

REGULATIONS

SUBJECT: School Councils

STRUCTURE AND COMPOSITION OF SCHOOL COUNCILS

1. Official Name

The official name of a School Council for a school shall be “The _____ School Council” or “The School Council for _____.” (Insert the name of the school in the blank.)

2. Membership

Parents/guardians shall form the majority of the School Council. It is expected that the membership of the Council will reflect the diversity of the school community. In defining a school community, considerations may include such aspects as geography, language, cultural, ethnic, economic, business, demographics, seniors or school boundaries. All members on the School Council are equal partners.

— Membership of a School Council shall be governed by Section 3 – Composition of Ontario Regulation 6/2/00 and shall include:

- 6 to 15 parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school (except in the adult day school where parent positions shall be held by students);
- 1 community representative;
- in a secondary school, 1 student appointed by the student council;
- in an elementary school, the principal will consult with other members of the school council to invite 1 student representative to serve on council. If interest is demonstrated by a student, the principal will appoint the student to council
- • 1 teacher (other than the principal or vice-principal) assigned to the school;
- 1 non-teaching employee assigned to the school; and
- the school principal.

The total membership of each school council shall be at least 10.

3. Selection of Membership

Membership on the School Council shall be governed by Sections 4 and 5 – Elections of Ontario Regulations 612/00 and shall be determined as follows:

- the 6 to 15 parents/guardians shall be nominated and elected by parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school;
- the 1 Community representative shall be appointed by the Council.
- the 1 secondary student representative shall be appointed by the student council; and the elementary student representative appointed by the principal after consultation with the school council
- the 1 Teacher representative shall be nominated and elected by members of the teaching staff assigned to the school;

- the 1 non-teaching employee shall be nominated and elected by non-teaching employees assigned to the school; and
- the school principal shall be a designated non-voting member.

4. Chair

The Chair will be a parent/guardian member elected by the Council at the first meeting following the elections by the Council as a whole.

5. Other Officers of the Council

The Council will elect a recording secretary at the first meeting. In order to facilitate its work, a School Council may decide to have other officers such as Vice-Chair or a Treasurer in addition to a Chair and Secretary. Council would elect members to these positions at the first meeting.

6. Reimbursement of Expenses

Section 11 – Remuneration of Ontario Regulation 612/00 provides for no remuneration for any person serving as an officer or member of a School Council. Reimbursement for expenses incurred as an officer or a member of a School Council will be provided in accordance with the Policy established by the Board.

7. By-laws

The Board Regulations and Administrative Procedures shall serve as by-laws for School Councils to address the following:

- Election procedures
- Filling vacancies
- Conflict of interest
- Conflict resolution procedures

ELECTIONS

1. Nominations

Persons shall be elected to the School Council by nomination and voting. A School Council Nomination Form (see sample Appendix 2) should be completed and returned to the principal at least 10 days prior to the election. If the number of nominees is equal to or fewer than the number of elected positions, then the nominees fill those positions by acclamation.

2. Election of Parent Member

The election of parent members of school councils shall be held during the first 30 days of each school year.

(a) A person is qualified to be a parent member of a school council if he or she is a parent of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.

(b) A person is not qualified to be a parent member of a school council if,

- (i) he or she is employed at the school; or
- (ii) he or she is employed elsewhere by the board, unless he or she takes reasonable steps to inform people qualified to vote in the election of parent members of that employment

(c) A person is qualified to vote in an election of parent members of a school council if he or she is a parent of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.

(d) The school council chair, in collaboration with the principal, will set the date of the election of parent members.

- (e) The principal of a school shall, at least 14 days before the date of the election of parent members, on behalf of the school council, give written notice of the date, time and location of the election to every parent of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.
- (f) The notice may be given by,
 - (i) giving the notice to the parent/guardian's child for delivery to his or her parent; and
 - (ii) posting the notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parent.
- (g) The election of parent members shall be by secret ballot.
- (h) The principal shall preside over the election proceedings until the election of the chair.

Other Elections

The elections of non-parent members of school councils shall be held during the first 30 days of each school year.

- (a) A person is qualified to vote in an election of a teaching member of a school council if he or she is a teacher, other than the principal or vice-principal, who is employed at the school.
- (b) A person is qualified to vote in an election of a non-teaching staff member of a school council if he or she is a person, other than the principal, vice-principal or any other teacher, who is employed at the school.
- (c) A person is qualified to vote in an election of a student member of a school council if he or she is a pupil enrolled in the secondary school.

3. Term of Office

The term of office for elected and appointed positions to the Council shall be for one year commencing the day after the election. (delete and may be up to two years.)
Elected and appointed members may seek additional terms.

4. Vacancies

If vacancies remain after the nomination process, the members of the Council shall fill the vacancies by appointing eligible persons. The School Council selecting an eligible person to complete the vacating member's term of office may fill a vacant position created during a term. A vacancy in the membership of a school council does not prevent the council from exercising its authority.

If a member does not attend three consecutive regular meetings, without a reason acceptable to the Council, the position may be deemed to be vacant by the Council.

Meetings

- a) A school council shall meet
 - (i) within the first 35 days of the school year, after the elections are held, on a date fixed by the principal of the school
 - (ii) at least four times during the school year
- b) A meeting of a school council cannot be held unless,
 - (i) a majority of the current members of the school council are present at the meeting; and
 - (ii) a majority of the members of the school council who are present at the meeting are parent members.
- c) All meetings of a school council shall be open to the public.

- d) All meetings of a school council shall be held at a location that is accessible to the public. A school council may hold its meetings at the school.
- e) The principal of a school shall, on behalf of the school council, give written notice of the dates, times and locations of the meetings of the council to every parent of a pupil enrolled in the school.
- f) The notice required may be given by:
 - (i) giving the notice to the parent/guardian's child for delivery to the home; and
 - (ii) posting the notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parent/guardians.
- g) the school council shall have access to reasonable photocopying and support to facilitate the operations of the school council.

Committees

- a) A school council may establish committees to make recommendations to the council.
- b) Every committee of a school council must include at least one parent member of the council.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL COUNCILS

1. Advisory Responsibilities

School Councils shall act as advisory bodies. The principal will solicit the views of the School Council and the Council will provide input to the school principal, and where appropriate, to the Lambton Kent District School Board on any of the matters listed below that the Council has identified as priorities:

- provide input in the determination of the local school year calendar;
- provide input for scheduling significant school events;
- review and suggest revisions to the school code of student behaviour;
- provide input into curriculum and program goals and priorities;
- provide input regarding the school's achievement in provincial and school board assessments to support and improve programs delivered in the school;
- assist in the preparation and review of the school profile and the overall growth plan for the school;
- assist in the preparation and review of the principal profile for consideration by the Board in its selection of school principal;
- provide input into the school's budget priorities including the local capital improvement plan, for consideration during the Board's annual budget review;
- provide input and support into school-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational and nutritional programs;
- report to parents and the community;
- assist in developing school-community communication strategies;
- support extra-curricular activities in the school;
- support the community use of school facilities and be aware of current Board policy and regulations;
- assist and make recommendations related to the local coordination of services for children and youth; and
- provide input into the development, implementation and revision of current Ministry and Board policies;
- (delete add) provide input on any other topic agreed to by the School Council that is felt important to the school community.

2. The School Council shall also:

- hold a minimum of four regular meetings per year (all meetings shall be open to the community Section 12 Meetings of Ontario Regulation 612/00 governs the holding of Council Meetings); delete
- maintain minutes of meetings, and financial records, for a period of at least 4 years
- submit, at the end of its term, a written report to the principal, and to the Board, outlining its goals, activities, and achievements. If the school council engages in fundraising activities, the annual report shall include a report on those activities. The principal will give a copy of this report to every parent.
- organize information and training sessions to enable members of the Council to develop their skills as Council members;
- communicate regularly with parents and other members of the community to seek their views and preferences with regard to matters being addressed by the Council, and to report on the activities of the Council to the school community; and
- promote the best interests of the school community.

3. The School Council may organize and run fundraising events as they deem necessary for the benefit of students, provided such fund raising activities are conducted in accordance with Board policies, regulations and guidelines.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL**1. Chair**

The Chair of the School Council shall:

- call School Council meetings;
- prepare the agenda for School Council meetings in consultation with the principal;
- chair School Council meetings;
- ensure that the minutes of School Council meetings are recorded;
- participate in information and training programs;
- communicate with the school principal, as required;
- ensure that there is regular communication with the school community; and
- consult with senior board staff and trustees, as required.

2. Vice-Chair (if this position is created by the Council)

The Vice-Chair of the School Council shall:

- assume the role of the Chair in the absence of the Chair
- assist the Chair as requested

3. Secretary

The secretary of the School Council shall:

- ensure the minutes of the School Council meetings are recorded, maintained, reported and available at each meeting;
- verify and record all consensus decisions;
- act as corresponding secretary as required.

4. Treasurer (if this position is created by the Council)

The treasurer of the School Council shall:

- receive all monies raised by the School Council;
- draw and cosign cheques along with the Principal, for payment of authorized expenditures;

- maintain the books and give a financial report at each meeting;
- submit books, vouchers and financial statements, annually or as required, to the principal for audit purposes.

Positions of Council Members

The members of the School Council shall:

- maintain a school-wide perspective on issues;
- participate in Council meetings, contributing positively and functioning as a team member;
- participate in information and training programs;
- act as a link between the School Council and the community;
- encourage the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the school community;
- evaluate the success in achieving the shared goals for the school; and
- ensure that the rights to privacy of students, staff and parents will be respected and protected.

Responsibilities of The Principal

The principal of the school shall:

- facilitate the operation of the School Council and assist in its operation;
- support and promote the Council's activities and advice;
- seek input from the Council in areas for which it has been assigned advisory responsibility;
- inform the Council on how their recommendations have been taken into account when decisions related to their recommendations are made
- act as a resource on laws, regulations, board policies and collective agreements;
- obtain and provide information required by the Council to enable it to make informed decisions;
- communicate with the Chair of the Council, as required;
- ensure that copies of the minutes of the Council's meetings are kept at the school;
- assist the Council in communicating with the school community;
- encourage the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the school community;
- conduct elections for parent representatives to the School Council;
- be accountable for all funds raised by Councils in the name of the school by being one of the signing authorities; and
- forward a list of the elected and appointed School Council members to the Director of Education following each election or change of membership.

Responsibilities of the Director of Education:

- ensure a School Council exists at each elementary and secondary school under the jurisdiction of the Board;
- implement the provincial legislation, and Board policy, regulations and administrative procedures regarding School Councils;
- call meetings of the School Council Chairs and Principals to enhance system-wide communication;
- provide the opportunity for School Councils' input on major changes to Board policies and regulations;
- provide the opportunity for School Councils to be advised of how their recommendations have been taken into account

- report to the Board on School Councils annually;
- facilitate training for School Councils in areas such as council management, dispute resolution, and meeting procedures.

Responsibilities of the Board

The Lambton Kent District School Board shall:

- solicit the views of the School Councils with respect to the following matters in accordance with Section 19 – Consultation by Board of Ontario Regulation 612/00
 - The establishment or amendment of board policies and guidelines that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents,
 - The development of implementation plans for new education initiatives that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents.
 - Board action plans for improvement, based on the Education Quality and Accountability Office’s reports on the results of tests of pupils, and the communication of those plans to the public.
 - The process and criteria applicable to the selection and placement of principals and vice-principals.
 - Any other matter on which the Board wishes to solicit the views of the Councils
- Consider each recommendation made to the Board by the Councils and advise the Councils, through the Director of Education, of the action taken in response to their recommendations.

Implementation Date: March 28, 2000
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Reference: Policy and Administrative Procedures