



CATHOLIC EDUCATION COMMISSION  
Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn

**Constitution**  
**for**  
**Archdiocesan Catholic School**  
**Community Councils**

***Insert Name of School Here***

**May 2014**

## Terms of the Constitution

### 1. Name

The official name of this Council is the Catholic School Community Council of *(insert full name and location of school)*.

### 2. Definitions

The following definitions will apply in this constitution.

"Archbishop"	The Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn.
"CEC"	The Catholic Education Commission of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.
"CEO"	The Catholic Education Office of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.
"Church"	The Catholic Church.
"Council Member"	An elected member of the executive or an appointed representative if a committee.
"Council"	The Catholic School Community Council of <i>(insert school name)</i> .
"Executive"	The Executive Leadership Group is comprised of: the ex-officio members (Parish Priest or Chaplain and Principal), elected members from the parent body and elected members from the staff and any members coopted for their expertise.
"Parent"	The parent or guardian of a student enrolled at the school.
"Parish"	The Parish of <i>(insert Parish name)</i> .
"Parish Priest"	The Parish Priest, Parish Coordinator or Parish/School Chaplain of <i>(insert Parish name)</i> .
"Principal"	The Principal of <i>(insert name of school)</i> .
"Committee"	Community Council committee or a working party established for a specific purpose.
"School"	<i>(insert name of school)</i>
"School Community"	All members of the wider school and parish community.

### **3.0 Authority**

- 3.1 Catholic School Community Councils have been approved by the Archbishop for the service of the Church and the Catholic school communities in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.
- 3.2 The Constitution is issued by the Catholic Education Commission, Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, with the authority of the Archbishop.

### **4.0 Purpose**

- 4.1 The purpose of this Constitution is to establish and provide regulations for the operation of the Council as specified below.

### **5.0 Mission and Objectives**

- 5.1 The Council, in accordance with the authority entrusted to it by the Archbishop, is to assist the school to fulfil its mission in accordance with the Code of Canon Law, Archdiocesan directives and guidelines and policies of the Catholic Education Commission and the Catholic Education Office.

### **6.0 Role**

- 6.1 The Council provides the opportunity for members of the school, parish and Archdiocesan communities to support the mission of Catholic education in the school. Working with the Principal, Parish Priest and staff, the members of the Council and its committees provide leadership to the wider school community.
- 6.2 The Council has a decision making role in certain policy areas and an advisory role in others. The policies of the school are always set within the mission of Catholic education. In the areas where it has responsibility for the development and monitoring of school policy, the Council operates within the policies and procedures determined by the CEC and the CEO.
- 6.3 The Principal has responsibility for the day-to-day leadership and management of the school.

### **7.0 Functions**

- 7.1 The Council has responsibility to take decisions in the following areas:
  - 7.1.1 Supporting the development of the Catholic identity, ethos and mission of the school.
  - 7.1.2 Supporting pastoral care strategies in the school community.
  - 7.1.3 Promoting the school in the local community.
  - 7.1.4 Appointing a member to the school's enrolment committee, if needed
  - 7.1.5 Developing, approving and monitoring the annual budget, including school determined levies, loan commitments and the fees collection and remission policy.
  - 7.1.6 Discussing the continuing Catholic education viability of the school.
  - 7.1.7 Developing and monitoring school enterprises, eg. Outside School Hours Care, sports associations, hall hire.
  - 7.1.8 Developing capital and maintenance programs.

- 7.1.9 Developing local strategic plans (finances, buildings, resources) and contributing to Archdiocesan educational strategic planning.
  - 7.1.10 Facilitate local school community debate in response to System leadership by the CEC and the CEO in lobbying governments in school funding campaigns.
  - 7.1.11 Approving school uniform items decided at school level.
  - 7.1.12 Ensuring that the parish and school community receives the Annual Catholic School Community Council Report.
  - 7.1.13 Ensuring the expenditure of levies or funds is in keeping with Archdiocesan regulations.
  - 7.1.14 Provide input on parent priorities and suggest ideas about Catholic schooling for the school's strategic plan.
  - 7.1.15 Raise money for resources as identified in the School's Strategic Plan and Annual Budget process.
  - 7.1.16 Provide student and parent services eg. Canteen.
  - 7.1.17 Provide support for school programs involving parents.
  - 7.1.18 Provide opportunities for social interaction and for parents to form supportive networks.
- 7.2 The Council has responsibility to provide advice in areas such as:
- 7.2.1 Curriculum.
  - 7.2.2 Educational policies for the school.
  - 7.2.3 Student welfare policies.
  - 7.2.4 Parent support processes.
  - 7.2.5 Other matters as requested by the Parish Priest or Principal.

## **8.0 Membership**

### **8.1 Parish Primary and Central School Community Councils**

- 8.1.1 The Council shall be comprised of the following members:
- 8.1.2 The Principal is an ex officio member and the Executive Officer of the Council.
- 8.1.3 The Parish Priest is an ex officio member. The Parish Priest may nominate an alternate to attend in his place.
- 8.1.4 Up to two (2) members of staff elected by the staff.
- 8.1.5 At least one (1) and up to four (4) parent members appointed in accordance with the Constitution.
- 8.1.6 As many as three (3) other people appointed by the Council for their expertise.

- 8.1.7 A representative of the Catholic Education Office (when requested by the school community or the Director of the CEO).
- 8.1.8 Depending on local circumstances and with the authorisation of the Catholic Education Commission, a representation larger than any of the above may be permitted.

## **8.2 Secondary School Catholic Community Councils**

- 8.2.1 The Council shall be comprised of the following members:
- 8.2.2 The Principal is an ex officio member and the Executive Officer of the Council.
- 8.2.3 The Parish Priest is an ex officio member. The Parish Priest may nominate an alternate to attend in his place.
- 8.2.4 One (1) member of the School Executive appointed by the Principal.
- 8.2.5 Up to two (2) staff members elected by the staff.
- 8.2.6 At least one (1) and up to four (4) parent members appointed in accordance with the Constitution.
- 8.2.7 As many as three (3) persons appointed by the Council for expertise.
- 8.2.8 A representative from the Catholic Education Office (when requested by the school community or the Director of the CEO).
- 8.2.9 The Bursar may act as Treasurer to the Council.

## **8.3 Criteria for Membership**

- 8.3.1 The Chairperson of the Council will normally be a Catholic and a committed member of a Catholic parish.
- 8.3.2 All Council members should maintain themselves in spiritual growth, motivation, commitment and competence according to the values and traditions of the Catholic Faith.
- 8.3.3 An understanding of local Church policies relevant to Archdiocesan Catholic schools.
- 8.3.4 A genuine desire to be of service to the school community.
- 8.3.5 Having the necessary skills to contribute to the work of the Council.
- 8.3.6 The ability to work collaboratively and constructively with other members of the Council.
- 8.3.7 Adequate time to give to Council duties.
- 8.3.8 Willingness to act within the code of ethics for Council members.

#### **8.4 Term of Office**

- 8.4.1 Only ex officio members may remain as members of the Council for more than six (6) consecutive years.
- 8.4.2 A term of membership of the Council shall be for a period of two (2) years for all other Council members.
- 8.4.3 Members of the Council may be elected for a maximum of three (3) consecutive terms. Executive members may not hold the same position of Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary or Treasurer beyond two (2) consecutive terms.

#### **8.5 Vacancies**

- 8.5.1 Should a position of an elected member of the Executive become vacant, the Council shall appoint a replacement from the same category of membership, for the unexpired term of the retired member.

#### **8.6 Removal From Office**

- 8.6.1 Any elected or appointed member the Council may be removed from membership by formal resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the Council at which at least three quarters (75%) of all Council members vote in favour of the removal. Such a person shall be ineligible for reappointment to the Council until authorised by an Ordinary Resolution of the Council, following representation to the Catholic Education Office.

#### **8.7 Absenteeism**

- 8.7.1 Any elected or appointed member of the Council who is absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of the Executive without sufficient reason will be deemed to have resigned from the Council. In such instance, the Executive will notify the member of loss of membership of the Council and will arrange for a replacement from the same category of membership until the next election for members of the Council.

#### **9.0 Officers**

- 9.1 The Council shall have its affairs controlled and managed by the Office Bearers and other members known as the Executive.
- 9.2 The Executive shall be:
  - 9.2.1 Chair
  - 9.2.2 Deputy Chair
  - 9.2.3 Secretary
  - 9.2.4 Treasurer
  - 9.2.5 Principal (ex officio)
  - 9.2.6 Parish Priest (ex officio)
  - 9.2.7 Elected Parent representatives
  - 9.2.8 Elected Staff representatives
  - 9.2.9 Members appointed by the Council
  - 9.2.10 Members appointed by the CEO or the CEC
  - 9.2.11 Appointments by the Principal where eligible

- 9.3 At the first Council meeting following community elections, the Council's Executive members will appoint a Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Regional secondary schools do not normally require a Treasurer as this role may be served by the College Bursar. Ex officio members and staff representatives are not eligible for election to the position of Chair and Deputy Chair.

## **10.0 Appointments and Elections**

- 10.1 The protocols for appointing parent members to the Council are to be determined by the Council and publicised to the school community at least one school term prior to the election.
- 10.2 A staff member who is also a parent of a student at the school is only eligible for election to the Council as a staff member because of the potential for conflict of interest between the staff member's parental role and staff role.
- 10.3 A suggested process for electing staff members is outlined in the Community Council Guidelines.
- 10.4 A suggested process for electing parent members to the Council is outlined in the Community Council Guidelines.

## **11.0 Meetings and Procedures**

- 11.1 The Council will meet regularly, at least once in each school term and conduct meetings in accordance with standard meeting procedures.
- 11.2 The Council is required to provide the opportunity for parents to attend an "open meeting" at least once per semester, according to local need.
- 11.3 All meetings will begin and end with prayer led by a member of the Council. Meetings should be limited to no more than two hours duration unless agreement is obtained from those present at the meeting.
- 11.4 Such ordinary meetings of the Council will be convened by giving not less than seven (7) days clear notice to each member stating the date, time and place of each meeting and any special business to be considered at that meeting.
- 11.5 Special meetings may be held when deemed necessary. Special meetings of the Council may be called:
- 11.5.1 When agreed to by a quorum including ex officio members.
  - 11.5.2 When requested by an ex officio member.
  - 11.5.3 When requested by the CEC or CEO.
- 11.6 Reports to the Council should normally consist of a simple written summary, tabled at the meeting.
- 11.7 A simple majority of Executive members will constitute a quorum.
- 11.8 No meeting of the Council may be held without a quorum.
- 11.9 Wherever possible all decisions must include the Principal and the Parish Priest and should be reached by consensus. Failing this, resolutions of the Council will be passed by simple majority.
- 11.10 Each member of the Council will have a deliberative and equal vote. The Chair will have a casting vote.

- 11.11 In the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair, members will elect an Acting Chair to preside over that meeting.
- 11.12 The Secretary will take minutes of all Council meetings. A copy of the minutes will be maintained in the Secretary's file and passed to the next elected Secretary. A second copy will be kept by the Principal for inclusion in the school file. Upon request, the CEC or CEO must be given a copy of the minutes of any meeting of the Council.
- 11.13 All correspondence to the Council will be tabled at meetings for perusal by all Council members. Correspondence will be actioned through the Secretary of the Council.
- 11.14 A Special Resolution must be passed by a General Meeting of the Council to recommend any changes to the constitution or the functions of the Council.
- 11.15 At least three quarters (75%) of those present must vote in favour of the Special Resolution.
- 11.16 These Special Resolutions must be approved by the CEC.

## **12.0 Committees**

- 12.1 The Council may appoint committees as it deems necessary and appropriate depending on local school circumstances and in accordance with local need.
- 12.2 Committees will be represented at each of the Council meetings and as such, these committees are not separately constituted bodies.
- 12.3 The Council, in consultation with parents, will determine the responsibilities and accountabilities of these committees and the duration of the operation of each committee.
- 12.4 Committees are appointed and dissolved at the discretion of the Council Executive.
- 12.5 A committee is answerable to and will communicate its advice on recommendations only to the Council.
- 12.6 At least one (1) member of the committee will be appointed as the contact person for that group, and as such is eligible to attend the Council meeting.
- 12.7 The committee contact person does not have voting rights on the Council.
- 12.8 Membership of committees is determined by need and availability of parent members.
- 12.9 The Council will set terms of reference for each committee.



## **13.0 Responsibilities of Office Bearers**

### **13.1 Chair**

13.1.1 The Chair is responsible for the leadership of the Council. He/she will chair the meetings and liaise closely with the Principal and Parish Priest.

### **13.2 Deputy Chair**

13.2.1 The Deputy Chair assists the Chair to lead and manage the affairs of the Council and will chair meetings in the absence of the Chair.

### **13.3 Secretary**

13.3.1 The Secretary will record accurately the minutes of the meeting, filing one (1) copy with the school and one (1) on the Council file. The Secretary, in collaboration with the Chair and the Principal, will prepare a brief report of each meeting for the school newsletter. The Secretary assists the Chair and the Principal in the preparation of the agenda and ensures that agenda items are advertised prior to the meeting. The Secretary will handle all correspondence as directed by the meeting.

### **13.4 Treasurer**

13.4.1 The Treasurer will ensure that proper accounts are kept by subcommittees and audited in accordance with the CEO policies and procedures.

13.4.2 The Treasurer will ensure that any bank accounts or cheque books carry at least two (2) signatories. The principal must be one of the designated signatories.

13.4.3 Authorised signatories will include the Principal, the Chair and the Treasurer.

13.4.4 The Treasurer will ensure that CEO policies and procedures are employed for the handling of cash and that those who are involved in the handling of cash are briefed on these practices.

13.4.5 No commitment shall be entered into for the non-operational expenditure of funds, except by resolution of a meeting of the Council.

13.4.6 The Treasurer will liaise with the school's Finance Officer/ Bursar and the Principal in the preparation of the Annual Budget and the reporting of the financial status of the school at each Council meeting.

### **13.5 Committee Representatives/Contact Officers**

13.5.1 At least one (1) member of each committee will be appointed as the contact person for that group, and as such is eligible to attend the Council meeting. The committee contact person does not have voting rights on the Council.

13.5.2 The Council may appoint committees for special projects and/or ongoing activities. These committees will appoint a Representative or Contact Officer who will be available to attend meetings of the Council.

13.5.3 All committees function under the policy and direction of the Council.

- 13.5.4 Any salaried staff involved in or engaged for school activities under the auspices of the Council, must be employed under the policy and procedures set down by the CEO. This is to ensure that all insurance, industrial, superannuation and occupational health and safety requirements are met. The CEO provides payroll and personnel service on a reimbursable basis.

#### **14.0 Financial Management**

- 14.1 The Council acts as a not-for-profit body.
- 14.2 The Council has the responsibility for setting local school levies/charges, monitoring their collection and following up the non-payment of system tuition fees according to CEO policies.
- 14.3 The Council must have a clear policy and protocol for fee remissions in line with CEC and CEO policies. At all times confidentiality surrounding fee remissions must be maintained.
- 14.4 In the ACT the Council also monitors the collection of the Canberra Catholic Schools Building Fund (CCSBF) contributions.
- 14.5 All financial matters are to be handled in accordance with CEO policy and procedures.
- 14.6 The Council has a vital role in advising the Principal on the short and long term financial strategy of the school.
- 14.7 The Council oversees the development of the Annual Budget in consultation with the Principal and school staff and parents. The Council approves and monitors the Annual Budget and endorses the Annual Audited Report of Income and Expenditure.
- 14.8 The Council does not have authority to commit more than its known income unless it has sufficient cash reserves or reasonable financial capacity to enter into loan agreements.
- 14.9 In line with Archdiocesan System policy and procedures, the Council is responsible for loans entered into by the school community using school raised funds.
- 14.10 The Council may request financial assistance from the Parish but must abide by the decision of the Parish, reached by the Parish Priest in consultation with the Parish Pastoral Council and Parish Finance Committee.
- 14.11 The assets and income of the organisation shall be applied solely in furtherance of its above-mentioned mission and objects and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the Community Council except as bona fide compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of the Community Council

#### **15.0 Compliance with System Policy**

- 15.1 The Council will not endorse any activity that conflicts with the policies of the CEC or the CEO.
- 15.2 The Council Executive has no authority over school staff and all communication should be through the Principal.

**16.0 Amendment**

16.1 The CEC retains the right to amend this Constitution as the need arises and after consultation with the Council and the CEO.

**17.0 Dispute**

17.1 Any dispute or uncertainty concerning the meaning or intention of this Constitution will be referred to the CEC and the CEO for interpretation and decision.

17.2 If for any reason the Council does not function effectively, the assistance of the CEO will be enlisted promptly.

**18.0 Dissolution**

18.1 The Council will be dissolved at the direction of the Archbishop at any time.

18.2 If the Council is dissolved by decision of the Archbishop, the assets of the Council and its committees will be disposed of in accordance with the directions of the CEC.

18.3 If the Council intends to pass a Special Resolution at a General Meeting to voluntarily dissolve the Council, this decision must be communicated to the Director of the CEO prior to the Special Resolution being put to the meeting.

**19.0 Dissolution of a Council-Controlled Service**

19.1 In the event of a Council-controlled service being dissolved, the amount that remains after such dissolution and the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall be transferred to another Council-controlled service with similar purposes which is not carried on for the profit or gain of its individual members

Approved by:.....

**+Christopher Prowse**

**Archbishop of Canberra & Goulburn**

on this day .....