



CATHOLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL
CONSTITUTION



REGIOPOLIS-NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL CONSTITUTION

Revised: April 18, 2023

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ARTICLE 1: Name

Regiopolis-Notre Dame (RND) Catholic High School Council, Kingston, Ontario

ARTICLE 2: Mission Statement

As per ALCDBS statement: RND Catholic School Council is a legally constituted advisory group of elected parents, staff, students, parish representatives, and appointed community members dedicated to fostering effective Catholic schools, promoting Catholic education, and enhancing student achievement.

Regiopolis-Notre Dame Catholic High School Mission Statement: Regiopolis-Notre Dame (RND) Catholic High School exists with the unique responsibility of educating the whole person. By inviting the individual to know Jesus Christ and His Church, the people of God, the students are called to be part of the Church's mission in the world. Operating within Catholic Tradition, the school assists its young people in developing skills, knowledge and values which enable them to contribute in a positive, critical, and effective ways in society.

As a part of the larger Christian Community, RND shares with home and parish, the obligation to nurture faith in its students and staff. In order to do so, RND provides an environment in which all may come to know Jesus Christ, share their faith with others and live it out in their lives.

ARTICLE 3: Mandate

- 3.0 Each member of the Catholic School Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) shall commit to the mission statement of the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District
- 3.1 School Board (hereinafter referred to as the Board as well as the RND Catholic School Council mission statement listed above.
- 3.2 Council is an advisory body which will make recommendations to the Principal and, where appropriate, school board trustees, in their decision-making on educational issues as outlined in Ontario Regulation 612/00.
- 3.3 The advice should be based on consultation of the school community, and the best interests of students throughout the school. Council must operate within the legislation of the Ministry of Education and Board policies and procedures.

ARTICLE 4: Goals

- 4.0 Improving pupil achievement and enhancing accountability of the system to the parent/guardian community;
- 4.1 Ensuring that the distinct Catholic character of the system is fostered by positive working links between home, school, and parish;
- 4.2 Developing and sustaining effective consultative and communicative processes;
- 4.3 Providing information and advising to the Principal, staff, and Board;
- 4.4 Providing opportunities for the school community to be more directly involved with the education of the children;
- 4.5. Providing liaison and communications between school, home, parish, and Board;
- 4.6 Providing support to student, staff, parent/guardians, and volunteer groups in their diverse efforts (including fund-raising) supportive of Regiopolis-Notre Dame Catholic High School.

ARTICLE 5: Membership

- 5.1 Council shall be composed of the following members:
 - parents/guardians of students enrolled at the school
 - school principal
 - one teaching representative
 - one non-teaching representative
 - one student
 - one parish priest or designate (parish representative)
 - one community representative
 - one person appointed by the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education.
- 5.2 Parents/guardians shall form the majority of the Council voting membership. It is possible that some of the positions may remain vacant if no candidate is willing to serve, as long as the criterion of parents/ guardians forming the majority of the Council is met.

ARTICLE 6: Determination of Membership

Election of Parent Members

- 6.1 A person is qualified to be a parent member of a Council if he or she is a parent/guardian of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.

- 6.2 Despite Section 5.1, a person is not qualified to be a parent member of Council, if:
- a) he or she is employed at the school; or
 - b) he or she is not employed at the school but is employed elsewhere by the Board, unless he or she takes reasonable steps to inform people qualified to vote in the election of parent members of that employment.
- 6.3 The Chair or co-chairs of the Council shall be a member(s) who are a parent member and who are Catholic Ontario Regulation 612/00 s. 8 (1). The Chair (co-chairs) shall be elected by the members of Council.
- 6.4 The Vice-Chair shall be a parent member. The Vice-Chair shall be elected by the members of Council.
- 6.5 A person is qualified to vote in an election of parent members of Council if he or she is a parent/guardian of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.
- 6.6 An election of parent/guardian members of Council shall be held at the first council meeting of each school year, on a date that is fixed by the Chair of Council on the last meeting of the previous year, in consultation with the Principal.
- 6.7 The Principal shall, at least fourteen (14) days before the date of the election of parent/guardian members, on behalf of Council, give written notice of the date, time, and location of the election to every parent/guardian of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school (by written or electronic notice).
- 6.8 Voting shall be carried out using secret ballots. The results of the elections shall be announced but the actual vote counts shall not be disclosed as per Ontario Reg. 612/00 s.4 (8). If self nominated forms are used, they are considered "secret". Officers to be voted in by secret ballot for formality and voter protection.
- 6.9 Voters must appear in person to exercise this right.
- 6.10 Where the slate of candidates for parent or guardian representation is not comprised of a majority of Catholic parents or guardians and that circumstance cannot be readily corrected, the Principal shall alert the Director of Education. At the discretion of the Director of Education, the nomination process shall be reopened.
- 6.11 Election procedures shall be supervised by the Principal. Ballots will be destroyed immediately following the vote count and declaration of successful candidates.

- 6.12 If all the elected positions are not filled through the election process, the Council shall proceed. However, the Council should seek members to fill the vacant positions through outreach into the community. Willing individuals may be appointed by majority vote of the Council for the remainder of the term.

ARTICLE 7: Other Elections/Appointments of Other Members

- 7.1 Community representatives shall be appointed by the Council.
- 7.2 The student representative shall be elected by students.
- 7.3 The school Principal shall be a designated member.
- 7.4 The teacher representative shall be elected by members of the teaching staff.
- 7.5 The non-teaching member shall be elected by members of the non-teaching staff.
- 7.6 A school employee may serve on the Council in their capacity as elected teacher or non-teaching representative only.
- 7.7 Eligible voters shall vote only if in respect to any available opening(s) in their representative group.
- 7.8 Membership of Council, by a majority recorded vote, will be prematurely terminated when a member:
- a) does not attend meetings or does not actively participate in Council's endeavours for three consecutive months (excluding July and August)
 - b) engages in behaviour that is not supportive of the goals and mandate of the Council
 - c) engages in behaviour that is deemed by Council to be disruptive
 - d) feels no longer able to fill the position due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., illness, moving from the school district, child no longer attending Regiopolis-Notre Dame Catholic High School).
- 7.9 There will be no honorarium paid to members of the Council.
- 7.10 A vacancy in the membership of a Council shall be filled by election or appointment in accordance with Ontario Reg. 612/00. A vacancy in the membership of a Council does not prevent the Council from exercising its authority.

ARTICLE 8: Council Procedures - Duties & Responsibilities

- 8.1 At the first meeting of the school year, the Council, excluding the Principal, shall elect a Catholic parent/guardian to serve as Chair. In addition, a Co-Chair, a Vice-Chair, Secretary and/or Treasurer may be elected as provided in the by-laws.
- 8.2 The constitution shall be reviewed annually.
- 8.3 Every Member of the Council shall:
- maintain and enhance the Catholicity of the school;
 - participate in Council meetings;
 - notify the chair or the secretary prior to the meeting if unable to be present;
 - participate in training programs;
 - encourage the participation of parents and guardians from all groups and of other people within the school community;
 - promptly declare any conflicts of interest as they arise;
 - not undertake public correspondence in Council's name without Council's expressed consent.
- 8.4 A council is an advisory body and may provide advice to the Principal and, where appropriate, to the Board on any of the matters listed below which the Council identifies as priorities:
- a) the spiritual life of the school;
 - b) local school year calendar;
 - c) school code of student behaviour;
 - d) curriculum and program goals and priorities;
 - e) the responses of the school or school board to achievement in provincial and board assessment programs;
 - f) preparation of the school profile;
 - g) selection of Principals, by providing to the Board a report on school/community needs, and special characteristics required of the Principal;
 - h) school budget priorities, including local capital improvement plans;
 - i) school-community communication strategies;
 - j) methods of reporting to parents and to the community;
 - k) extracurricular activities in the school;
 - l) school-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreation, and nutrition programs;
 - m) community use of school facilities;
 - n) local coordination of services for children and youth.
 - o) development, implementation, and review of board policies at the local level or on any matter, in accordance with its constitution.

- 8.5 The Chair (s) of the Council shall:
- a) call Council meetings
 - b) prepare, in consultation with the Principal, the agenda of the meetings
 - c) chair the meetings
 - d) communicate with the school Principal and the Students' Council Advisor
 - e) prepare report on the operation of the Council to be included in the annual report of the Director of Education and available to the parent/guardian community
 - f) ensure there is regular communications with the school community
 - g) consult with senior board staff and trustees, as required in the event that an issue arises that requires a decision between Council meetings, the Chair may take action provided that the decision is reached in conjunction with the Principal and at least one other Council member. The choice of Council member for consultation will be based upon the Council sub-committee infrastructure. The Chair will report on any action taken at the next Council meeting.
- 8.6 The Vice-Chair of the Council shall:
- a) assist the chair
 - b) assume the responsibilities of the Chair in his or her absence
- 8.7 The Secretary of the Council shall:
- a) maintain an attendance record for the Council meetings
 - b) maintain the minutes of the meetings and records of all of its financial transactions. O. Reg. 612/00, s. 16 (1) and arrange for their distribution
 - c) ensure that the minutes and constitution are available either in the library or the school office for access by members of the school community for up to four years O. Reg. 612/00, s. 16 (3).
 - d) prepare correspondence on behalf of the Council
- 8.8 The Principal of the Council shall:
- maintain and enhance the Catholicity of the school
 - assist in the operations of the Council
 - support and promote the Council's activities
 - seek input from the Council in areas for which it has been assigned advisory responsibility

- act as a resource on laws, regulations, board policies and collective agreements
- obtain and provide information required by Council to enable it to make informed decisions
- communicate with the chair of the Council, as required
- encourage the participation of parents and guardians from all groups and of other people within the school community
- ensure that copies of the agendas and approved minutes of the Council's meetings are kept at the school and are placed on the Regiopolis- Notre Dame Catholic High School website
- assist the Council in communicating with the school community

8.9 The Teacher Representative shall:

- facilitate communication between the teachers and the Council

8.10 The Non-teaching Representative shall:

- facilitate communication between the non-teaching staff and the Council

8.11 The Community Representative shall:

- liaise between the school and the community at large
- be invited to assist the Council in achieving specific and well-defined mandates, on an expert, consultative basis

8.12 The Catholic Church Community Representative shall:

- liaise between the Council and the parishes

8.13 The Student Representative shall:

- facilitate communication between the students and the Council

ARTICLE 9: Meetings

9.1 The Council shall meet on a regular basis, at least four (4) times a year, all which shall be open to the members of the school community. The dates of the meetings shall be publicized on the webpage and in the newsletter. In the case of an online meeting, the Teams link will be available to any parent/guardian who contacts the RND office, and their name will be added to the invitation list.

9.2 Attendance and minutes of the meetings shall be recorded and be available to the school community.

- 9.3 Council shall meet within the first 30 days of the school year at which time elections will occur on the first meeting date. During this first two council meetings, members in attendance will be provided with the “Catholic School Council Parent Self-Nomination Form” which will be filled out and signed by each member in attendance to be considered official council members as a formality to acquire base numbers for quorum.
- 9.4 A Council meeting cannot be held unless:
- a) a majority of the current members of the Council are present.
 - b) a majority of the members who are present are parent members; and
 - c) the Principal or Principal designate is present.
- 9.5 All meetings are open to the Public.
- 9.6 Councils shall operate in a manner that is non-judgemental and based on no fault discussion and compromise as the usual method for developing recommendations and plans. Any vote or decision will be made with a quorum (50 % + 1) of official council members as defined by O.Reg. 612/00 s. 12 (3) indicates that “a majority of members of the council who are present at the meeting are PARENT MEMBERS.
- 9.7 Only official members of the Council, excepting the Principal, shall have voting privileges.
- 9.8 If a formal ballot voting process may be required, each member will have one vote as per O. Reg. 612/00 s 14 (1). Absentee ballots and/or proxies will not be permitted. The Chair shall have a second vote when required to break a tie vote There are no double votes. 2/3 vote to pass a motion resolves the “tie vote”.
- 9.9 Council members are to maintain a school-wide focus on all issues. Council meetings are not a forum for discussion about individual parents, students, staff, trustees or other Council members.
- 9.10 Agendas will be set by the Council Chair, and Council secretary in conjunction with the school Principal with provision made for items to be added to the agenda by the general school community within the week prior to a meeting, provided such agenda items are submitted in writing to the school Principal, Chair, and secretary. A call for new agenda items will occur at the beginning of each meeting.
- 9.11 Members of the general school community may attend Council meetings. They

may participate during discussion at the meeting (at the invitation of the chair) but only elected Council members may vote.

- 9.12 Meetings are to open with the land acknowledgement, a prayer and all present will conduct themselves with due reverence.

ARTICLE 10: Subcommittees

- 10.1 The Council may create subcommittees as required, generally to undertake and manage specific projects, and shall report to the Council, through the Chair, on a regular basis.
- 10.2 Subcommittees shall be formed and dissolved by motion at a meeting of council.
- 10.3 Subcommittee shall select their Chairs at the first meeting of the subcommittee and shall then present the name(s) of the proposed person to Council for their approval by motion.
- 10.4 Council will endeavour to attract volunteers from the general school community to serve on committees. Any member of Council or other interested persons, on Approval of the Council shall be eligible for membership on subcommittees. Each subcommittee shall include at least one parent/guardian member of Council.
- 10.5 Council, when commissioning a new committee, will determine its mandate, scope and timelines.
- 10.6 Committee members will be made aware that their recommendations are always subject to the approval of Council and to the limits of authority and responsibility within which Council must work. Subcommittees shall report to Council through the subcommittee Chair or his/her delegate.

ARTICLE 11: Review and Evaluation

- 11.1 Council will review its activities and evaluate its effectiveness at the end of each school year.
- 11.2 Proposed amendments to this constitution can be submitted and discussed at any regular meeting of the Council.
- 11.3 Amendments shall be presented for ratification no sooner than the next regular meeting of the Council and shall require 50% + 1 vote. Amendments shall be effective immediately after the vote.
- 11.4 All Council members and known interested persons shall be notified of the proposed amendments at least seven (7) days before the ratification meeting.

ARTICLE 12: Liability & Conflict of Interest

- 12.1 The mandate of the Council is clearly stated at the Ministry and Board level as advisory in nature with a focus on school -based or board-wide issues.
- 12.2 The Council must operate collectively and individually within this mandate in order to be covered under the liability insurance of the Board.
- 12.3 Council members are subject to federal, provincial, and municipal laws while serving in their roles.
It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that Council members are aware of the relevant legislation or policy when considering an issue.
- 12.4 Members of the Council may be personally liable if they go beyond the advisory role or do not follow federal, provincial, and municipal laws as well as Board policy.
- 12.5 All members of Council must be aware of their responsibilities to declare a conflict of interest in matters where an opportunity for personal or business financial gains conflicts with the member's position on Council. This includes the use of the member's position for the advantage of the member's immediate family, friends, and business associates.
- 12.6 The opportunity to declare a conflict of interest must be included on the agenda for any Council meeting. In the case of a conflict of interest the member is obliged to declare that conflict before the Council and refrain from voting on matters in which they have conflict.
- 12.7 In order to avoid unnecessary conflict, Council shall:
 - a) adhere to defined roles and responsibilities,
 - b) refrain from discussions of students, parents/guardians, staff members, trustees, or other Council members (as per Freedom of Information Protection of Privacy Information); and
 - c) have no involvement in selection or evaluation of teaching and non-teaching staff.
- 12.8 In the situation that an unresolvable conflict inhibits the activity of Council, the following process will be followed:
 - a) the Chair and/or Principal will contact the Superintendent of the school, in writing and a copy of this correspondence will be directed to the Chair or the Principal;
 - b) the Superintendent will meet with the Chair and the Principal, in a

timely fashion, to mediate the Superintendent may request to meet with the whole Council or with appropriate staff, as deemed necessary;

- c) if the matter cannot be resolved and the work of the Council is rendered impossible, the Superintendent may refer the matter to the Director of Education for mediation.