes 2 min
 - 4.1 Additions, corrections etc. noted here
 - 4.2 Motion of date of minutes being presented.
"I move to accept the minutes as presented/with the agreed additions"
5. Outstanding business 3 min
6. Reports 20 min
 - 6.1 Principal Report add principal's name
 - 6.2 Staff Report add staff member name
 - 6.3 Trustee Report add Trustee name
 - 6.4 Chair Report add chair name
 - 6.5 Committee Report if any committees
7. New Business/Discussion items: 30 min
 - 7.1 Put any new ideas/ discussion items listed here
8. Adjournment 3 min
 - 9.1 Next meeting items
 - 9.2 Next Meeting date:
 - 9.3 Adjournment and closing prayer

Sample School Operating Procedures #1

Name of School Council

Mission/Vision Statement

Date Accepted:

1. DEFINITIONS

In these Operating Procedures:

- A. "School" means the school to which the School Council belongs.
- B. "Conflict of Interest" means a situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefit from a discussion or decision in which they may be involved.
- C. "Council" means the School Council for the School;
- D. "Parents" means parent, guardian or primary caregiver of any child enrolled in an educational program at the School;
- E. "Regulation" means the School Councils Regulation as provided through Alberta Provincial Legislation;
- F. "School community" means persons other than parents (as defined in 1C above) who have, in the opinion of the majority of the Members of the School Council, an interest in the well-being of the students and the School;
- G. "Operating Procedures," means the governing document serving the same purpose as Bylaws referenced in the Regulations.

2. AUTHORITY

The _____ School Council derives its authority to participate in the education of our students through Alberta Provincial Legislation hereinafter referred to as "legislation."

3. MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

The _____ School Council will work in partnership with our school and our parent community in the support of student's spiritual and educational journey.

4. PURPOSE

The purpose of the School Council, in keeping with the legislation, are to:

- A. Represent the parent perspective by providing advice to and consulting with the principal and the board on matters relating to the School such as: the School philosophy, mission and vision, policies, improvement plans, programs and directions, and budget allocations to meet student needs;
- B. Develop community engagement opportunities that will foster participation and well-being of the school community and add to the culture of the school;
- C. Facilitate communication with parents and the community;
- D. Advise and collaborate with other school councils, school boards, Alberta Education or other provincial organizations on educational issues;
- E. Encourage a positive atmosphere where individual contributions and continuous improvements are encouraged and valued;

- F. Support an approach to education in which decisions are made collaboratively and, wherever possible, at the School and classroom level;
- G. Create annual goals that align with the 4-year division goals and the schools' goals that advances student growth
- H. Adhere to School Council's Code Ethics.

5. GOVERNANCE, MEMBERSHIP and DECISION MAKING

School Council uses a Town Hall Operating Style

- A. The membership of the School Council shall consist of:
 - 1) All parents, as defined in 1C above;
 - 2) The Principal of the School;
 - 3) One or more teachers and staff of the School, elected or appointed by the teachers;
 - 4) Others as decided by the School Council;
- B. The voting Members of the School Council shall consist of all parents as defined in 1C above;
- C. The non-voting Members of the School Council shall consist of: Administration, staff and STAR board members or other attendees that do not meet the definition in 1C as above;
- D. The parent/other ratio may vary at times, but the number of parent Members must always exceed the number of administration, staff, students and/or community representatives.

6. DECISION MAKING

Decisions are made by a vote process. A motion must be moved, seconded, and passed by the majority of School Council voting Members present at the meeting at which the vote was taken.

7. QUORUM

- A. Quorum will be attained when the majority present at any School Council meeting are parents as defined in 1C above, and at least two (2) executive members and the principal or designate is present.
- B. In the absence of a quorum:
 - 1. No motions may be considered or approved.
 - 2. If a majority of parents and School Council Members at the meeting agree to proceed in the absence of a quorum, the School Council will continue the meeting for purposes of discussion of issues, but point 1) above will continue to apply.

8. EXECUTIVE and TERMS of OFFICE

The positions of the Executive shall consist of: Chair, Vice-Chair (or Co-Chair), Secretary and four (4)members at large.

- A. Parents as defined in 1C above will fill all Executive positions.
- B. The positions of the executive shall not be held by a teacher, principal (or any administrative of the school) any staff member employed at _____ School, or a board member of St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic School Division.
- C. Every parent is eligible to be elected to an Executive position on the School Council.
- D. The terms of office are from the close of the Annual General Meeting to the close of the following Annual General Meeting. Any elected Member may serve two (2) consecutive terms in the same position. The principal, under special circumstances, may give permission to an officer to continue in an executive position past the two (2) year term.
- E. The Executive of the School Council will be elected by parents attending the Annual General Meeting or, in the event of vacancies after the Annual General Meeting, executive positions will be appointed by the voting Members present at a subsequent School Council meeting.
- F. Any Executive Member may resign his/her position during their term by providing written notice to the Chair and Principal.

G. Any Executive Member may be removed from the Executive at any time with cause by a majority vote of the Executive whenever, in its judgement, the best interest of the School Council will be served.

H. The Executive will carry out the day-to-day operation of the School Council.

9. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

A. Chair

The School Council Chair will be a parent of a student attending the School. Unless otherwise delegated, the Chair of the School Council will:

1. Chair all meetings of the School Council;
2. Coordinate with the Principal to establish meeting agendas;
3. Communicate with the Principal on a regular basis;
4. Decide all matters relating to rules of order at the meetings;
5. Follow existing SC Operating Procedures;
6. Ensure that minutes are recorded and maintained;
7. Have general supervision of all activities of the School Council and serve as ex-officio on any committee;
8. Be the official spokesperson of the School Council;
9. Ensure that there is regular communication with the School community, beyond those who attend meetings;
10. Review any communication to the School community prior to distribution and include the Principal in same;
11. Stay informed about School Board policy that impacts School Council;
12. Submit an annual report to the School Board in conformance with the Provincial Legislation, Regulations and any board policies and procedures.

B. Vice-Chair

Unless otherwise delegated, the Vice-Chair of the School Council will:

1. In the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the Chair, fulfill the Chair's responsibilities;
2. In the absence of the Chair, supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the School Council;
3. Work with and support the Chair in agenda preparation;
4. Ensure the appropriate management, in compliance with PIPA, of any personal information collected on behalf of the School Council;
5. Assume responsibility, in consultation with the School Council, for communicating with the fundraising society or other parent groups within the School;
6. Promote teamwork and assist the Chair in the smooth running of the meetings;
7. Keep informed of relevant School and School Board policies;
8. Prepare to assume the position of Chair in the future;
9. Assist the Chair and undertake tasks assigned by the Chair.

C. Secretary

Unless otherwise delegated, the Secretary of the School Council will:

1. Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure that the minutes accurately reflect the directions agreed to at the School Council meeting;
2. Ensure that minutes, correspondence, records and other School Council documents are properly maintained, and ensure that all relevant documents (as per legislation) are available to the public in an accessible location in the School, for a period of 7 years;

3. Maintain a dated record of all the Members of the School Council who have knowingly provided their contact information, in compliance with PIPA;
4. Distribute, as determined by the School Council and/or the Chair, agendas, minutes, notices of meetings and notices of other events;
5. Ensure all materials relating to the School Council including Alberta School Council Resource Guide, all meeting minutes and any relevant documents are available digitally and in an accessible location in the School
6. Maintain all records pertaining to the school council in its designated storage area during their term.

In the absence of the Secretary, the School Council shall choose a recording Secretary for each meeting.

D. Members at Large/Others as decided by the School Council

These Members will:

1. Share their professional knowledge, expertise and life experience with other School Council members;
2. Encourage feedback and participation from community groups and individuals;
3. Communicate information of interest to the School Council and the School community;
4. Share information from School Council meetings with the community;
5. Have a clear understanding of the School Council's goals and purpose;
6. Attend School Council meetings;
7. Identify possible topics for agendas;
8. Serve as a liaison between the School Council and their organization or area of responsibility.

10. VACANCIES

With the exception of the School Council positions filled by the Principal and teacher representative, any vacancy of the School Council will be advertised to the parent community. Appointments for a vacant position will be held at subsequent meetings of the School Council until the vacancy is filled.

11. MEETINGS

A. Annual General Meetings

Where the School Council has not been operational the year prior, an Establishment Meeting will be held in accordance with legislation, otherwise an Annual General Meeting of the School Council will take place once each School year.

The Annual General Meeting of the School Council shall be held not later than 30 days after the first instructional day of the School year and will be advertised throughout the School and the community at large at least ten (10) days in advance of the meeting.

All parents as defined in 1C above are eligible for election.

1. All parents as defined in 1C above are eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting.
2. The business of the Annual General Meeting shall include:
 - a. the election of School Council.
3. And may also include
 - a. plans for the upcoming year;
 - b. Set the dates for regular meetings for the up-coming year;
 - c. Discussion of any major issue in which all parents should have input such as changes to the Vision

or Mission of the School or School Board, School policy, or other major changes in the School program or focus;

d. any evaluation of the School Council.

B. Special General Meetings

- 1) Upon receipt of a written request of at least 10 parents, with a description of the purpose for a Special General Meeting, the Chair must ensure a Special Meeting will be called within 14 days. The School Council Executive may at any time give notice of a Special General Meeting of the School Council
- 2) A notice stating the time, date and place of the meeting, the names of the parents calling the Special General Meeting, and a description of the matters to be dealt with will be provided to the School community at least 5 days before the Special General Meeting.
- 3) At any Special General Meeting all parents in attendance at the Special General Meeting shall have the right to vote.

C. Regular Meetings

A minimum of six (6) regular School Council meetings will be held per School year or as called by the Executive. It will be decided when these meetings will take place at the Annual General Meeting. The meetings will take place at the School, unless otherwise advertised.

Any School Council Member may be suspended or expelled for the duration of the School year from attendance at any Regular School Council meetings, if, upon a majority vote of voting Members present at Special General Meeting called for that purpose, it is determined to be in the best interests of the School Council to do so.

12. MEETING AGENDAS

The Chair will work in partnership with the Principal and the vice-chair, when invited, to establish the agendas for all meetings. Agenda item requests must be made through the Chair, who will, if necessary, consult with the Executive Committee and Principal as to the appropriateness of the item requested.

13. COMMITTEES

The School Council may appoint committees that consist of School Council Members and/or School community members. Committees will meet outside of School Council meetings to complete their assigned tasks as per the direction of the School Council and provide a written report on their activities at each School Council meeting.

14. POLICIES

Subject to any provincially or Board-mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may make and implement policies that it considers necessary to carry out its functions.

- A. The School Council may develop policy for the duration of its term.
- B. The policies of the School Council will be reviewed at the beginning of every new School Council term to decide if each policy will be implemented for the new School Council and its term.
- C. Topics on which School Council may wish to develop guiding policies include, but are not limited to: Communication (Internal and External), Record Keeping, Fundraising, Privacy, Location of Meetings, Official Correspondence Address, New Member Orientation, School Council Evaluation, and Social Media.

15. FUNDRAISING ASSOCIATION and OTHER GROUPS OF PARENTS

The School Council recognizes and appreciates the efforts of other groups of parents striving to support and enhance the educational opportunities in the School.

- A. The School Council will communicate regularly with the Fundraising Society, and/or other groups of parents to support their activities and to solicit support for School Council activities.
- B. The School Council may develop policies to promote a productive, open and transparent relationship with the fundraising society and/or other groups of parents. The school council may invite a member from the society to attend a school council meeting and/or provide a report at school council meetings.

16. CODE OF ETHICS

All School Council Members shall:

- A. Abide by the legislation that governs them;
- B. Be guided by the mission statement of the district, the School and School Council;
- C. Endeavour to be familiar with School policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them;
- D. Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth;
- E. Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the School community;
- F. Declare any conflict of interest;
- G. Encourage a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
- H. Apply democratic principles;
- I. Consider the best interests of all students;
- J. Respect the confidential nature of some School business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the School Council;
- K. Not disclose confidential information;
- L. Limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the School community as a whole;
- M. Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise;
- N. Promote high standards of ethical practice within the School community;
- O. Accept accountability for decisions;
- P. Comply with all relevant legislation and school board policies and/or board Administrative Procedures;
- Q. Not accept payment for School Council activities.

17. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The School Council shall abide by the Conflict Resolution Procedures outlined in the School Board's policies and regulations. If none exist, the School Council shall apply every effort to resolve internal conflicts using the steps outlined in these Operating Procedures.

- A. If at any time, 10 parents, or 5 parents and 50% of the Executive Members of the School Council are of the opinion that the School Council is in a state of conflict such that its operation is significantly impaired, they may deliver a signed written letter to all Executive Members and the Principal requesting a Special General Meeting, and the following will apply:

1. The Chair will call a Special General Meeting of the School Council.
2. The Secretary will provide a minimum of 5 days written notice to all parents and School Council Members of the date, time, place and purpose of the Special General Meeting.
3. At the Special General Meeting, all parents and School Council Members present will have an opportunity to hear and discuss the issues causing conflict.
4. On motion, a vote shall be taken respecting a proposed resolution to the conflict.
5. If a majority of voting Members present vote in favor of the resolution proposed, the School Council will immediately act upon it.

6. If required, a neutral, external person will be invited to chair the special general meeting.

18. PRIVACY

The School Council shall adhere to the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) and shall not use or share personal information for purposes other than those of School Council business.

19. DISSOLUTION

As per Alberta Provincial Legislation, only the Minister of Education has the authority to dissolve a School Council. If the School Council is dissolved, the Principal may establish an advisory committee to perform some or all of the duties of the School Council until the next school year. The Principal will perform the duties as outlined in Alberta Provincial Legislation with respect to the re-establishment of the School Council within forty (40) School days after the start of the next School year.

20. REVIEWS and AMENDMENTS

Subject to any provincially or School Board-mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may make any changes to these Operating Procedures deemed necessary to carry out its functions.

- A. The Operating Procedures will be reviewed for their relevance and effectiveness on a regular basis by the School Council Executive or by a committee established expressly for that purpose.
- B. Notice of proposed changes to the Operating Procedures will be provided to the School community no less than 5 days before the meeting.
- C. The Operating Procedures of the School Council may be amended by a majority vote of the voting Members present at any scheduled Regular, Special or Annual General meeting of the School Council.

These Operating Procedures have been accepted by a majority of the Members entitled to vote at a Regular, Special or Annual General meeting of the School Council.

Date: [MONTH] [DAY], [YEAR]

Chair's Signature

Secretary Signature

Principal Signature

Sample School Operating Procedures #2

[DATE]
[SCHOOL NAME] School Council
Operating ProceduresApproved by
[SCHOOL NAME] School Council:
Chairperson:
Secretary:
Principal:

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1. AUTHORITY

The Sacred Heart School Council derives its authority to participate in the education of our students through Alberta Provincial Legislation, specifically Section 22 of the School Act and the School Councils Regulation which supports it.

2. MISSION STATEMENT

To foster the well-being and effectiveness of our school community and to enhance student learning.

3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. To provide advice and consultation to the principal and staff on issues of educational importance such as school philosophy, mission, vision, policies, programming, communications, community relations, the school plan for continuous growth, the Three-year strategic education plan, and budget allocations to meet student needs.
- b. To create a stronger learning environment for the students.
- c. To keep the STAR School Board informed, in cooperation with the principal, of the needs of the school and its students.
- d. Develop special events which will foster participation and well-being of the school community.

e. Develop a communication plan to share information with parents and the community and facilitate communications with all educational stakeholders.

f. Consult with other school councils and provincial organizations.

g. Advise the STAR School Board, Alberta Education and/or other provincial organizations on broader educational issues.

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

In accordance with the School Councils Regulation and the STAR School Board Administrative Procedure #110, the School Council, through the Chair, shall provide the school board with an annual report that summarizes the School Council's activities for the previous school year, including a financial statement relating to money as at June 30th, if any, handled by the School Council no later than July 31st.

i. Adhere to School Council's Code of Conduct.

4. PRIVACY

a. Sacred Heart School Council shall adhere to the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA).

b. Sacred Heart School Council shall not share personal information for purposes other than those of School Council business.

5. MEMBERSHIP, GOVERNANCE and DECISION MAKING

[SCHOOL NAME] School Council uses a Town Hall Model of governance.

a. The School Council is generally composed of the following members:

- i. The parents of students enrolled in the school including Early Childhood Services.
- ii. The principal of [SCHOOL NAME]
- iii. Teacher(s) of [SCHOOL NAME]
- iv. Parish Representative of [CHURCH].
- v. Community Member(s).

b. The voting members of the School Council shall consist of:

- i. Parents.
- ii. Parish Representative.
- iii. Community Member(s).

c. The non-voting members of the School Council shall consist of:

- i. Principal.
- ii. Teacher(s).

6. EXECUTIVE ROLES and TERMS of OFFICE

1. EXECUTIVE:

a. The positions of the Executive Committee shall consist of:

- i. Chairperson
- ii. Vice chairperson
- iii. Secretary
- iv. Treasurer
- v. Fundraising Coordinator
- vi. Past Chairperson

b. All Executive positions must be filled by parents of students enrolled at the school.

- c. Where possible the executive should be comprised of a majority of Catholic parents.
- d. Every voting member of the School Councils eligible to be elected to an Executive position on School Council.

2. TERMS:

- a. The term of office is from July 1st following election to the following July 1st.
- b. Any elected member may not serve more than 3 consecutive terms in the same position.
- b. All Executive positions must be filled by parents of students enrolled at the school.
- c. Where possible the executive should be comprised of a majority of Catholic parents.
- d. Every voting member of the School Councils eligible to be elected to an Executive position on School Council.

3. TERMS:

- a. The term of office is from July 1st following election to the following July 1st.
- b. Any elected member may not serve more than 3 consecutive terms in the same position.
- c. The Executive of School Council is normally elected at the Annual General Meeting or at the next School Council meeting by School Council members, until filled.
- d. An Executive member may withdraw at any time during their term of office by notice in writing to the Chair and the Principal, or if the withdrawing member is the Chair, by notice in writing to the Vice Chair and the Principal.

4. VACANCIES

- a. Any vacancies of the School Council will be advertised to the parent community. Elections for vacant positions will be held at each regular meeting of School Council, until filled.,

7. EXECUTIVE DUTIES

1. Chairperson

The Chairperson of the School Council will:

- a. Chair all meetings of the School Council.
- b. Coordinate with the principal to establish meeting agendas.
- c. Communicate with the principal on a regular basis.
- d. Call regular School Council meetings.
- e. Decide all matters relating to rules of order at the meetings.
- f. Ensure compliance with current School Council operating procedures.
- g. Ensure that minutes are recorded and maintained.
- h. Have general supervision of all activities of the School Council.
- i. Be the official spokesperson of the School Council.
- j. Ensure there is regular communication with the school community, beyond those who attend meetings.
- k. Stay informed about STAR School Board policies that impact School Council.
- l. Prepare an annual report in conformance with the Regulations.

2. Vice Chairperson

The Vice-Chairperson of the School Council will:

- a. Aid the Chair and undertake tasks assigned by the Chair
- b. Work with and support the Chair in agenda preparation

- c. Promote teamwork and assist the Chair in the smooth running of the meetings
- d. Keep informed of relevant school and school board policies
- e. In the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the Chair, fulfill the Chair's responsibilities
- f. In the absence of the Chair, supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the School Council

3. Secretary

The Secretary of the School Council will:

- a. Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure the minutes accurately reflect the directions agreed to at the School Council meeting.
- b. Keep minutes, correspondence, records and other School Council documents including School Council Operating Procedures.
- c. Ensure notice of meetings and other School Council events is distributed.
- d. Give notice of any special meetings.
- e. Post agendas in compliance with the communications plan for any Council meeting at least 7 days in advance.
- f. In the absence of the secretary, the School Council shall choose a recording secretary for the meeting.
- g. Have signing authority on any financial accounts together with the Chair and/or the treasurer.
- h. The secretary is responsible for maintaining a hard copy of monthly minutes that will be kept on site at the school, and to ensure the posting of the minutes to the school website within 10 days. The hardcopy record will be presented at the AGM meeting yearly to maintain accurate records.
- i. Be responsible for keeping and maintaining a hard copy of Operating Procedures on site at the school.

4. Treasurer

The Treasurer of the School Council will:

- a. Keep accurate records of all financial transactions
- b. Ensure that records are available upon request of the school council, school board, or public requests approved by council.
- c. Be responsible for the deposits of all monies paid to the School Council in whatever financial account the School Council utilizes.
- d. Be responsible for monitoring the movement and allocation of funds. Present a full detailed account of receipts, disbursements, and account balances to the School Council at regular meetings, and whenever requested by the School Council, and prepare the financial statements for the annual report.
- e. Send a copy of the bank statement to the Chairperson at least quarterly.
- f. Have signing authority on any financial accounts together with the Chairperson and/or Secretary.

5. Past Chairperson

The Past Chairperson of the School Council will:

- a. Serve in an advisory capacity to the School Council.
- b. Act in the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair.

6. Fundraising Coordinator

The Fundraising Coordinator of the School Council will:

- a. Gather information and present ideas/projects to the executive and parents at any regular school council meeting.
- b. Organize fundraising projects.

c. Assist Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer with all fundraising activities.

8. MEETINGS

a. REGULAR MEETINGS

At the Annual General Meeting, the School Council will review the number of regular meetings, the time, date, and place of those meetings for the school year and determine how the schedule will be communicated to the broader Parent Community.

b. SPECIAL MEETINGS

The School Council may at any time give notice of a Special Meeting of the School Council. Notice will be given at least 7 days before the meeting. The notice will state the time, date and place of the meeting, and describe the matters to be dealt with.

c. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

Where a School Council hasn't been operational the year prior, the Annual General Meeting will be held in accordance to Section 3 of the School Councils Regulation. Notwithstanding the above:

- i. The AGM of the School Council shall be held on the first Wednesday of June.
- ii. The AGM will be advertised throughout the School and the community at large at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the meeting.
- iii. Election of School Council Executive from the parent community will take place at the AGM. All parents of the students enrolled in Sacred Heart School including Early Childhood Services are eligible for election.
- iv. All parents of students enrolled at Sacred Heart School are eligible to vote at the AGM.
- v. The business of the AGM shall include:
 1. the election of School Council Executive Members.
 2. financial statement of the previous year.
 3. presentation of the previous year's records.
 4. establish annual schedule for regular meetings.
 5. And may also include:
 6. plans and budget for the upcoming year
 7. operating Procedure amendments

9. AGENDAS

- a. The Executive Committee through the Chair establishes all meeting agendas in partnership with the principal.
- b. Agenda item requests must be made through the Chair, who will, if necessary, consult with the Executive and principal as to the appropriateness of the item requested.
- c. Agenda requests will be given to the Chair a minimum of fourteen (14) days in advance before the next meeting.

10. QUORUM

- a. A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the School Council is 50% of the elected Executive members in addition to one staff member. When, at a regularly scheduled School Council meeting the number of parents is outnumbered by administration, the meeting shall be adjourned until the next scheduled meeting date.

11. COMMITTEES

- a. Committees will be determined by the School Council and will make decisions or recommendations

according to the mandate the School Council gives them as deemed necessary from school year to school year.

- b. Committee members shall consist of volunteers from the school community.
- c. Standing committees will operate on an ongoing basis with specified lengths of terms for members.
- d. Ad hoc committees will be formed as necessary and will work within a specified time period.
- e. Chairs of standing committees shall submit a written report of their work as specified by the School Council.

12. POLICIES

- a. [SCHOOL NAME] School Council may make and implement policies in the school that the School Council considers necessary to carry out its functions.
- b. The school council may develop policy for the duration of their term.
- c. The policies of the School Council will be reviewed at the beginning of every new School Council term to decide if each policy will be implemented for the new School Council and its term.
- d. Topics on which School Council may wish to develop guiding policies include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Communication: Internal and External
 - ii. Record Keeping
 - iii. Fundraising
 - iv. Privacy
 - v. Location of Meetings
 - vi. Official Correspondence Address
 - vii. New Member Orientation
 - viii. School Council Evaluation
 - ix. Social Media

13. SCHOOL COUNCIL FUNDRAISING

- a. If the School Council does fundraise, any funds raised will be kept in a School Council bank account.
- b. The School Council's funds given to the school will be subject to the School Board's policy on School Council fundraising.

14. CODE OF ETHICS

All School Council members shall:

- a. Abide by the legislation that governs them.
- b. Be guided by the mission statement of the school and School Council.
- c. Be familiar with the school, school council policies, operating procedures and act in accordance with them.
- d. Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth.
- e. Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.
- f. Declare any conflict of interest.
- g. Encourage a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
- h. Apply and adhere to democratic principles.
- i. Consider the best interests of all students in our decisions and deliberations.
- j. Respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the School Council.
- k. Not disclose confidential information.
- l. Limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.
- m. Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise.

- n. Promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community.
- o. Accept accountability for decisions.
- p. Not accept payment for School Council activities.
- q. Respect recent decisions made at a School Council meeting.

15. CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

- a. The School Council will apply every effort to resolve internal conflicts using the steps outlined in these Operating Procedures if necessary and shall abide by the Conflict Resolution Procedures outlined in Administrative Procedure #111 of St. Thomas Aquinas Roman Catholic Schools

If at any time, ten (10) Parents, or fifty per cent (50%) of the Executive members of the School Council are of the opinion that the School Council is in a state of conflict such that its operation is significantly impaired, they may deliver a written request signed by them to all School Council members, and the following will apply:

- i. The Chair will call a Special Meeting of the School Council.
- ii. The Secretary will provide a minimum of five (5) days' written notice to all parents of the date, time, place and purpose of the Special Meeting.
- iii. At the Special Meeting, parents in attendance will have an opportunity to hear and discuss the issues causing conflict.
- iv. On motion, seconded by any School Council Executive member or parent in attendance at the Special Meeting, a vote shall be held respecting a proposed resolution to the conflict.
- v. If a majority of parents and School Council Executive members present vote in favour of the resolution proposed, the School Council will immediately act upon the resolution, as directed by the assembly.

16. DISSOLUTION

- a. As per Alberta Provincial Legislation, specifically Section 22 of the School Act, only the Minister of Education has the authority to dissolve a School Council. If Sacred Heart School Council is dissolved, the Principal may establish an advisory committee to perform the duties of the School Council until the next AGM and the Principal will perform the duties as outlined in Alberta Provincial Legislation with respect to the re-establishment of the School Council within 40 school days after the start of the next school year.

17. REVIEW and AMENDMENTS

- a. School Council must review and approve its Operating Procedures at any School Council Annual General Meeting.
- b. The School Council, by a majority vote of parents present at any Regular or Special or Annual General Meeting of the School Council, may, subject to Alberta Provincial Legislation, make any changes to these Operating Procedures deemed necessary in order to carry out its functions. Notice which provides the details of the intended changes will be provided to the school community no less than 7 school days prior to the meeting.

