

PRINCE ALBERT ROMAN CATHOLIC SEPARATE SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 6

POLICY ITEM: School Community Councils	CODE: BGA
LEGAL STATUS: The Education Act, 1995 Board Motion #161.07, #250.13; #76.19	DATE APPROVED: 25 Mar 2019

Background: The Board of Education believes in the fundamental linkage between the home/school/parish and community in order to support an authentic and living Christian community and to enhance the educational experiences in each of its schools.

POLICY: **The Board of Education supports the work of School Community Councils at each of its schools and values parent and community engagement in achieving the overall goals of Catholic education.**

Guidelines:

1. The Board of Education shall establish a School Community Council at each school operating under its jurisdiction.
2. School Community Councils replaced Local Advisory Councils pursuant to changes in the Education Act, 1995, Section 140.
3. The School Community Council is an integral, purposeful, and valued component of school division governance.
4. The School Community Council is to be inclusive of the school community.
5. The School Community Council shall contribute to the board of education and administration decision-making processes in an advisory capacity, and will focus on enhancing student learning and well-being.
6. The School Community Council shall focus its attention on the areas of the school's Learning Improvement Plan where the parent/community perspective and efforts are most appropriate and needed.
7. In schools where ad hoc committees, with the approval of the principal, have been established in support of the school program and the S.C.C., the School Community Council will act in a coordinating role.
8. School Community Councils shall be established within the first term of the school year.

Procedures: Membership

1. The membership of each School Community Council shall consist of representative parent/guardian members, permanent members, and may include community members.
 - a) There shall be five to nine elected members, of which the majority must be of the Catholic faith.
 - b) There shall be permanent members which will include the principal, one teacher, and, in community schools, the community school

coordinator. Furthermore, other members may be appointed by the Board of Education, in consultation with the principal.

2. At École St. Mary High School, two students will serve on the School Community Council. Student representation will come from the School Leadership Council and will serve a one-year term.
3. School board trustees may be assigned to individual School Community Councils, in a non-voting role, to serve as a liaison between the council and the board of education.

Election Procedures

1. One half of the representative parent and community members will be elected each year.
2. The Board of Education will appoint an Election Supervisor for the school division to ensure that an Election Manager is selected for each school, if necessary.
3. Election procedures for representative parent and community members are outlined in the School Community Council Election Manual (see Appendix C).
4. If, following the nomination process, there are vacant positions on a School Community Council, the Board of Education may appoint members to fill the vacant positions, after consulting with the school's principal.

Constitution

The School Community Council is to have a Board approved Constitution and Bylaws that will govern the operations of the council. The Constitution and Bylaws must conform to all relevant sections of *The Education Act, 1995* and to all relevant policies of the Board of Education. Changes to the Constitution and Bylaws must be submitted to the Board of Education for its approval. (The Board of Education will provide a sample constitution (see Appendix A) that may be used as a guideline in the development of a School Community Council's constitution).

Operations

1. The School Community Council shall designate: a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, a secretary, and a treasurer.
2. The A.G.M (annual general meeting) will be held before the end of the first term of the school year. During this meeting, School Community Council members will be selected.
3. In addition to the A.G.M., the School Community Council will meet at least five times per school year.
4. A quorum of the School Community Council shall be a majority of the representative members (elected and appointed) in attendance.
5. On matters requiring a formal vote, permanent members of the council may not vote.

6. Minutes (using the school division templates) of each School Community Council (SCC) meeting will be kept and forwarded to the principal of the school within 7 days of the School Community Council meeting by the SCC Secretary. The school principal is responsible for submitting the meeting minutes and any attachments to the Board of Education.
 - Sample SCC Meeting Agenda Template – Appendix E
 - Sample SCC Meeting Minutes Template – Appendix F
7. The School Community Council shall adopt the Code of Conduct, as per the example in Appendix B.
8. The School Community Council shall prepare an annual budget. All funds will be administered using the procedures outlined in the School Community Councils Funds: Operations and Procedures Manual (see Appendix D).

Role and Responsibilities

The role of the School Community Council is to assist the administration of the school and the Board of Education in an advisory capacity in sharing responsibility for the learning success and well-being of the students in its school.

Every school community council shall:

- a) facilitate parent and community participation in school activities,
- b) provide advice to the Board of Education on policies, programs, and educational service delivery decisions,
- c) provide advice to the school's staff concerning school activities,
- d) review the School Improvement Plan,
- e) provide advice to other agencies involved in the learning and development of students, and
- f) comply with the regulations and policies of the Board of Education.

Note: All Appendices A through to F will be a “copy” in this document ‘Policy BGA’.
The Original Appendices will be located in Standard of Work (SOW) #143 – School Community Councils

Policy BGA – Appendix A

SAMPLE CONSTITUTION

Preamble:

In accordance with Section 140 of *The Education Act, 1995*, the Prince Albert R.C.S.S. Board of Education has established, in each of its schools, a School Community Council to act as an advisory body. Each School Community Council shall comply with the legislation in *The Act*, as well as with the regulations and policies of the Board of Education.

ARTICLE I – Name

The name of the council shall be the _____ (*name*) School Community Council.

ARTICLE II – Purpose of the Council

To act in an advisory capacity to the Board of Education and the school’s administration on matters pertaining to the education of the children in _____ (*name*) School.

ARTICLE III – Membership

- 1) The membership of each School Community Council shall consist of representative parent/community members and permanent members.
 - c) There shall be five to nine elected members, of which the majority must be of the Catholic faith.
 - d) The principal, one teacher, and, **in community schools**, the community school coordinator, will serve as permanent members.
- 2) The school board trustee assigned to the School Community Council of the _____ (*name of school*), is a non-voting member.

ARTICLE IV – Officers

The following School Community Council officers will be selected annually from among the representative/community members.

- Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer

ARTICLE V – Meetings

- 1) The Annual General meeting will be held on/by ____ *(date)* ____ of each year. During the meeting, the School Community Council members will be selected.
- 2) The School Community Council will establish a schedule of at least five meetings a year.
- 3) Model of Governance

The School Community Council will need to choose a model of governance. Two examples of governance models are:

- a) The Representative Model

The S.C.C. represents the wider school community. Meetings are open to the public but only members of the S.C.C. may decide on matters brought before the S.C.C. The School Community Council reports to the school community using a communications strategy, an annual report, and an Annual General meeting.

- b) The Town-Hall Model

Members are elected to the School Community Council but regular meetings are open to the entire school community. Any member of the school community can participate in the meeting and be involved in the decision-making process regarding matters brought before the S.C.C.

- 4) Voting

On matters requiring a formal vote, only representative members of the School Community Council may vote.

- 5) Quorum

A quorum of the School Community Council shall be a majority of the representative members.

- 6) Special Meeting

A special meeting of the School Community may be called by the Chair of the S.C.C., if required to do so by the Board of Education or through a request in writing signed by no fewer than 25 persons who have a child attending the school or who are Catholic electors living in the school's attendance area. Only business pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of school community councils can be considered at a special meeting.

ARTICLE VI – Public Consultation and Communication

The School Community Council shall consult with the school community through the following strategies: (for example: the school's newsletters, parish bulletins, or any other appropriate means).

The School Community Council will communicate with the school community and the Board of Education through the following strategies: (for example: the school's assigned School Board trustee, the Director of Education, or at a school meeting).

ARTICLE VII – Code of Conduct

The School Community Council shall adopt a Code of Conduct (see Appendix B).

ARTICLE VIII – Conflict of Interest

A school community council member may occasionally find himself/herself in a conflict of interest position in terms of some issue under consideration by the School Community Council. If this were to happen, the member should declare himself/herself in conflict of interest and leave the room for that portion of the meeting, thus refraining from participating in the discussion. The member should not vote on any decision made on the issue.

ARTICLE IX – Decision-Making Processes

The School Community Council will need to choose a preferred decision-making process. Although some decisions, like adopting a constitution, will require a motion and a formal vote, not all S.C.C. business will require this process.

There are two common decision-making models:

a) Majority Vote Model

This issue is discussed and a vote is taken. The majority vote decides the issue.

b) Consensus Building Model

Consensus does not necessarily mean that all parties agree, but that all can live with a decision for the sake of the group's ability to move forward. It requires that all members listen to each other's opinions and try to find solutions to problems and differences.

Consensus will almost always involve compromise and can release a group to move beyond individual wants to determining and pursuing shared needs. Consensus does not necessarily mean that all parties agree, but that all can live with a decision made for the sake of the group's ability to move forward.

ARTICLE X – Handling Complaints or Concerns

1) Complaints or Concerns about an Individual Student or Staff Member

Any matter concerning an individual student or staff member must be directed to the staff member or principal. It is not the responsibility of the School Community Council to deal with concerns or complaints about individuals other than to direct the concern to the appropriate individual.

2) Complaints or Concerns about School Community Council Initiatives or Activities

a) Informal Complaints or Concerns

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

b) Formal Complaints or Concerns

Concerns or complaints can be brought to the attention of the School Community Council by addressing the concern in writing to the Chair or by requesting that the Chair provide the individual with the opportunity to meet with the School Community Council at an upcoming meeting. The School Community Council will provide a written response regarding how they have or will address the concern or complaint.

ARTICLE XI – Conflict Resolution Process

The Conflict Resolution Process will be used by the School Community Council to address both internal conflict, which may occur among individuals within the School Community Council, and external conflict that may occur between the School Community Council and individuals, groups or organization outside of the S.C.C. The conflict resolution process is outlined in *A Handbook for School Community Councils and Principals* (p 99).

If reasonable attempts to resolve the conflict have been unsuccessful, the principal or the chair will contact the Director of Education for assistance.

ARTICLE XII – Committees

The School Community Council will act in a coordination role for ad hoc committees that have been approved by the principal and operate in support of the S.C.C. and the school program.

ARTICLE XIII – Amending the Constitution

The School Community Council may amend its constitution by sending in suggestions in writing to the Board of Education.

ARTICLE XIV - Other

Code of Conduct*

The School Community Council of _____ (*name of school*) is established by motion of the Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Board and is to act in an advisory manner to the board and the administration of _____ (*name of school*).

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.

A council member who is approached with a concern relating to an individual is in a privileged position and must treat such a concern with discretion, protecting the confidentiality of the people involved.

A person who accepts a position as a school community council member:

- Adheres to all relevant school board policies.
- Upholds the constitution and bylaws, policies and procedures of the School Community Council.
- Performs his/her duties with honesty and integrity.
- Works to ensure that the well-being of students is the primary focus of all decisions.
- Respects the rights of individuals.
- Takes the direction from the Council, ensuring that the representation processes are in place.
- Encourages and supports parents and students with individual concern(s) to contact the appropriate person(s) who is able to address the concern(s).
- Works to ensure that issues are resolved through due process.
- Strives to be informed and only passes on information that is reliable and correct.
- Respects all confidential information.
- Supports Catholic education.

* adapted from the Saskatchewan Association of School Councils

SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTION MANUAL

SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

This Election Manual is a guide to filling the membership of School Community Councils throughout the Prince Albert Roman Catholic Separate School Division No. 6.

SECTION B: MEMBERSHIP

1. Elected Membership

- a) Elected representative members are parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school.
- b) The number of elected representatives for each School Community Council shall be between five and nine members. The majority must be of the Catholic faith.

2. Appointed Membership

- a) Secondary Students

At École St. Mary High School, two students will serve on the School Community Council. Student representatives will be selected from the Student Leadership Council (SLC) for a one-year term.

3. Permanent Membership

- a) The principal of the school.
- b) A teacher – the teacher member will be selected by the teachers at each individual school. The teacher appointment will be for a one-year term, subject to re-appointment on a yearly basis.
- c) In community schools, the community school coordinator.
- d) The Board of Education, in consultation with the principal, may appoint other permanent members from the community.

SECTION C: ELECTION PROCEDURES

1. Call for Nominations

The **Notice of Call for Nominations** will be advertised in the school community four weeks prior to the date of the School Community Council's annual meeting.

The **Notice of Call for Nominations** will specify who may let their name stand for the School Community Council, the deadline for close of nominations, and the place where nomination forms can be picked up and dropped off.

2. Nominations

Individuals who qualify to run in the election can be nominated by another individual or can volunteer to stand for election. All nominees must indicate whether they are of the Catholic faith.

3. Election

Representative members are elected at the School Community Council's annual meeting.

One half of the representative members of each School Community Council will be elected each year. If representative members are acclaimed and an election is not necessary, council members will decide among themselves who will serve for a one-year term and who will serve for a two-year term.

4. Annual Meeting

The annual meeting will be advertised in the school newsletter and in the community. The notice will set out the time, place, and purpose of the meeting.

a) Agenda for Annual Meeting

1. Elections

If an election is necessary, the school's Election Manager will:

- i. Announce that parents/guardians of students who are enrolled in the school are eligible to vote.
- ii. Invite each candidate to speak to the group.
- iii. Distribute and collect ballots.
- iv. Count ballots with the Chair of the annual meeting in attendance. If there is a tie between nominees, the Election Manager will break the tie, using an acceptable method.
- v. And, announce the outcome of the election.

The Chair of the Annual Meeting will ask for a motion to have the Election Manager destroy the ballots.

Contested Election

If there is a dispute about the outcome of the election, the ballots will be held in safekeeping by the Election Manager, and the matter will be referred to the Director of Education by the school principal. The Director of Education will investigate the election process and make a ruling.

2. Annual Report

An Annual Report will outline the School Community Council's activities and a financial report as outlined in: Operations and Procedures Manual Re: *School Community Council Funds*.

3. Other Business as established by the School Community Council

4. Discussion

5. Adjournment

OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES

School Community Council Funds

SECTION A: Allocation of Funds

- a) The Board of Education annually establishes a grant, which provides operational funds for School Community Councils.
- b) In addition to the annual grant received, School Community Councils may undertake one major fundraising project per year (as per Policy JLK) for the benefit of the school community.
- c) The School Community Council is to establish an annual budget.

SECTION B: Review of Finances

- a) The School Community Council may request, from the Chief Financial Officer, information regarding its grant allocation.
- b) Fundraising activities proposed by the school administration or student leadership/representative council are to be reviewed by the S.C.C. The review of the fundraising plan is to include:
 - i) A determination of the activities which financially benefit the school, and those activities which support charitable causes.
 - ii) An assurance that the requirements of the school division's policy on fundraising (Policy JLK), and any legal requirements are met.
 - iii) An assurance that provision is made to report fundraising activities in the statement of school accounts, and reported to the Chief Financial Officer, by the principal, by June 30th of each year.

SECTION C: Accounting Guidelines

General Information

- a) The Prince Albert Catholic Board of Education is ultimately responsible for all funds utilized in the delivery of services within the P.A. Catholic school division, including those funds that are school-based.
- b) The School Community Council is responsible to the Board of Education for ensuring that school-based funds assigned to it, and those raised by the council, are accounted for in accordance with Board policies and administrative procedures.
- c) In the administration of a trust, School Community Councils are bound to exercise diligence and care in the management of its school-based funds and are responsible to provide public accountability.

Accounting Consideration

- a) The School Community Council fiscal year runs from September 1 to August 31.

- b) In order to exercise effective control over trust funds, a set of complete and accurate accounting records must be maintained and made available for use on a timely basis. Such records shall be based on basic fundamental accounting principles that include:
- receipting and recording of all revenue received
 - safeguarding/control of cash
 - authorizing and recording of all expenditures
 - documentation to substantiate expenditures
 - monthly bank reconciliations
 - preparation of year-end report
 - audit as approved by Chief Financial Officer

SECTION D: Bank Accounts and Investments

a) Current Bank Account

Each School Community Council shall have one current bank account to deal with all School Community Council funds. This account must have the following features:

- provide bank statements dated at month-end, along with cancelled cheques or document images of cancelled cheques,
- provide interest earned each month on remaining account balances with minimal monthly service charges, and
- provide for all cheques to be signed by two people.

b) Cheques

School Community Councils must have pre-numbered cheques with the school name printed on them. Voided cheques must be retained and interfiled in numerical order with the returned cancelled cheques. Unused cheques must be kept in a safe place where they are accessible only to authorized cheque signers.

c) Signing Authority

Dual signatures are required on each cheque, therefore, it is recommended that the bank account be set up to have three people authorized to act as cheque signers. (For example, signing authority may be a combination of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer.)

d) Deposits

Funds collected should be deposited intact. Cash payments should come out of petty cash, not out of cash collected. (Making cash payment out of cash collected results in an understatement of both the total receipts and the total expenses and should **not** be done).

e) Investments

To take advantage of greater interest rates, surplus funds may be invested for short periods of time in term deposits or guaranteed investment certificates with financial institutions covered by the Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation.

f) Disbursement of Funds

- All disbursements must be supported by an original invoice or a receipt that shows the amount and purpose of the payment.
- Upon authorization by the School Community Council, the disbursement of funds shall be made by cheques only, except for petty cash purchases (under \$25.00).
- Cheque signers must never sign blank cheques.

g) Year-End Report

A year-end report will be submitted to the Chief Financial Officer by September 30th of each year. The report will be prepared using an Annual Financial Report Form, supplied by the Chief Financial Officer.

SAMPLE – SCC MEETING AGENDA TEMPLATE

AGENDA

"Insert School Name" School Community Council

"Insert Date and Time"

	Item
1.	Opening of Meeting and Prayer
2.	Approval of Agenda
3.	Approval of Minutes
4.	Principal's Report
5.	Treasurer's Report
6.	School Board Trustee's Report
7.	Business Arising
8.	New Business
9.	Round the Table
10.	Next Meeting
11.	Adjournment

SAMPLE – SCC MEETING MINUTES TEMPLATE

MINUTES

"Insert School Name" School Community Council

"Insert Date and time" | *Meeting called to order by* _____

Attendance:

Present:

Elected Members:

Permanent Members:

School Board Trustee:

Regrets:

Opening of Meeting and Prayer

_____ called the meeting to order and _____ led in opening prayer.

Approval of Agenda

_____ moved that the agenda be approved as presented. Seconded by _____.

Carried.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from _____ approved by _____ and _____ seconded

Carried.

Principal's Report

"Insert Principal's name" presented his report

New Business

-

Treasurer's Report

"Insert name" presented the school's Treasurer Report (indicate 'as attached' or 'as follows' and key in the details here).

-

School Board Trustee's Report

"Insert Trustee's name" presented the School Community Council Trustee Report as attached.

Business Arising

(if there aren't any items – type "No items" at the bulleted area)

-
-

New Business

(if there aren't any items – type "No items" at the bulleted area)

-
-

Round the Table

(if there aren't any items – type "No items" at the bulleted area)

-
-

Next Meeting

"Insert Date and time here"

Adjourned at "Insert time here"

As per Policy BGA-School Community Councils (Procedure-Operations #6)

Minutes (using the school division templates) of each School Community Council (SCC) meeting will be kept and forwarded to the principal of the school within 7 days of the School Community Council meeting by the SCC Secretary. The school principal is responsible for reviewing and submitting the meeting minutes and any attachments to the Board of Education.
