



MEMORANDUM

Office of the Superintendents of Education

To: All Principals

Cc: Senior Administration, Manager of Finance, Religion and Family Life Consultant

From: Jennifer Varnam, *Superintendent of Education*

Date: September 16, 2026

Re: **Catholic School Advisory Councils (CSAC) Preliminary Information**

Parents/Guardians are the primary faith, social and knowledge educators of their child(ren) and as such are a vital part of the Catholic school community. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to take an active role in their child's school as advocates, volunteers, event attendees, and members of the Catholic School Advisory Council (CSAC). The Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO) wrote in their pastoral letter *Renewing the Promise* that

school councils are opportunities for faith formation and collaboration, where parents and school staff learn from each other, pray together, and work alongside each other to ensure all children have opportunities to grow in faith and in their learning (p.16).

The CSAC contributes to the strengthening of the **Home, School, Parish partnership** and can be one of the greatest champions of the gift that is publicly funded Catholic Education.

The CSAC serves as an **advisory body** to the principal supporting the faith, wellness, academic and co-curricular life of the school community. Although a CSAC is encouraged to fundraise and is provided with a budget through various Ministry of Education grants, ultimately the principal is responsible for the security and use of those funds. It is a best practice for Principals and their CSAC to collaboratively determine the goals and plans for spending funds in these categories.

Catholic School Advisory Councils **must be elected within the first 30 days** of the school year and **notice of elections must be given to all parents/guardians at least 14 days before the date of the election**. It is highly encouraged that elections take place prior to the end of September.

The following information is provided to assist Principals with their initial CSAC meeting(s):

1. Promotion of Catholic Education

Please watch [A Precious Gift: Celebrating Publicly Funded Catholic Education in Ontario](#) and [The Enduring Gift](#) at one of the initial Catholic School Advisory Council meetings. Both short videos give an overview of the history and current state of Catholic Education in the province.

The CSAC should also be made aware that this year's [BHNCDSB spiritual theme](#) and the provincial Catholic Education Week theme is *Becoming Artisans of Peace*. More information and resources can be found on the [Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association website](#).

Principals and their CSAC should review the [BHNCDSB Policy 200.31](#) as well as the Ministry of Education's [guide](#) and [website](#) about School Councils. These resources provide the official regulations about the election, responsibilities, and limitations of a CSAC.

2. Home, School, Parish Partnership

Please share the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association's (OCSTA) document [Together in Faith: Home, School, Parish – A Collection of Catholic School Board Practices](#) and the ACBO's pastoral letter [Renewing the Promise](#) with your CSAC members at one of the initial meetings as a means of highlighting the role that parents/guardians have in Catholic Education.

3. Ministry Funding for Catholic School Advisory Councils

More information about the **Parent Involvement Committee (PIC)** grant, money to be used to encourage parent/guardian participation in the life of the school, that all schools receive and the **Parents Reaching Out (PRO) grant**, funds for parent/guardian engagement activities, that school's can request by application will be provided in a forthcoming memorandum once the Ministry of Education subsidies are confirmed.

4. Catholic School Advisory Council Financial Tracking

Principals must ensure that all funds granted to or raised by their CSAC are held within official school financial accounts. Fundraising dollars are considered School Generated Funds and should be reported as such on the initial and final reports that Principals send their Family of Schools Superintendent. Principals can contact a member of the BHNCDsb Finance Department for more information if needed. A CSAC should elect as part of its Executive a Treasurer who can, with the assistance of the principal, deliver a financial report at every CSAC meeting.

5. Catholic School Advisory Council Orientation Meeting

An orientation session for Principals and their CSAC Chairperson(s) and Vice-Chairperson(s) will be held on **Tuesday, October 20, 2026, at 7:00 pm** at the **Catholic Education Centre** (a virtual link will be provided for those who cannot attend in-person). The orientation session will include information about PIC and PRO grants, a commissioning for attendees, and important updates from senior administration. More information will follow.

6. Catholic School Advisory Council Mid-Year Check-in

A mid-year check-in session for Principals and their CSAC Chairperson(s) and Vice-Chairperson(s) will be held on **Tuesday, February 16, 2027, at 7:00 pm** at the **Catholic Education Centre** (a virtual link will be provided for those who cannot attend in-person). The check-in session will include important updates from senior administration. More to follow.

7. Principal Profile

CSACs are encouraged to annually complete a [Principal Profile](#) which will be considered by the school board if selecting a newly appointed Principal to the school. Principal Profiles should be submitted to Fran Pace at fp@bhncdsb.ca by the end of November.

Please **send the name and contact information of your Catholic School Advisory Council Chairperson(s)** to Fran Pace at fp@bhncdsb.ca once they are elected. Thank you!