

ST. MARK JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL COUNCIL
BY-LAWS
2023-2024

Name

The name of the school council shall be THE ST. MARK JUNIOR HIGH COUNCIL of Edmonton, Alberta.

Mission

The mission of our school council is to support learning as an active process involving students, staff, church, and the community in a Catholic atmosphere of mutual trust and respect, whereby the uniqueness of each individual is accepted and valued.

Vision

Educating the Mind, Heart, and Spirit.

Objectives

The central focus of the school council is the desire to create a strong learning environment for all students enrolled in the school, recognizing that the foundation of what we have today has been built upon the characters of community, hospitality, justice, tradition, sacramentality, humanness, rationality, and spirituality. The school council welcomes and accommodates diversity in its membership and strives to embody the Division's core values of dignity and respect, honesty, loyalty, fairness, and personal and communal growth in all its actions, endeavors and goals.

The objectives of the Council, in keeping with the School Act and the School Council Regulations, are as follows:

- To provide advice and ideas to the staff and the principal on issues of importance such as the school philosophy, mission and vision, school discipline policies, programs and directions, and budget allocations to meet the student needs.
- To stimulate continuous improvement in meaning involvement by all the members of the school community.
- To facilitate collaboration among all concerned participants of the school community.
- To support an approach to schooling in which decisions are made collaboratively and wherever possible, at the school and classroom levels.
- To facilitate a common vision for our school.
- To facilitate a means to measure the school council's achievements during the school year and to communicate the results to the school board and the school community.
- To, in cooperation with the principal, keep the school board informed of the needs of the school.
- To support the school in its efforts to focus the teachers' time and the school resources to the essential tasks of teaching and learning.

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- To encourage and promote parental involvement as well as foster a strong positive relationship between home and school.

1. Membership

- 1.1. Any person having a vested interest in the educational well-being of students enrolled in St. Mark Catholic Junior High School, residing in Alberta, being of the full age of 18 years, who has completed the membership requirements and is in good standing with the Council, is eligible to become a Member of the St. Mark Catholic Junior High School Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council, with voting privileges at any General Meeting of the Council Membership.
- 1.2. The majority of the Members of the Council will be parents or guardians of students currently enrolled in St. Mark Catholic Junior High School.
- 1.3. Any Member, upon a majority vote of all Members of the Council in good standing and present at a Special General Meeting of the Membership called for that purpose, may be suspended or expelled from membership for any cause that the Council may deem reasonable.

2. Associate Membership

- 2.1. The principal and staff members of St. Mark Catholic Junior High School can choose to have an Associate Membership only.
- 2.2. As Associate Members, the Principal and all other staff members shall serve as resource people and in an advisory capacity; however, they will not have voting rights at any General Meeting of the Membership or Meeting of the Board.
- 2.3. Neither the Principal nor any staff member shall have signing authority for the Council.
- 2.4. The principal, by virtue of the Education Act, shall have the power of veto relating to actions directly affecting the school building, staff, or students.

3. Community Membership

- 3.1. People who have a vested interest in the school are able to apply to become Community Members. Their written letter of intent must be approved by the Board by a majority vote.
- 3.2. Community Members shall serve in an advisory capacity. They will not have voting rights at any General Meeting of the Membership or Meeting of the Board.
- 3.3. Community Members shall not have signing authority for the Society.

4. Board of Directors

4.1. Composition of the Council

The Council will be composed of the following Executive and Directors, hereinafter referred to as the Board:

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- 4.1.1. **Executive:** Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer – These positions are mandatory. The Vice-Chair position may be considered filled should the Chair position be co-shared between two members of the Council. The Office of the Secretary and Treasurer may be filled by one person if the membership at any General Meeting of the Membership for the election of Officers shall so decide.
- 4.1.2. **Directors:** A maximum of three (3) additional directors at large – These positions are optional. The Council will determine the number of Directors at Large needed on an annual basis (up to the maximum).
- 4.1.3. **Other:** The principal of the school and at least one teacher from the school.

4.2. Chair

- 4.2.1. The Chair shall have general knowledge of all activities of the Council and will carry out duties assigned by the Society.
- 4.2.2. The Chair shall call a Meeting of the Board and shall preside at all General Meetings of the Membership and Meetings of the Board.
- 4.2.3. The Chair will be the chief spokesperson for the Association unless otherwise delegated.
- 4.2.4. The Chair shall be copied on all Council communications and will review any communications to the membership, parent body, school community or public prior to distribution and shall include the Vice-Chair in same.
- 4.2.5. The Chair shall have a vote at any meeting.
- 4.2.6. The Chair will be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- 4.2.7. The Chair of a school council must prepare and provide to the Board by September 30 of each year a report that:
 - 4.2.7.1. Summarizes the activities of the Council in the previous school year; and,
 - 4.2.7.2. Includes a financial statement relating to money handled by the Council in the previous school year, if any, and how funds were used.
- 4.2.8. The Chair of a school council may also prepare and provide to the division Board of Trustees advice regarding the development of the school's mission, vision, philosophy, policies, annual education plan, annual results report and budget.

4.3. Vice-Chair

- 4.3.1. The Vice-Chair shall assist the Chair in all Council activities and will carry out other duties assigned by the Chair.
- 4.3.2. In the event of absence, resignation, incapacity, or extended leave of absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall fulfill the responsibilities of the Chair until the next elections at the AGM. The Chair's position remains vacant until the new Chair is elected.

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- 4.3.3. In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair from meetings, a Chair may be elected or appointed at the meeting to preside.
- 4.3.4. The Vice-Chair will be copied on all Council communications and will review any communications to the membership, parent body, school community or public prior to distribution.

4.4. Secretary

- 4.4.1. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to attend all General Meetings of the Membership and Meetings of the Board, to keep accurate minutes of the same, and to prepare these for distribution.
- 4.4.2. In the absence of the Secretary, his/her duties shall be discharged by such Officer or Director as may be appointed by the Board.
- 4.4.3. The Secretary shall have charge of all Council correspondence and/or documentation and be under the direction of the Chair and the Board. All documentation, literature, correspondence, forms, thumb drives, etc. are the property of the Council. The outgoing Secretary shall transition this property to the incoming Secretary at the end of his/her term.
- 4.4.4. The school council must provide to the principal a copy of the minutes for each meeting of the Council. The principal may then make them available to the school division Board of Trustees or public on request. Once the minutes are provided to the school, they become of the property of the Division.
- 4.4.5. The school council and the school shall independently retain the minutes for each meeting for at least seven years.
- 4.4.6. The Secretary shall keep an accurate Register of Members of the Council, including contact information, and shall send all Council correspondence/notices as required.

4.5. Treasurer

- 4.5.1. The Treasurer shall receive all monies paid to the Council. These funds shall be deposited with the school division under the direction of the school.
- 4.5.2. The Treasurer shall properly account for the funds of the Council, keep such books as may be directed and disburse funds as required. All records, receipts, documentation, forms, thumb drives, etc. are the property of the Council. The outgoing Treasurer shall transition this property to the incoming Treasurer at the end of his/her term.
- 4.5.3. The Treasurer shall present a full detailed account of receipts and disbursements to the Board and/or school division, Edmonton Catholic School Board of Trustees, whenever requested and shall submit a copy of same to the Secretary for the records of the Council.
- 4.5.4. The Treasurer will prepare, and submit with Board approval, any financial reports required by organizations and agencies in a timely manner.

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4.5.5. The use of Council funds will be voted upon through regular council procedures with quorum present (see #6.4.2 and #9.2.3).

4.6. Officers and Directors at Large

4.6.1. All Members of the Board will:

- 4.6.1.1. Attend Annual, Regular and Special General Meetings of the Membership.
- 4.6.1.2. Be prepared for, attend, and actively participate in all Meetings of the Board.
- 4.6.1.3. Actively support the initiatives and actions of the Council.
- 4.6.1.4. Approve, where appropriate, policy and other recommendations received from the Board and its standing committees.
- 4.6.1.5. Review the Bylaws and recommend Board-approved Bylaw changes to the membership.
- 4.6.1.6. Review the Board's structure, approve changes, and prepare necessary Bylaw amendments.
- 4.6.1.7. Participate in the development of the Council's plan and annual review.
- 4.6.1.8. Assist in developing and maintaining positive working relations among the Board, committees, School and School Council to support and enhance education in the school community.
- 4.6.1.9. Allow for opinions and positions of all Members to be voiced and heard in a safe, respectful environment.
- 4.6.1.10. Act as a leader and an ambassador of the Council.
- 4.6.1.11. Strive to reach consensus in all areas. If a consensus cannot be reached, Board Members will accept, and adhere to, the majority decision of the Board.
- 4.6.1.12. Address operational concerns openly and with input from Board Members.
- 4.6.1.13. Address personal concerns relating to Board Members' roles privately, constructively, respectfully, and in a timely manner.

4.7. The Board shall, subject to the Bylaws or directions given by majority vote at any meeting properly called and constituted, have full control and management of the affairs of the Council.

4.8. The Board shall act as the liaison between the Council and the parent fundraising society, St. Mark Junior High Parent Society, on matters of funding requests and asset acquisition.

4.9. Any Director or Officer may resign his/her position by providing written notice to the Board.

4.10. Any Director or Officer may be removed from the Board at any time with cause by a majority vote of the Board whenever, in its judgment, the best interest of the Council will be served.

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- 4.11. Executive and Directors at Large will serve one (1) year in duration, with elections held at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) by October 31 of the current school year.

5. Standing and Ad Hoc Committees

- 5.1. Standing and ad hoc committees will be formed as necessary by the Board and will operate on an ongoing basis with specified lengths of terms for Members.
- 5.2. Committees will meet outside of Meetings of the Board or General Meetings of the Membership to complete their assigned tasks as per the direction of the Board and present a report of their activities at meetings as requested.

6. Meetings

Irregularities or errors made in good faith do not invalidate acts done by any General Meeting of the Membership or Meeting of the Board. No action taken at a meeting is invalid due to accidental omission to give notice to any Member, any Member not receiving any notice, or any error in any notice that does not affect the meeting.

Meetings of the Membership and/or the Board may be held in-person or using a virtual or online platform suitable for conducting Council business, or a combination of the two. The Board will determine the meeting format and notify members.

6.1. Annual General Meeting of the Membership (AGM)

- 6.1.1. An Annual General Meeting of the Membership (AGM) will take place on or before October 31st in each year, by providing no less than 14 days' notice in writing using a newsletter, website, email, text and/or social media. If a Special Resolution will be proposed, no less than 21 days' notice will be required.
- 6.1.2. Only the matters set out in the notice for the AGM may be considered at the AGM.
- 6.1.3. At this meeting, there shall be elected a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and optionally to a maximum of three (3) Directors. The Officers and Directors so elected shall form a Board.
- 6.1.4. The voting Members in attendance at the General Meeting will constitute quorum for the purposes of conducting Annual General Meeting business such as election of Officers and determining signing authority.

6.2. Special General Meeting of the Membership (SGM)

- 6.2.1. A Special General Meeting of the Membership (SGM) may be called at any time by the Secretary upon the instructions of the Chair or Board by providing no less than 14 days' notice in writing using a newsletter, website, email, text and/or social media. If a Special Resolution will be proposed, no less than 21 days' notice will be required, specifying the intention of the Special Resolution.
- 6.2.2. Only the matters set out in the notice for the SGM may be considered at the SGM.
- 6.2.3. The voting Members in attendance at the General Meeting will constitute quorum for the purposes of conducting Special General Meeting business of whom two (2) must be an elected Officer of the Council.

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6.3. Regular Meeting of the Board

- 6.3.1. A Regular Meeting of the Board shall be called at the frequency determined by the Board that will permit their duties to be accomplished. All Members of the Council are allowed to attend and observe Regular Meetings of the Board. At the discretion of the Chair, Members may participate in discussions and ask questions, but shall not be permitted to make, second or vote on a motion.
- 6.3.2. Regular Meetings of the Board will be announced to all Board Members by providing no less than 10 days' notice in writing using a newsletter, website, email, text and/or social media or three (3) days' notice verbally, by telephone or in person.
- 6.3.3. Quorum at any Regular Meeting of the Board shall be three (3) Executive and one (1) Director at Large.
- 6.3.4. Regular Meetings of the Board may be held without notice if a quorum of the Board is present, provided that any business transactions shall be ratified at the next Regular Meeting of the Board; otherwise, they shall be null and void.
- 6.3.5. A topic to be discussed at a Regular Meeting of the Board may be deemed to be "in camera" or closed to anyone the Board chooses should the Board determine, by a majority vote of those present, that the topic is of a personal, sensitive, or confidential nature.
- 6.3.6. Regular meetings of the board will be reviewed and scheduled for the current year at the first meeting to be held prior to November 30 of each year.

6.4. Special Meeting of the Board

- 6.4.1. A Special Meeting of the Board shall be called by the Secretary upon the instructions of any two (2) Board Members, by providing no less than 10 days' notice in writing using a newsletter, website, email, text and/or social media or three (3) days' notice verbally by telephone or in person, to all Board Members setting forth the reasons for calling such meeting.
- 6.4.2. Quorum at any Regular Meeting of the Board shall be three (3) Executive and one (1) Director at Large.
- 6.4.3. All or any portion of a Special Meeting of the Board may be deemed to be "in camera" or closed to anyone the Board chooses should the Board determine, by a majority vote of those present, that the content of the meeting or agenda item is of a personal, sensitive, or confidential nature.

7. Special Resolution

Special Resolution will mean a resolution passed at a General Meeting of the Membership of which not less than 21 days' notice in writing using a newsletter, website, email, text and/or social media, or provided verbally by telephone or in person, specifying the intention to propose the resolution has been duly given.

8. Election Process

- 8.1. Board Members are elected by the voting Members at an AGM held annually on or before October 31st.
- 8.2. Candidates must be voting Members in good standing.
- 8.3. Notification of the nomination procedure will be included with the notice of the AGM.

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- 8.4. The term of office shall be complete at the conclusion of the meeting at which successors are elected, unless written notice of resignation is submitted to the Board.
- 8.5. The maximum number of consecutive terms in the same Officer or Director position on the Board, shall be two (2) consecutive terms, unless the position is uncontested. The Officer/Director still must stand for election annually.
- 8.6. Any vacancy occurring during the year may be filled at the next meeting, provided it is so stated in the notice calling such meeting, with the exception of the position of Chair.

9. Voting

The Board may hold in-person or virtual meetings, or a combination of the two. The Board will determine the voting process for meetings, including what type of electronic voting will be used for virtual meetings (i.e., Raise Hand feature, Chat Window, private message, mic). In-person and electronic voting will not include voting by proxy.

9.1. General Meetings of the Membership

- 9.1.1. Any voting Member, including each Member of the Board, who has not withdrawn from membership and who has been neither suspended nor expelled shall have the right to vote at any Annual, Regular or Special General Meeting of the Membership.
- 9.1.2. Such votes must be made in person and not by proxy or otherwise.
- 9.1.3. Members will vote by show of hands or by secret ballot where 50% + 1 will be considered the majority, except in the case of a Special Resolution. (See Clause #7).

9.2. Meetings of the Board

- 9.2.1. Only each Member of the Board will have one (1) vote at all Meetings of the Board.
- 9.2.2. Such votes must be made in person and not by proxy or otherwise.
- 9.2.3. Members will vote by show of hands where 50% + 1 will be considered the majority.
- 9.2.4. The Chair may authorize an electronic vote by email if a situation needs to be acted upon by the Board between physical meetings. In the case of an electronic vote, a quorum shall be constituted when at least 60% of the Members of the Board cast a vote by email. Any motion taken electronically will be formally recorded into the minutes of the next Board meeting.
- 9.3. In the case of a tie, the principal or administrative representative may cast a vote.
- 9.4. Any Member having a personal pecuniary gain or conflict of interest in any matter being discussed by the membership or the Board is required to declare such and absent himself/herself from any discussion or vote on such matter.

10. Council Rules of Engagement

The following rules of engagement have been established to ensure a productive, respectful, and inclusive environment for all members of the Council. These rules are designed to promote effective communication, collaboration, and decision-making within the council.

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10.1. Respectful Communication

- 10.1.1. All members are expected to communicate with respect, courtesy, and professionalism at all times.
- 10.1.2. Disagreements and differing opinions should be expressed in a constructive manner, focusing on the issues rather than personal attacks.

10.2. Active Participation

- 10.2.1. All members are encouraged to actively participate in council activities, meetings, and discussions.
- 10.2.2. It is important to contribute ideas, feedback, and suggestions to promote the council's objectives and initiatives.

10.3. Decision-Making Process

- 10.3.1. Decisions within the council will be made through a collaborative and democratic process.
- 10.3.2. Members should be open to discussing various viewpoints and be willing to reach consensus when possible.

10.4. Accountability

- 10.4.1. Each member is accountable for their commitments, responsibilities, and actions within the council.
- 10.4.2. Timely completion of assigned tasks and responsibilities is essential to the council's success.

10.5. Inclusivity and Diversity

- 10.5.1. The council is committed to fostering an inclusive environment that respects and values diversity.
- 10.5.2. All members should be mindful of promoting inclusivity and embracing diverse perspectives within the council.

By adhering to these rules of engagement, the Council aims to create a supportive and collaborative environment that benefits the entire school community. These guidelines are foundational to our collective efforts in achieving the Council's objectives and serving the best interests of our children and families.

11. General Management

- 11.1. The registered office of the Council is located within the school.
- 11.2. The mailing address for all communication or correspondence shall be the registered office of the Council.
- 11.3. To maintain integrity, minute books and financial records will be securely stored at the Secretary's Residence until the end of the school year then will be moved to the secure cabinets at the school. These may be inspected by any Member in good standing of the Society upon reasonable request, including the reason for inspection.

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- 11.4. Such inspection may only take place at the registered office of the Council, in the presence of a Board Member and dual control (2 people present, 1 of whom is a Board Member) will be maintained at all times.

12. Remuneration

Unless authorized at any meeting and after notice for same shall have been given, no Executive, Director or Member of the Council shall receive any remuneration for his/her services.

13. Privacy

- 13.1. The Council shall not collect, use, share or store personal information for purposes other than those of Council business, and shall destroy it appropriately once it is no longer needed.
- 13.2. The Council will adhere to Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) guidelines as required by Alberta legislation, and voluntarily where appropriate.
- 13.3. Confidential information shared within the council should be handled with utmost care and kept private.
- 13.4. Members are expected to respect the confidentiality of sensitive discussions, documents, and personal information.

14. Dispute Resolution

- 14.1. In the event of conflicts or disputes, members are encouraged to seek resolution through open dialogue and mediation.
- 14.1.1. If the principal is not directly involved, the principal shall attempt to have the school council focus on resolving the conflict among the Members.
- 14.1.2. If the conflict is between the school council and the wider school community, the principal, in consultation with members of the Council and members of the community, shall establish a committee to develop recommendations for the resolution of the conflict. The committee shall consist of three or five (3-5) persons including parents, at least one (1) teacher and/or a member of the administration.
- 14.2. Escalation of conflicts should be handled in a constructive and respectful manner.
- 14.3. If a conflict fails to be resolved at the local level, any party directly involved in the conflict may appeal in writing to the Chief Superintendent for a resolution.
- 14.3.1. Within 10 school days of the receipt of the written appeal by the Office of the Chief Superintendent, the Chief Superintendent shall render a written decision in relation to the conflict, including if appropriate, steps or a series of steps, timelines and defined outcomes aimed at resolution of the conflict. The plan may involve appointing a mediator. The Chief Superintendent will provide a copy of the written decision to the Board of Trustees for information purposes.

15. Bylaws

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- 15.1. All Members are responsible for behaving in accordance with the Bylaws and objectives of the Council.
- 15.2. The Council Bylaws and operations will be in accordance with the laws of Alberta and any other governmental legislation relating to the Council's operation and objectives.
- 15.3. The Bylaws may be rescinded, altered, or added to by a "Special Resolution."
- 15.4. Any question regarding the proper application and interpretation of these Bylaws shall be determined by the Chair of any Council Meeting of the Membership or board meeting. The Chair's decision may be appealed by a voting Member and can be overturned by a simple majority vote at a Special General Meeting of the Membership, or a Special Meeting of the Board, called in accordance with these Bylaws.

16. Dissolution of the Council

In the event of the dissolution (closing) of the Council, which shall require a Special Resolution of the membership or upon the written notification of the school principal (in consultation with division office), the assets remaining shall be transferred to St. Mark Catholic Junior High School.