

These are short snippets you might want to use:

Catholic School Community Councils

Next fall all schools in our division will be electing Catholic School Community Councils. This organization will replace our present Parent Association (Home and School). Catholic School Community Councils are to be:

- Advisory groups established at each school
- They are focused on enhancing student learning and well-being.
- Official connection to Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Board of Education

Consider becoming involved!

Catholic School Community Councils – Member Roles:

- Catholic School Community Council Members are volunteers.
- They are expected to attend all meetings.
- They are interested in working to support student learning and success.
- They are willing to be guided by the principles outlined in their constitution.
- They are able to provide a two year commitment.

Catholic School Community Councils –What’s the Same?

- One group of people supporting the work of the school
- Parents supporting schools and their children
- Parents remain a vital support to the school
- Validates the importance of parental involvement and the positive impact this has on student learning
- Members are appointed or elected
- Membership can include those involved in existing parent groups ie. room reps
- Operate according to constitution
- Consultation with parents re: school initiatives and plans
- No discussion regarding specific staff, students, parents or classroom situations
- May continue to fundraise to support the school

Catholic School Community Councils – What’s Different?

- Official connection to the Board of Education
- Senior administrator assigned to work with CSCC’s
- Board to provide training, orientation and networking opportunities
- Specific election procedures (if needed)
- Grant allotment to help with operation costs
- Provision for involvement of Catholic community members
- Parents elected to council, not to specific offices
- All parent groups will use the name Catholic School Community Council
- Specific involvement of CSCC in developing and recommending an annual Learning Improvement Plan

School Community Councils Frequently Asked Questions

Why are schools being asked to do this now?

On May 13, 2004, the Government of Saskatchewan announced the forced amalgamations of school divisions in Saskatchewan, reducing 81 school divisions to 28 school divisions by January 1, 2006. As part of that decision, the government also wanted to examine the current model for local school and community engagement.

In February 2005, a three-person panel was appointed to prepare a policy paper on local engagements in schools. The task of the Local Accountability and Partnerships Panel would be to recommend a framework for local accountability and community involvement for K to 12 education.

On September 26th the Panel released its report to the government and in November 2005, the government announced its response to that report. The new 'School Community Councils' would become the school and community engagement model for Saskatchewan school divisions. A Council would be required in every school and the framework would be included in legislation.

What happens to our existing Home and School or Parent Association?

All schools in the province are being asked to change the parent structure that presently have in their school community to a "school community council". The council will function in many ways like the pre-existing organization. The primary purpose is to support their school and their children. Specifically, the school community councils are to focus on contributing to enhancing student learning and well-being.

How are school community councils different from existing parent groups?

The following outlines what's "different" about school community council:

- Official connection to the Board of Education
- Senior administrator assigned by the Board to work with School Community Councils
- Board to provide training, orientation and networking opportunities
- Specific election procedures
- Grant allotment to help with operation costs
- Provision for involvement of community members
- Parents elected to council, not to specific offices
- All parent groups will use the name Catholic School Community Council
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Who is eligible to serve on a school community council?

The intent is that your elected school community council be representative of the student population. A school community is free to determine the number of elected members that will serve on council (5 to 9 members). Elected members may be parents and/or community members who reside in the transportation attendance area of the school as established by the Board of Education. The majority of elected members must be

parents. Any parent, who has students attending the school, is eligible for election. School Community Councils should strive to be reflective of all segments of the student population.

All councils in the Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division will be called Catholic School Community Councils. All parents/guardians will be eligible to run or vote in the election. Community members must reside within the school's transportation attendance area/geographic area as determined by the Board of Education and be of the Catholic faith.

Who are the “appointed” members and who does the appointing?

Legislation requires that certain people must be appointed: the school principal, one teacher, and one or two students in the high school setting. The principal and staff will determine which teacher will serve. Each school with secondary students may determine how the student(s) will be chosen. If you have students in your school who live on a reserve, one or two representatives from the band are to be invited to serve on the council.

In addition to the required appointed members, school community councils are free to decide and appoint other members whom they feel should be present. The following is a suggested list but it is not intended to limit the possibilities.

- Parish representative
- Community School Coordinator/HSLW
- Community Association rep
- Room reps.
- Community partners

How many people may be part of a school community council?

Our school division has set the number at 50. Although only 5 to 9 parents and/or community members are elected to council, many others may be appointed by the existing council. Some schools may want to include room representatives as part of their council.

What is the role of the Returning Officer and who can serve in that capacity?

The Returning Officer is assigned to:

- provide public notice of the Annual General Meeting
- prepare and accept nomination forms (if used)
- prepare for the election procedure at the Annual General Meeting (if necessary)
- be present to facilitate the voting procedure at the Annual General Meeting

The Returning Officer must be an employee of the Board of Education and cannot be a school community council member. It is recommended that unless there are extenuating circumstances, the school's office coordinator fill the role of Returning Officer.

How will nominations to school community councils occur?

Nominations may occur in one of the following three ways and the method should be determined by the school community council based on their knowledge of the community.

1. Advance nominations can be formally collected prior to the annual meeting with a cut-off date of one week prior to the meeting. Using this method will allow you to determine if elections will be needed at all.

2. Advance nominations and nominations from the floor at the time of the Annual General Meeting.

3. Nominations taken from the floor at the time of the Annual General Meeting (no nomination form required).

What is the term of office for serving on the school community council?

Each elected member of a school community council will hold office for two years and is eligible for re-election, except in the matter of the first election of members. Similarly for appointed members, with the exception of a student appointment, each appointed member of a school community council holds office for two years and is eligible for reappointment. Any student who is appointed holds office for one year and is eligible for reappointment.

In the first year of operation of the school community council approximately one-half of the members are to be elected or appointed to one-year terms and the other members are to be elected or appointed to two-year terms. You may use a draw from the hat or some other method of determining which members will hold one and two year terms of office. All subsequent elections shall be for two years.

Longer newsletter inserts:

Catholic School Community Councils

The provincial government is now requiring every school in our province to establish a school community council. This council will replace existing home and school or parent associations. It is the expectation that in the fall 2007, every school in our division will be electing a school community council. Our division has chosen to add the word “Catholic” to that title to more clearly align with our mandate of providing Catholic education.

Catholic School Community Councils are intended to strengthen the capacity of schools to improve children’s learning. By helping families to support their children’s learning and by gathering the resources of the community to ensure student well-being, councils will make a valued contribution to the learning success of Saskatchewan students. School community councils are to replace all other entities as defined in legislation. Catholic School Community Councils will be established within the authority of Boards of Education to ensure alignment of accountability, authority and responsibility among the schools of the Division.

The purposes of the Catholic School Community Council are to:

- develop shared responsibility for the learning success and well-being of all children and youth; and,
- encourage and facilitate parent and community engagement in school planning and improvement processes.

Catholic School Community Councils are an essential feature of educational planning and decision-making. They are part of the school system and are a primary link between the home, community and school. The vision of School Community Councils guides their formation, initiatives and evaluation.

Catholic School Community Councils shall:

1. Work within the parameters of Board policy and administrative procedures;
2. Elect officers from the elected members and the student or band representative(s), appoint additional members as determined by existing council members, create a constitution to govern the operation of the council;
3. Undertake activities to enhance its understanding of the communities economic, social and health needs, aspirations for pupils’ learning and well-being, and resources and supports for the school, parents, guardians, and community;
4. Facilitate parent and community participation in school planning by cooperating with the Principal and staff of the school, in developing and recommending to the Board of Education for approval a **Learning Improvement Plan** that is in alignment with the goals and directions identified by the division;
5. Take action to fulfill initiatives assigned within the Learning Improvement Plan;

6. Communicate annually to parents, guardians and the community on its plans, initiatives and outcomes;
7. Account publicly for the expenditure of funds related to the operation of the Catholic School Community Council;
8. Meet at least five times per year plus an annual general meeting;
9. Participate in orientation, training, development and networking opportunities in order to enhance the capacity of the school community council to fulfill its responsibilities;
10. Not discuss or be given access to personal confidential information about or complaints about any pupil, family member or guardian of any pupil, teacher, administrator or other employee of or member of the board of education.

What's New?

School Community Councils

Why School Community Councils?

On May 13, 2004, the Government of Saskatchewan announced the forced amalgamations of school divisions in Saskatchewan, reducing 81 school divisions to 28 school divisions by January 1, 2006. As part of that decision, the government also wanted to examine the current model for local school and community engagement.

In February 2005, a three-person panel was appointed to prepare a policy paper on local engagements in schools. The task of the Local Accountability and Partnerships Panel would be to recommend a framework for local accountability and community involvement for K to 12 education.

On September 26th the Panel released its report to the government and in November 2005, the government announced its response to that report. The new 'School Community Councils' would become the school and community engagement model for Saskatchewan school divisions. A Council would be required in every school and the framework would be included in legislation.

What are they?

- New school-level groups that will provide input into school improvement
- A new opportunity to make a difference in your school
- Legislated by the provincial government to be in every school
- A replacement for local boards, parent associations or home and school groups
- Includes parents and community members interested in improving education
- A chance to make a difference

Who are they?

- Parents and community members who want to make a difference
- Five to nine elected parent and community members, representative of student demographics in the school, working with school staff on learning improvement plans, providing advice to the board of education, etc.
- Could include secondary students, First Nations representatives, and other specific demographic groups
- School staff including the Principal, a teacher and other members approved by the Board of Education

How do you get involved?

For more information, contact your school.

Prepare to let your name stand for your school's new Catholic School Community Council

Catholic School Community Councils **A Word for Parents and** **Community Members**

A parent or community member serving on the Catholic School Community Council is:

- a dedicated volunteer providing advice for educational planning and decision-making at the school level
- interested in working with others (including the Board of Education, school division administrators, parents, community members and other Council members) to support student learning success and well-being
- willing to be guided by “Principles” that support good School Community Council practice and,
- able to provide a two-year commitment to the work of Council

As a Council member you might expect to ...

- Attend monthly meetings from September to June
- Participate in building a constitution
- Engage in the work of the Council such as:
 - creating a School Community Profile
 - jointly developing the Learning Improvement Plan with the staff of the school
 - providing advice to the school, Board of Education and other community organizations and agencies
 - approving school fundraising activities, school fees and the student code of conduct
 - taking action on Council initiatives to help families support their children’s learning
 - reporting to parents and community on Council progress and,
 - working with other Council members to learn more about the role of the Council and how to fulfill its responsibilities

Your role as a Council member is to build shared responsibility among parents the community and school for student learning and well-being and to lead parent and community involvement in school planning and improvement.

Getting Involved in Your School

How to Get Involved...

Next fall Catholic School Community Councils will be elected at each school in our school division. These councils will replace existing Home and School Associations or Parent Associations.

The purpose of the Catholic School Community Council is to:

- Support student learning success and well-being; and,
- Encourage parent and community involvement in school.

Councils are accountable to their community.

Their responsibilities are to:

- Support parent and community involvement in the school;
- Work with the staff of their school to develop and recommend a Learning Improvement Plan to the Board of Education;
- Help parents to support their children's learning; and,
- Provide advice to the Board, school staff and others about the learning program, policies and educational service delivery.

Parents and Community members are encouraged to participate in school community council elections and become involved in their school.

School Community Council Elections

Voter Information ...

Catholic School Community Councils (CSCC's) provide a new form of parent and community involvement in schools. Councils will replace existing Home and School or Parent Associations and have a value-added role. Most importantly, the main effort of the CSCC's is in the community. Although they provide advice to the school and participate in school planning, their main responsibility is to engage the students' community and homes in support of their learning and well-being.

For this reason, CSCC's need to be reflective of the students and community. It is important that parents of students enrolled in the school take a prime leadership role but it is also important that there be a place for the community to be represented as well.

All **parents or guardians** of students enrolled in the school will be eligible to run or vote in the election of the CSCC. **Community members** who are of the Catholic faith and whose residence is within the transportation attendance area or otherwise defined geographic area of the school as determined by the Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Board of Education, may run for election of the CSCC. An elector is a person who is a Canadian citizen, 18 years of age, a resident of the school transportation attendance area and of the Catholic faith. Voters are asked to register a vote at the Public Meeting by signing a registration sheet and receiving a ballot. Proof of qualification to vote is not required.

