



**STUDENT  
COUNCIL  
CONSTITUTION  
GUIDELINES**

# **JOHN CABOT STUDENT COUNCIL CONSTITUTION GUIDELINES**

## **MISSION**

In the spirit of bringing together and uniting the school community, in representing all views and opinions and in living in the school motto of Faith, Hope and Charity, this is officially declared as the John Cabot Catholic Secondary School Student Council Constitution.

## **PURPOSE AND ROLE OF STUDENT COUNCIL**

- To provide a democratic forum in which students may address school-related issues that affect their lives
- To provide leadership opportunities for students to become involved in their school activities
- To maintain strict ethical values in all actions and relationships while representing student government
- To provide venues for students to gather for various activities
- To provide students with the opportunities to become involved in student government and student life
- To provide opportunities for students to contribute to their community and to appropriate charities.
- To liaise with school administrators about various concerns, opportunities and issues affecting students in the school
- As role models to the student body, support excellence in academics, community, and extracurricular activities.

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## ELECTED POSITIONS

The following positions for elections are as follows:

### EXECUTIVES:

- Prime Minister (1 Member of Council)
- Deputy Prime Minister (1 Member of Council)
- Minister of Finance (1 Member of Council)
- Minister of Community Development (1 Member of Council)
- Minister of Special Events (1 Member of Council)
- Secretary (1 Member of Council)

### GRADE LEVEL

- Grade 9 Representative (2-4 Members of Council)
- Grade 10 Representative (2-4 Members of Council)
- Grade 11 Representative (2-4 Members of Council)
- Grade 12 Representative (2-4 Members of Council)

Total: 18 Members

Disbursement of grade representatives will be determined based on the successful completion of election interviews. Positions that are not filled by the election process can be filled by the proclamation of being "acclaimed". Any position that is not fulfilled by more than the required amount, in which an election does not have to take place for that position, those who are running will be acclaimed in that position.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The eligibility of those who wish to run for Student Council is as follows:

- Prime Minister & Deputy Prime Minister positions require at **least one year of Executive service** on John Cabot Student Council or a Board Representative position *and* must **maintain an overall average of 80% or higher** at any given reporting period *and* successfully complete 2 rounds of interviews
- Grade Level Representatives must **maintain an overall average of 70% or higher** at any given reporting period *and* successfully complete 1 round of interviews
- Any student running for the role of an Executive Member (excluding Secretary) must be in a senior grade
- Student Council members are expected to be in attendance at all meetings, unless prior arrangements or notifications have been made, upon missing 3 meetings, the member will be asked to resign from their position
- All student Council members must be full time students, from the start of the school year until the end

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## GENERAL

- All members of the Council MUST sign and abide by an Non Disclosure Agreement (NDA)
- There will be no candidates for the role of Deputy Prime Minister; this position will go to the student who is runner up for the position of Prime Minister
- All members MUST participate in ALL events including Friday morning announcements (Otherwise removal from student council)
- If a member of Council is not performing his/her duties, warnings will be issued. On the third warning a discussion with the executives will be in order.
  - Suspensions within Council are to be decided upon by Teacher Advisors
- In the event of resignation of an Executive member on Council, elections will be held within council. If there are no volunteers or interested members, the election is then open to the school
- If you have been asked to step down from any executive position on any council, you may not run again for an executive position the following year.
- All Student Council members must adhere to the Catholic Code of Conduct, when representing their position as well as events organized by Student Council

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## ROLES: GENERAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### Prime Minister

- Run the council meetings in a timely and orderly fashion
- Maintain order within meetings
- Maintain communication between the Student Council (i.e. attend monthly meetings)
- Act as an example to Council and other students as to the appropriate behaviour within the school community
- Act as the liaison between Student Council and Administration
- Attend every School (Parent) Council meeting (3 per year) Dates will be available on school website (subject to change)
- Attend Student Council events

### Deputy Prime Minister

- Co-Chair Council meetings
- Take the place of Prime Minister at School Council meetings in their absence
- Act as an example to Council and other students as to the appropriate behaviour within the school community
- Act the liaison between Student Council and Administration
- Attend every School (Parent) Council meeting (3 per year) Dates will be available on school website (subject to change)
- Attend Student Council events

### Finance Minister

- Update the council of their financial position in a timely manner
- Maintain the Council's finances
- Prepare regular financial reports
- Organize fundraisers
- Attend Student Council events

### Minister of Community Development

- Organize community events designed to improve the physical and spiritual environment
- Maintain good relations with community
- Act as co-contributor for social media and announcements
- Liaison with the chaplain
- Attend Student Council events

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## Minister of Special Events

- Organize community events designed to improve the physical and spiritual environment
- Maintain good relations with community
- Act as co-coordinator of Student Council Bulletin Board & social media
- Attend Student Council events

## Secretary

- Take minutes for weekly meetings
- Prepare weekly minutes and agenda
- Oversee member's participation and maintain attendance
- Store and provide templates of Council documents
- Write correspondence when required, such as for announcements or social media accounts
- Act as co-coordinator of Student Council Bulletin Board
- Attend Student Council events

## Grade Level Representatives

- Participate in the organization of three events
- Inform the Council of concerns/comments from their respective grades
- Attend Student Council events

## TERMS OF OFFICE

The Student Council plays a very important role in the school. To ensure that there is a seamless transition from one Council to another, the following is recommended:

- A clear beginning and end date of when the new Council takes office, the new Council takes place at the time of the following year's elections. The election process takes place in June for returning students and will take place again in September for those beginning high school.
- A process for transition from one elected Council to another is recommended

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## ELECTION PROCEDURES

Student Council is a yearlong commitment, which requires a great deal of time.

- Students are required to complete a nomination form provided by the Student Council Teachers Advisors
- The first step in joining the Student Council is the interviewing process to determine the seriousness and willingness of the candidate to fulfill the desired role.
- Upon **successful** completion of the interview(s), there will be time allotted for campaigning.
- During this time, all candidates are welcome to place signs in a dedicated assigned area and talk to the school population.
- NO slandering of other candidates
- NO vandalizing campaigns of others running
- NO posters in classrooms, walls, doors or windows
- NO announcements over the morning announcements
- NO promising the impossible (e.g uniform change, clubs, events)
- NO bribing with material goods

## CAMPAIGNING ON ELECTION DAY

In failing to comply with the above outlines, the said student will be disqualified from the elections.

## COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURES

When communication is needed between Student Council and the following organizations or groups, liaisons will be assigned.

- Principal - Prime Minister and/or Deputy Prime Minister
- Staff - Any Executive Member
- Student Body - Grade Representative/ Prime Minister/ Deputy Prime Minister
- Catholic School Council - Prime Minister/ Deputy Prime Minister
- Community, Media - Minister of Community Events / Minister of Community Events

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## MEETINGS

To ensure that meetings are run efficiently, the following should be clearly outlined:

Each session will include:

- Beginning Prayer & Land Acknowledgement
- Meeting Agenda (prepared before meeting)
- Secretary update
- Financial update
- If there is a guest speaker, it is customary that they will be placed on the agenda first
- The length of a meeting will vary from the items that are on the agenda. Once all items are covered the meeting will be adjourned
- All members are eligible to vote on a decision. However if the final decision come to a split vote, the Executive Members will make the final decisions
- The secretary will be responsible for taking minutes during Council meetings.
- The Minister of Finance will be responsible for keeping track of the Council's financial position and will NOT disclose confidential information.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

The Student Council Teacher Advisors as well as the Prime Minister will handle conflicts that may arise during Council. Members of Council who are having difficulties interacting with their fellow Council members will be assigned a meeting with the Teacher Advisors and Prime Minister for further discussion about the conflict. A resolution to the conflict will be made.

## RECALL PROCEDURE

A member of Council may be removed from their position due to academic standings or the disorderly conduct of the Catholic Code of Conduct or the breaking of the NDA. This information will be relayed to the school through an announcement or posting of the new member of council who has taken the place of the member who has resigned. If the position cannot be fulfilled by either a volunteer or another Council member, a schoolwide election will take place.



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## FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

The following procedures communicate the importance of planning, budgeting and reporting the financial status of the Council to the Council and school community.

The first two items must be incorporated into the Constitution:

- Auditing and reporting: as per Board procedure pertaining to school generated funds.
- All fundraising by the Council shall be in accordance with federal, provincial, and municipal laws. The Teacher Advisors/School Administrators must approve all fundraising activities. All fundraising shall be in accordance with the school and DPCDSB policy (Board Policy #4.21, GAP Section 500, Procedure 538.00 Fund-Raising Initiatives). The Council and fundraising committees will operate all fundraising activities in a professional manner and without financial gain for its members.

The following are guidelines to facilitate this process:

- Establish an annual and monthly budget or financial plan of action. To budget for activities, committee chairs should prepare projected revenue and expense reports.
- The Finance Minister should prepare monthly financial statements that include date, revenue, expenses, and profit/loss and disclose monthly financial reports at every Student Council meeting. The report must also be recorded in the Council meeting minutes.
- The Finance Minister and witnesses are responsible for the counting of money in a secure, school location such as the school main office. All monies should be stored in a predetermined, secure, onsite location. All funds collected from Council activities should be deposited into the Student Council bank account via the Teacher Advisor and school financial secretary.
- The Council through a majority vote should approve all expenditures. A process for dissemination of funds should be determined by the Student Council. Disbursements should be by bank cheque only with a supporting paper receipt. A minimum of two signatures should be required those of the principal and/or advisors).
- The Finance Minister is responsible for preparing the Annual Financial Report to be submitted to the Teacher Advisor and school Principal at year-end. The Annual Financial Report should be publicly published (school newsletter, school newspaper etc.).