



ST. MARY CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL

CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

CONSTITUTION

Revised June 7, 2006

St. Mary Catholic Secondary School

Catholic School Council

CONSTITUTION

1.0 NAME

The organization shall be known as the St. Mary Catholic Secondary School Council, henceforth, referred to as the Catholic School Council. The Catholic School Council may not be incorporated.

2.0 COMPOSITION

Parents and guardians of students enrolled at the school shall form the majority of the Catholic School Council. The Catholic School Council shall reflect the diversity of the community. The Durham Catholic District School Board is appreciative of the contribution of and support of all of the parents who have entrusted their children to our care.

The Catholic School Council will include but not be limited to:

- A Parish priest or designate (voting member – appointed)
- Seven parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school (voting members)
- A student (mandatory in secondary schools, at the discretion of the principal in elementary schools) (non voting)
- The school Principal (non voting member)
- A teacher (voting member)
- A non-teaching staff member (voting member)
- Community representative shall be appointed by the Catholic School Council. The Catholic School Council cannot appoint a person employed by the Board unless they are not employed at the school and have informed the members of their employment prior to appointment (voting member)
- One person appointed by an association that is a member of the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education, if the association that is a member is established in respect of the school

The School Chaplain shall sit as a non-voting member of the Catholic School Council.

It is the expectation that each member of a Catholic School Council be committed to the Board's Mission Statement and upholds the tenets and beliefs of our Catholic faith.

**Durham Catholic District School Board
Mission Statement**

The Durham Catholic District School Board recognizes the dignity and worth of each person. The Board brings together members of the Catholic community: the home, the school and the parish as partners in promoting the Gospel of Christ and thereby participating in the saving mission of the Church to bring all of creation back to the Creator.

When Jesus Christ, the Foundation of the whole educational system, the Durham Catholic District School Board is a community of faith based on relationships nurtured by love of God and neighbor.

The mission of the Durham Catholic District School Board is to provide holistic education, which will form the minds and hearts of young people and guide them to grow in their relationship to Christ, through and with others, in the context of human culture. Through this formation, the students will then be enabled to take personal responsibility in continuing the Church’s mission of service in society.

The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and the majority of parent/guardian members of the Catholic School Council shall be Separate School Supporters.¹

Each parent/guardian upon acceptance of nomination to a Catholic School Council shall sign a declaration confirming their commitment to Catholic Education.

Declaration:

I, _____ do solemnly swear to uphold the tenets
(Parent/Guardian)
and beliefs of the Catholic Faith as a Catholic School Council Member of St. Mary Catholic Secondary School.

I will model and promote the Mission Statement of the Durham Catholic District School Board and will support the principal and staff in the academic, physical, emotional and spiritual development of our students.

(Date)

(Signature)

¹ Separate School Supporter as defined by the Education Act “mean a Roman Catholic ratepayer,
a) in respect to whom notice of school support has been given in accordance with section 106 and notice of withdrawal of support has not been given under section 107,
b) who is shown as a separate school supporter on the school support list as prepared or revised by the assessment commissioner under section 16 of the Assessment Act, or
c) who is declared to be a separate school supporter as a result of a final decision rendered in proceedings commenced under the Assessment Act, and includes the Roman Catholic spouse of such ratepayer.

Catholic School Council members will be elected by the groups they represent, with the exception of the school principal and the parish priest or designate who are automatically members and the community representative who is appointed by the Catholic School Council. If an employee of the Board works at a school that his/her children attend, the employee may stand for election on the Catholic School Council as a staff member, but not as a parent. All parents are invited to serve on committees and continue to enrich school life with their presence, contributions and insights.

If circumstances preclude representation from, or election of, any of the above groups, the Catholic School Council will continue to operate but will seek involvement of the non-represented group through outreach strategies. Members acquired in this manner will serve as voting members for the remainder of the term of office.

If a Catholic School Council member resigns/retires midterm, the Catholic School Council may appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of the term. The minimum number of elected parents on the Catholic School Council shall be 50% plus one.

All Catholic School Council by-laws will include the term of office defined as the period of time between the first Catholic School Council meeting of the school year and the first Catholic School Council meeting of the following school year. A member may be re-elected or re-appointed for no more than four consecutive one-year terms.

3.0 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The St. Mary Catholic School Council is committed to fostering a school community striving toward the spiritual, intellectual, social and physical development of students at St. Mary Catholic Secondary School, in accordance with Catholic teaching. Through the partnership of learners, which include parents, clergy, staff, students and the wider community, the St. Mary Catholic School Council will enhance student learning and their development into responsible members of the Catholic Faith community.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Catholic School Councils will deal with issues of particular relevance to its community and establish priorities on an annual basis. The Catholic School Council may make recommendations to the Principal or to the Board on any matter. In addition, the Catholic School Council shall:

- Promote the spiritual life of the school
- Submit an annual written report on its activities to the Principal and to the Board
- Within this annual report, include a report on any fund-raising activities and Financial Statements in which it has participated.
- Consult with parents of pupils enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by the Catholic School Council
- Provide advise to the Principal with respect to:
 - Local code of conduct

- School policies or guidelines related to policies and guidelines established by the Board respecting appropriate dress for pupils
- School action plans for improvement, based on the EQAO reports and the communication of those plans to the public

In addition to its advisory responsibilities, the Catholic School Council shall:

- Promote the best interest of Catholic education locally and provincially
- Establish goals, procedures and priorities of the Catholic School Council
- Attend training sessions provided by the DCDSB and Ministry of Education (MOE)
- Hold a minimum of four (4) meetings a year
- Communicate regularly with parents and other members of the community to seek their views on matters being addressed by the Catholic School Council
- Operate according to this constitution and by-laws developed by the Catholic School Council and aligned with the policies of DCDSB

5.0 THE CHAIR

The chair of the St. Mary Catholic School Council is to be one of the parent representatives and is to be elected by the full sitting membership of the council, consisting of elected and appointed members. The Chair may not be an employee of the DCDSB, and shall:

- Ensure that the promotion of Catholic values is central to the work of the Catholic School Council
- Call Catholic School Council meetings and work to keep members informed
- Prepare the agenda in consultation with the Principal
- Chair the meetings
- Ensure minutes are recorded and maintained
- Keep records of all its financial transactions
- Make available the minutes and records at the school for examination without charge by any person
- Retain minutes and financial records for a minimum of four (4) years at the school
- Participate in information and training programs (or assign a designate to do so)
- Communicate with the school Principal on a regular and ongoing basis
- Ensure that there is regular communication with the school community
- Encourage participation of parents and others in the parish and wider community and beyond
- Act as an ex-officio member of all council committees
- Have the opportunity to consult with senior staff and trustees in consultation with the principal and council

6.0 THE CO-CHAIR

The Co-chairperson of the St. Mary Catholic School Council is to be one of the parent representatives and is to be elected by the full sitting membership of the council. The Co-chairperson may not be an employee of the DCDSB and shall:

- Perform those duties as assigned by the council
- Act as the Chair of the Council in the absence of the Chairperson

7.0 THE SECRETARY

The secretary of the St. Mary Catholic School Council may be any member, not necessarily a parent, and is to be elected by the full sitting membership of the Council. The Secretary shall:

- Record the proceedings of the meetings (see section 16)
- Be responsible for maintaining and distributing the minutes of all meetings
- Respond to all Council correspondence and take action as directed by the council
- Perform duties as assigned by council members.

8.0 THE TREASURER

The Treasurer of the St. Mary Catholic School Council is to be one of the parent representatives and is to be elected by the full sitting membership of the council. The Treasurer shall:

- Maintain the financial and accounting records of the council
- Table a financial statement at all meetings of the council
- Provide a year-end financial statement based on the fiscal year ending August 31, at the Annual General Meeting. The Financial Statement is to be audited in accordance with guidelines approved by the council

9.0 THE PRINCIPAL

The Principal of the school acts in accordance with the Education Act, the Regulations and the Policies of the DCDSB. As the Curriculum Leader of the school, the Principal shall consider the advisory role of the council and resource its members. The Principal shall:

- Ensure that the Catholic faith is the foundation upon which decisions are made
- Consider each recommendation made by the Catholic School Council and advise the Catholic School Council of action taken in response to the recommendations
- Solicit the views of the Catholic School Council with respect to:
 - School code of conduct
 - School policies or guidelines related to policies and guidelines established by the Board respecting appropriate dress for pupils
 - School action plans for improvement, including those based on the EQAO reports and the communication of those plans to the public

- Act as a resource person and assist the Catholic School Council in obtaining information relevant to the functions of the Catholic School Council including information relating to relevant legislation, regulations and policies
- Attend every meeting of the Catholic School Council unless unable to do so by reason of illness or other cause beyond control
- Provide for the prompt distribution to each member of the Catholic School Council of any materials received by the Principal from the Ministry that are identified by the Ministry as being for distribution to the members of Catholic School Councils.
- Post any materials distributed to each member of the Catholic School Council from the Ministry in the school in a location that is accessible to parents.
- Ensure that the annual report prepared by the Catholic School Council is distributed to every parent/guardian of a pupils enrolled in the school
- Encourage participation of parents, staff, students and others in the parish and the wider community
- Facilitate communication with senior staff and trustees as appropriate
- Ensure that copies of the minutes of St. Mary Catholic School Council meetings are kept in the school for a minimum of four (4) years
- Ensure that the issues addressed are those that are the responsibility of the Catholic School Council and relevant to the school community

10.0 THE TEACHING STAFF REPRESENTATIVE

The Teaching Staff Representative is to be a teacher other than the Principal or Vice Principal and is to be elected by the members of the school teaching staff in accordance with the Act, Regulations and Board Policies to represent the teachers on the council. The Teaching Staff Representative shall:

- Act as a liaison for teacher input and report to the council
- Perform those duties as assigned by the council
- Ensure that all council correspondence is reviewed by the principal prior to its distribution

11.0 THE NON-TEACHING STAFF REPRESENTATIVE

The Non-Teaching Staff Representative is to be elected by members of the school's non-teaching staff comprising of Educational Assistants, Secretarial and Custodial Staff in accordance with the Act, Regulation and Board Policies to represent the non-teaching staff on the council. The Non-Teaching Staff Representative shall:

- Act as a liaison for non-teaching staff input and report to the council
- Perform those duties as assigned by the council
- Ensure that all council correspondence is reviewed by the Principal prior to its distribution.

12.0 THE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

The Student Representative is to be appointed by the Student Council of the school in cooperation with the Principal. The Student Council shall develop its own criteria and procedure for selecting a student interested in serving in this capacity. The Student Representative shall:

- Act as a liaison for student input and report to the council
- Perform those duties assigned by the council
- Ensure that all council correspondence is reviewed by the Principal prior to its distribution.

13.0 A PARISH PRIEST OR DESIGNATE

A Parish Priest shall be invited to sit as a member of the St. Mary Catholic School Council. A Parish Priest may appoint a designate to act on his behalf. A Parish Priest or Designate shall:

- Lend knowledge, support and experience in promoting and maintaining the ideals of the Faith in our schools
- Assist the council in strengthening the fundamental partnership between the parish, home and school

14.0 THE COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE

The Community Representative shall be invited to sit as an appointed member of the council from individuals nominated by a member of the council, school staff, and parents at the school or students attending the school. The Community Representative shall:

- Act as a liaison for the community at large on the council
- Assist the council in strengthening the partnership with the community

BY-LAWS

15.0 VOTING RIGHTS OF ST MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

Council meetings are open to any interested member of the school community and any community member should be given the opportunity to participate in the deliberations of the Council. Attempts should be made to reach decisions by consensus. If, however, it becomes necessary to put the matter to a vote, the vote shall be restricted to the elected and appointed members of the Council. Each member of the elected Council present at the meeting is entitled to vote. The principal is not entitled to vote in any voting undertaken by the Council or by a committee of the Council.

16.0 MEETINGS

16.1 Quorum

Fifty percent of the elected and appointed membership, plus one, with a majority of parents, shall constitute a quorum for all meetings. The Principal or designate shall be present. (Example: a minimum of seven members, four of which are parents.)

16.2 General Meeting

A General Meeting of the Catholic School Council shall be held annually in September for the purpose of elections and reporting on the activities of the council to the Parent, School and Parish Community. The Executive shall also be elected at that meeting as per 5.0 (Chair, Co-chair, Secretary, Treasurer)

16.3 Regular Meetings.

The Catholic School Council shall meet on a regular basis as determined by the membership and scheduled at its first meeting following the Annual General Meeting. The meeting dates shall be decided upon and the information provided to the parent, school, parish and community at large. There shall be a minimum of four (4) meetings per school year. The School Council shall meet within thirty-five (35) days of the beginning of the school year, after the elections are held, on a date fixed by the Principal. The Council may follow Robert's Rules of Order as a means of governing council proceedings etc. (copy attached)

17.0 AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a Notice of Motion at any meeting of the Council. Such Notice of Motion shall be debated at the next meeting and the amendment may be voted upon in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. A two-thirds majority of the voting members of council is required for the amendment to become part of the Constitution.

18.0 PARLIAMENTARY AUDIT

The council shall follow Robert's Rules of Order as a means of making decisions with the understanding that discussion prior to the formal presentation of a motion will remain informal.

19.0 ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Order of Business at all meetings of the council shall be as follows:

- Meeting called to order
- Opening prayer (example: scripture reading and reflection)
- Approval of agenda
- Presentations
- Minutes of the previous meeting
- Business arising
- Correspondence
- Treasurer's report
- Committee reports
- New business
- Adjournment and closing prayer
- Any further agenda items shall be presented upon new business and approved for discussion at a future council meeting. Additional agenda items shall be received by the chair in writing ten (10) days prior to the next meeting

20.0 ELECTIONS FOR THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

The purpose of the annual General meeting shall be to elect the parent representative designated by the Constitution. Due notice of the elections to be held not later than September 30th shall be given in writing by way of a notice to parents. The Chair, Co-chair, Secretary and Treasurer shall also be elected prior to the conclusion of this meeting by the newly elected and appointed council members. School council elections shall be conducted by secret ballot.

20.1 Nominations

Nominations may be received in writing using the nomination form approved by the council at least two weeks prior to the elections and shall be moved and seconded. Nominations may be accepted from the floor as part of the electoral procedures.

20.2 Election Procedures

The Principal of the school or designate shall receive nominations, screen them for eligibility and compliance with Ministry and Board Policies and conduct the elections in accordance with the Robert's Rules of Order. All parents will elect parent representatives by secret ballot. If there is a tie for the final position, a second vote by secret ballot will be taken. Further ties will be broken by lottery.

20.3 Eligibility for Office

Candidates will meet the eligibility requirements as defined by Ministry and Board Policies.

20.4 Vacant Positions

If all the elected and/or appointed positions are not filled, the council shall proceed. It shall endeavor to seek members for the vacant positions through outreach into the community. Positions which become vacant as a result of resignations may be filled by appointment, based on applications received from interested school community members and voted upon by the elected and appointed council members.

21.0 COMMITTEES

The Catholic School Council shall have the authority to establish both standing and ad-hoc committees and, may invite members to serve from the school and/or broader community as appropriate. Committees are responsible for reporting to the council. All council correspondence is to be approved by the Principal prior to its distribution. Every committee must include at least one parent member of council. Each committee may include persons who are not members of the council but are parents of students or appointed by council.

22.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of interest is defined as any matter that may directly or indirectly financially benefit the member, place of employment, or the individual member, student or family. A conflict of interest must be declared prior to/or as a result of discussion or the decision making process. A person disclosing conflict of interest may not participate in further discussion or votes on that issue.

23.0 CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

Internal school council disputes shall be referred to the Conflict Resolution Committee. This committee shall consist of the chair, two other members as selected by the council, and the principal as resource. All matters referred to this committee shall be discussed "In Camera". A report to the entire council will be given as found appropriate by the committee. Should a resolution not be found the Catholic School Council may invite the Area Superintendent to assist.

24.0 MINUTES AND FINANCIAL RECORDS

St. Mary Catholic School Council shall keep minutes of all meetings and records of all its financial transactions. The minutes shall be available at the school and available, without charge, for examination. Minutes and financial records shall be kept for a minimum of four (4) years. The financial statement based on the fiscal year ending August 31st, shall be audited prior to the September annual General Meeting by a third party.

25.0 REPORTING TO THE COMMUNITY

The Catholic School Council must report all activities on an annual basis to the Principal and subsequently to the Board.

APPROVED THIS _____ DAY OF _____

1. Mrs. Mary Curran (principal)	_____
2. Ms. Brenda McDonald (vice-principal)	_____
3. Mrs. Carol Pistchik (chair)	_____
4. Mrs. Mary-Joe Kotsopoulos (vice-chair)	_____
5. Mrs. Margaret Fardoe (secretary)	_____
6. Mrs. Cathy Carman (secretary)	_____
7. Mrs. Doris Foden (treasurer)	_____
8. Mr. Tomy Valookaran (parish representative)	_____
9. Mrs. Rosanna Garcia (community representative)	_____
10. Mrs. Colleen Pontello (teacher representative)	_____
11. Ms. Carla Cavallo	_____
12. Mr. Colin Hill	_____
13. Ms. Mary Michael	_____
14. Mrs. Liz Dell	_____
15. Mrs. Elaine Blackburn Dunn	_____
16. Mrs. Sue Haslam	_____
17. Mrs. Sue Robinson	_____
18. Mrs. Rosie Henein	_____