

# TORONTO CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE (CPIC)

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**GOVERNANCE & PROCEDURE  
STANDING SUBCOMMITTEE**

**AGENDA  
March 20, 2019**

**Geoff Feldman, Co-Chair**  
Ward 2

**Isabel Starck**  
Parent At Large 1



**Annalisa Crudo-Perri, Co-Chair**  
Ward 10

**Desmond Alveres**  
Ward 11

**External Representatives**  
**Alasdair Robertson**  
Parliamentarian

**Ex-Officio Members**  
**John Del Grande**  
CPIC Chair

**Board Representatives**  
**John Wujek**  
Director Designate

**Manuela Sequeira**  
Parent Engagement Coordinator

## PURPOSE

*CPIC is the legislated parent voice at the Toronto Catholic District School Board for parents of students in TCDSB schools.*

## MISSION

*To improve student academic achievement and the emotional, spiritual and physical well-being of students by supporting, encouraging and enhancing meaningful parent engagement.*

**Rory McGuckin**  
Director of Education

**Maria Rizzo**  
Chair of The Board



## TORONTO CATHOLIC PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

### Toronto CPIC Governance and Procedure Subcommittee Agenda

Wednesday March 20, 2019      Electronic Meeting 7:30 PM – 8:30 PM

AGENDA ITEMS	OWNER	TIME
1 <b>Welcome, Roll Call, Prayer</b>	G. Feldman	<b>2 min.</b>
2 <b>Adoption of Proposed Agenda</b>	G. Feldman	<b>3 min.</b>
3 <b>Overview of each Article in current Toronto Catholic PIC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Decision on each Article: Keep, Simplify, Revise/Reconsider, Combine, Remove</li></ul>	SubCommittee	<b>45 min.</b>
4 <b>Tentative Meeting Plan and Dates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Wednesday, April 10, 2019</li><li>Wednesday, April 24, 2019</li><li>Wednesday, May 8, 2019</li><li>Wednesday, May 22, 2019</li></ul>		<b>5 min.</b>
5 <b>Adjournment</b>		<b>1 min.</b>
<a href="https://torcathpargm.globalmeet.com/CPIC">https://torcathpargm.globalmeet.com/CPIC</a>   416-915-3615; Pass Code: 357506#		<b>0 hrs 56 min</b>



# Toronto Catholic Parent Involvement Committee

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March 15, 2019

## Synopsis of 2012 Constitution and Bylaw

- Background Information: *Explains the history, logic, research etc. behind Ministry decision to involve parents in the education system.*
- Introduction & Preamble: *Reason for having a Bylaw*
- Article I - Name: *Defines the name and the logo.*
- Article II - Missions and Objectives: *What is expected of CPIC.*
- Article III - Definitions: *Terminology used and meaning.*
- Article IV - Committee Structure and Membership: *Just what the title says.*
- Article V - Term Of Office: *We must have 2-year term parent members and 1-year term parent members, max of 3 community members, Director or Designate, Trustee. Optional is Staff Liaison Communications Liaison and other staff.*
- Article VI - Members - Vacancy: *What to do to fill vacancy.*
- Article VII - Executive Officers: Elections, Duties, and Powers: *Who are Executives, their terms of office, their duties, etc.*
- Article VIII - Subcommittees: *Repeating and Special Subcommittees, their chair, membership, duties, etc.*
- Article IX - Meetings and Meeting Agendas: *Agenda used for Inaugural and Regular Committee meetings, meeting schedule and notice provision.*
- Article X - Meeting Procedure: *Rules, attendance, and conduct.*
- Article XI - Quorum at Meetings: *Members required to be a formal meeting.*
- Article XII - Minutes of Proceedings: *Record of items and decisions transacted at meetings*
- Article XIII - Member Duties, Responsibility, Code of Conduct: *As per title.*
- Article XIV - Conflict of Interest: *What is a conflict and how to handle member conflicts.*
- Article XV - Dispute Resolution Protocol: *How to handle members disputes.*
- Article XVI - Discipline, Suspension & Removal of Members: *As per title.*
- Article XVII - Financial Matters: *Reporting year, members expenses, who approves.*
- Article XVIII - Elections: *Annual parent member and community representative process.*
- Article XIX - Ratification and Amendments: *How the bylaw is changed.*

# Toronto Catholic Parent Involvement Committee

## By-Law Recommendations

Prepared by request of the Chair of CPIC by  
Alasdair A. Robertson

## Introduction

At the request of John Del Grande, Chair of the Toronto Catholic Parent Involvement Committee, I have conducted a preliminary review of the current CPIC Constitution and its associated Consolidated Addenda. Owing to it being an overview, it is necessarily brief.

Based on that review, and my experience as a procedural advisor and parliamentarian who has attended numerous meetings of CPIC, I offer the following observations. Please note that they are not a legal opinion.

## Observations

- 1. Length and Complexity:** CPIC's primary governance document, without the Consolidated Addenda, is 20% longer than the Government of Canada's *The Constitution Acts 1867-1982*. As a consequence, it is a formidably complex document which is daunting for even expert users. It has the additional failing that not all associated and relevant information appears in a single location. In consequence of this, understanding what should happen often involves references to two or more sections of the Constitution and Appendices, and/or the Consolidated Addenda. CPIC must consider that most, if not all, of its members are not experts in the use and interpretation of governance documents. They are parents who committed to help engage other parents with the TCDSB and the education of their children. The CPIC rules need to fit this group of users.
- 2. Descriptive vs. Proscriptive Wording:** By-laws and Rules of Order need to be written as directions to act in certain ways, or not to act in others. This means that broadly speaking, they should avoid describing attributes or providing detailed job descriptions. Pragmatically, a Member cannot reasonably raise, nor can a Chair decide a Point of Order about a description, or advice which is written into a governance document. To consider one example, see 12.6 *Form or Style of Minutes*. In a procedural terms, one cannot answer what is meant by, "White space is encouraged. Crowding the text makes the Minutes harder to read. Minutes which are hard to read won't get read. The defeats the primary purpose of producing Minutes." The use of this sort of descriptive writing contributes to the length of the document. It also makes it less clear than is optimal for users. Some of this guidance might be useful in a manual; it does not, in my view, belong in a governance document. There is a prevailing secondary issue with the document which is important to include here as well. It relies on non-standard language and usages. As much as possible, this should be avoided.
- 3. Too Much Governance, Not Enough Engagement:** On the books, CPIC has a Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary (who does not take the minutes) Communications Director, and an assistant Treasurer, Secretary, and Communications Director. In addition it has no fewer than seven standing sub-committees. Several of these committees have detailed mandates which are more appropriate for large and complex bodies such as a regional government. This level of administrative and executive organization is at odds with the realities of what CPIC does, or is

meant to do. Section 27 of the Regulations which empowers Parent Involvement Committees reads:

27.(1) The purpose of a parent involvement committee is to support, encourage and enhance parent engagement at the board level in order to improve student achievement and well-being.

(2) A parent involvement committee of a board *shall achieve its purpose* (my italics) by,

(a) providing information and advice on parent engagement to the board;

(b) communicating with and supporting school councils of schools of the board;  
and

(c) undertaking activities to help parents of pupils of the board support their children's learning at home and at school.

CPIC has made strides in recent meetings in shifting its meetings away from procedural/structural discussions, but needs to consider to what extent the complex, highly structural governance model which exists in the CPIC Constitution is, in fact, a barrier to advocacy and involvement. CPIC also needs to consider to what extent the present improvements may be undermined by an aggressive use of the present rules should a member, or members, decide to do so.

4. **Rules Which Create Confusion**: Several of CPIC's present rules are confusing or may give rise to democratic deficits. Among them, the Community Member rule has come up several times in recent discussions. Equally problematic is the alternate-year election rule which, under one reading, limits who can be elected Chair of the Committee. There are many more. One of the more important is the way in which loss of quorum is currently handled.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

It is my opinion that the existing document has outlived its usefulness and should be replaced with a more concise and simply worded governance document more focused on enabling easier input and the exchange of ideas which will increase CPIC's role and success as an instrument of parent engagement. In saying this, I recognize that there was a considerable investment of time and energy in creating the old document and that there will be those who will argue that minor adjustments are all that is required. However, in my view the current document's individual parts are so complex, at times contradictory, and so entwined that corrections/amendments would prove terribly time-consuming and would not significantly improve the document. I would recommend the following approach:

1. Accept that a blank sheet of paper is necessary.
2. Engage the current members (and perhaps other interested individuals) in a discussion which does not try to write a Constitution, but instead asks two basic questions:
  - a) What do we need to be an effective Catholic Parent Involvement Committee?
  - b) What should never happen at CPIC?
3. Refer the product of this engagement either to an expert, or a small committee, who would:
  - a) Begin with an established template. I would recommend the one which appears in Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised). This provides the basics in a standard order and form.
  - b) Add to this the relevant sections of the Regulations. Use the exact language of the regulations wherever possible.
  - c) Recommend rules which reflect the feedback of the engagement process.
  - d) Recommend wherever possible the adoption of well-tested documents, for example the conflict of interest policy, already in use by the TCDSB.