Rationale

The principle of subsidiarity acknowledges that decision-making authority is often properly exercised at the local level. In specific cases the CISPG board entrusts this authority to local School Councils.

Policy

Each school under the authority of Catholic Independent Schools is to have a School Council, which will assume authority at the local level for those areas of governance delegated by the Board of Directors and in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the CISPG and its policies.

Each School Council in the Prince George Diocese is constituted by the authority of Catholic Independent Schools of the Diocese of Prince George and each is directly responsible to the Society.

Mandate of the Local School Council

1. There shall be included within the jurisdiction of the Society those certain Catholic schools designated as follows, namely:

• Annunciation School	Prince Rupert
• Immaculate Conception School	Prince George
• Notre Dame School	Dawson Creek
• Sacred Heart School	Prince George
• St. Anthony's School	Kitimat
• St. Joseph's School	Smithers
• St. Mary's School	Prince George
• Veritas School	Terrace

2. The Board of the Society must approve any locally-developed policies or initiatives that would have a substantial impact on the school.

3. The name of this school council shall be:
   (School Name) School Council (hereinafter referred to as "the Council")

4. Composition of the school council

   <u>The Electorate</u>
   Eligible voters are all parents/legal guardians having children in the school and/or any person who is nineteen years of age or older who is a member of the parish or parishes served by the school. Employees of CISPG, principals, teachers and other staff members are eligible to vote for school elections in the parish in which they work.

The Council

Each School Council must have a minimum of six members from the parish. Those serving on the council must:

a. be practicing Catholics as defined in the Catholicity Clause
b. be at least nineteen years of age at the time of election
c. be a supporter of Catholic education
d. be approved by the pastor prior to entering the election
e. be nominated for the position
f. not be an employee or spouse of an employee of CISPG
g. be prepared to attend meetings regularly
h. take the Oath of Confidentiality upon election.

The pastor is an *ex officio* member with the power of veto in matters concerning the Catholicity of the school as outlined in the canonical legislation concerning Catholic education. (Canon 793 – Canon 806 (1 & 2). (See Role of the Pastor 481)

All members have a vote. As an employee, the principal attends the council meetings, but does not have a vote.

A non-Catholic parent/legal guardian of a child attending the school is not eligible for election but may serve on a Council-appointed sub-committee.

5. The Term of Office

   Shall be two-years, renewable twice for a maximum of six years. Terms of office shall be staggered so that a maximum of three people are elected at a time.

6. Removal from Office
   a. A member of the School Council who ceases to meet the conditions for eligibility to hold office automatically ceases to be a member.
   b. A member may be removed from office for conduct unbecoming a member which in the opinion of the Pastor is likely to bring discredit on the school. A member removed in these circumstances has the right to appeal to the Board of Directors of the Society.
   c. A member who misses three consecutive monthly meetings may be removed by a majority vote of the Council.
   d. The Society reserves the right to remove a Council member or members for just cause.
   e. The loss of individual membership on a School Council will result in the loss of membership and office in the Catholic Independent Schools of the Diocese of Prince George Society.

7. The Responsibilities of the School Council
   a. Ensure compliance with the policies and directives of the Society. The CISPG provides an online policy manual (www.cispg.ca).
   b. Develop local school policies in compliance with CISPG policy.
   c. Work with the parish finance council to maintain and develop the school facilities.
   d. To review and approve the Preliminary and Final budgets each May and October.
   e. To review financial statements at its regular meetings.

f. To administer a bank account in the name of "RCEC - Catholic Independent Schools Diocese of Prince George – (School Name) Account" into which shall be paid contributions from supporters, funds allocated from the parish, and any other grants or subsidies which may be received.
g. To ensure that all cheques are signed by two of the following: pastor, school council chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer or principal. Current bank documents must be in place for all persons having signing authority,
h. To ensure that all financial records of the school are audited by the appointed CISPG accounting firm. An audited financial statement shall be presented to the School Council, the Parish Finance Council and the CISPG Society each year.
i. To set tuition fees and other fees as may be required, and to oversee their collection.
j. To work with the Superintendent of Schools to select a principal for the educational and administrative leadership of the school.
k. To work with the Superintendent and principal to select teaching staff. All teacher and principal contracts must be signed by the Superintendent of Schools on behalf of the Society. Support staff shall be employed by the School Council with a Support Staff Contract and Schedule 1.
l. To establish local student admission and dismissal policies. The Pastor, Principal, and Chairperson or delegate shall comprise the Admissions Committee. Each School Council shall have an admissions committee.

8. Election of Officers and Term of Office
    a. The first meeting after an election shall be the last meeting of the old School Council, with newly elected members in attendance. At the conclusion of this meeting, the new School Council shall elect from among its members a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary and treasurer.
    b. The term of office of School Council officers is one year, renewable five times.

9. Vacancies

    If a vacancy occurs on a School Council, the vacancy will be filled through appointment by the Council.

10. The Role of the Chairperson in the School

    The role of the chairperson in the School Council is critical to the successful functioning of the School Council. The Chairperson's main task is to work with the Pastor and Principal to implement the policies and procedures of the Society and promote the goals and objectives of the school.

    The Chairperson is elected to fulfill the following responsibilities:
    a. to ensure that the School Council uses its authority responsibly in accordance with the Society's policies and procedures.
    b. to prepare the agenda for each meeting, in consultation with the Pastor and the Principal.
    c. to ensure that parliamentary procedures are followed. To ensure that a Nominating Committee is appointed to conduct the annual elections for School Council members.
    d. in consultation with the Pastor, to appoint all chairpersons to subcommittees. The Chairperson is an ex officio member of all subcommittees of the School Council.
    e. to direct the preparation of an annual budget for presentation by the treasurer to the School Council.

f. to ensure that a local school policy manual is developed and approved by the CISPG Board prior to implementation.
g. to ensure that the guidelines of the Society are followed in regard to hiring, evaluation and termination of personnel.
h. to represent the School Council to parents/legal guardians.
i. to keep the Superintendent informed of any situation that could have a negative effect on the Society.

11. The Role of the Vice-Chairperson
    a. To be acting Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson.
    b. To carry out any other duties as assigned by the School Council.

12. The Role of the Treasurer
    a. Prepare a draft budget in consultation with the Principal, Pastor and Chairperson. The School Council approves and forwards the budget with a cover letter from the Treasurer to the CISPG Board annually in May and October. The fiscal year begins July 1 and concludes June 30th.
    b. Ensure compliance with all financial policies and directives of the Society.
    c. In consultation with the bookkeeper, provide monthly financial reports to the Council.
    d. Oversee the collection of tuition and overdue accounts in consultation with the Principal and Pastor.

13. The Role of the Secretary
    a. The secretary maintains the written record of the School Council's meetings in the form of minutes.
    b. Prepare letters on behalf of the School Council.
    c. Other secretarial tasks as assigned from time to time by the Council.
    d. School Councils may choose to engage the school secretary on a paid basis for carrying out its secretarial duties.

14. Catholicity Clause
    The Catholic Council Member acknowledges that:
    a. it is an essential condition that they exhibit at all times way of life that are consistent with Catholic denominational standards
    b. the determination of what are Catholic denominational standards shall be the right and prerogative of the pastor and or bishop
    c. the primary reference for Catholic Teaching on Faith and morals is The Catechism of the Catholic Church
    d. a breach of this clause shall constitute just cause for dismissal.

15. Parent Support Groups
    a. It is the responsibility of the School Council to approve and direct any parent group working or acting on behalf of the school council.
    b. Parent Support Groups (PSG) will come directly under the authority of the School Council and the School Council will appoint from its membership a representative to the PSG.
    c. PSG members may be non-Catholic.

References: Role of the Pastor 481	***Date:*** August 2023
	Revisions: