

Alexander Mackenzie High School School Council Constitution



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Article 1: Name and Address

The organization will be known as Alexander Mackenzie High School School Council (known hereafter as School Council). The members of the school council shall be responsible for maintaining the constitution.

Alexander Mackenzie High School
300 Major Mackenzie Drive West
Richmond Hill, ON L4C 3S3

Article 2: Mission Statement

Our council is committed to supporting quality student learning in a safe environment through a partnership with staff, students, parents, and the community by providing the highest standard of education to assist all students in reaching their full potential.

Article 3: Objectives

The objectives of the School Council shall be:

- to serve as an advisory body to the school principal and to the York Region District School Board on matters relating to the school's Vision and Mission Statements, and to the review, development, and implementation of the School Plan for Continuous Improvement.
- to facilitate communication among parents/guardians, administrators, teachers, and students in the school community by providing a forum for both input and support, and where appropriate, by making recommendations to the York Region District School Board and to the Minister of Education and Training.
- to support school staff members in their efforts to focus time and resources on the essential tasks of teaching and learning.
- to promote the building of a vibrant school community which will have as its common interest the education of students served by Alexander Mackenzie High School.

Article 4: Governance and Guidelines

- The operational procedures of this council are outlined in the YRDSB Policy and Procedure #262, available on the Board's website. All recommendations and activities of the Council shall comply with all Ministry of Education Acts, York Region District School Board Policies and Procedures and Staff Collective Agreements.
- The School Council is a non-profit organization operating without financial gain for its members. Any monetary income shall be used in promoting the School Council's stated objectives. Any fundraising activities shall be in strict accordance with the policies of the York Region District School Board and conducted under the supervision of the school administration.
- Only 1 parent per household with student(s) enrolled in the school shall be a voting member of the School Council.

Article 5: Membership

5.1: Parent Members

The number of parents entitled to vote on the school council will be at least 7 but no more than 15. The number once agreed at the first school council meeting of the current school year will be enforced until the first school council meeting of the next school year.

5.2: Community Representatives

The number of community representatives will be up to 2. The community representative will be appointed by the members of school council. They do not have a vote on council.

5.3: The Principal

The principal does not have a vote on council.

5.4: Teaching Staff Representative

The number of Teaching Staff will be up to 2. The teaching staff representative will be elected by teachers employed at the school. The teaching staff representative does not have a vote on council.

5.5: Support Staff Members

The number of support staff members will be up to 1. Support staff members will be elected by support staff employed at the school. Support staff members do not have a vote on council.

5.6: Student Representative

The number of student representatives will be up to 3. Student representatives will be named by the student council. The student representatives do not have a vote on council.

Article 6: Elections

6.1: Acclamations

Parent elections shall be by acclamation when the number of candidates is within the range set out in article 5.1, including the minimum and maximum number of parent member positions on the council.

6.2: Election Procedures for Parent Members

- In accordance with York Region District School Board policy #262.0, school council elections shall be held in the first 30 calendar days of each school year.
- Each parent/guardian seeking election must be nominated or self-nominated in writing, must have a child registered at the school, and must declare if he or she is employed by the Board.
- Each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent/guardian membership position on the council.
- Voting will only occur if the number of interested parents/guardians exceeds membership capacity outlined in Section 5.1 above.
- Then, a maximum of one parent/guardian in attendance at the election meeting of one or more students enrolled at the school shall have one vote for each of the candidate positions available.
- The election committee, composed of the previous year's council members, shall:
 - provide nomination forms;
 - ensure that the school community is notified of election procedures and election date(s), location, and time, at least fourteen days in advance of election;
 - conduct the election, if needed, by secret ballot;
 - count the ballots in the presence of the school principal;
 - help the principal notify all candidates of the results;
 - keep all the ballot counts and related information confidential;
 - only release the names of successful candidates. A list of candidates and the vote results will be kept on file for use in the event of a vacancy on the Council;
 - notify all individuals standing for election of the results before the results are released to the school community.

6.3: Terms of Office

Elected and appointed members will serve a one year term of office from the date of the first meeting until the first meeting in September of the following year and may seek additional terms of office.

6.4: Vacancies in Membership

Should a position become vacant during the year, or if vacancies already exist, the School Council may appoint individuals to fill the position(s) effective until the first meeting of the next school year.

Appointments will be considered by:

- offering the person with the next largest number of votes who was not elected the opportunity to accept the position;
- where there are not enough candidates to fill the vacancies, notice will be sent to all parents informing them of the vacancies and application by interested volunteers sought; when no more candidates are available, council may appoint a willing parent as school council member.

6.5: Resignations

Resignations shall be in writing to the Chair.

6.6: Removal

The Council may choose to remove from council any member who misses three consecutive meetings and shall undertake to replace that person according to article 6.4: Vacancies. The Chair shall notify a member in writing of a motion for removal at the next School Council meeting.

Article 7: The Executive

The Executive of the School Council shall be composed of the principal, and parents/guardians who serve in the capacity of 1 Chair or 2 co-chairs, 1 Vice Chair (optional), 1 Secretary (required), and 1 Treasurer (required).

7.1: The Chair

At the first meeting, after the elections, the council will elect a chair and vice chair (optional) or 2 co-chairs.

7.2: Other Officers

At the first meeting of the school year, the council will elect a secretary, a treasurer and if necessary, a fundraising chair.

Article 8: Sub-Committees

- Committees, standing or *ad hoc*, may be formed by the School Council at any time in response to need. Each properly endorsed committee shall include a coordinator and a member of the School Council.
- Each committee shall be accountable to and report regularly to the School Council.
- The coordinator shall:
 - consult with the Chair on a regular basis;
 - organize committee participants and solicit their views and support;
 - delegate areas of responsibility to committee participants;
 - keep and submit upon request to the School Council written records of pertinent information, meetings, and budgetary matters.

Sub-committees must include at least one parent member of council and may include persons who are not members of the school council.

Article 9: Conflict

9.1: Conflict of Interest

- If individual Council members perceive themselves to be in conflict of interest, they are honour bound to declare their conflict at the earliest possible opportunity so the minutes may reflect this declaration.
- Council members cannot receive any remuneration for their work as a member of council.
- If a School Council member finds themselves in a conflict of interest position, the member should declare such and either leave the room or refrain from participating in the discussion relating to that subject. The member should not vote on any decision made on the issue.

9.2: Conflict Resolution

- The council will undertake to resolve all internal conflicts within its mandate in a timely manner. The council will abide by any conflict resolution policy issued by the Board.
- The Council believes that its operation can be conducted based on mutual respect in the interest of students and the school community.
- All members are encouraged to follow the Code of Ethics as listed in Appendix A.
- All members are expected to exercise their role with positive attitude in a democratic manner to minimize conflict.
- From time to time a dispute may arise amongst the members of the Council. It is expected that the members of the Council will make every effort to resolve it themselves. It is the responsibility of the Chair/Co-chairs to facilitate the resolution of conflict.
- Should an internal dispute require outside intervention to achieve resolution, the Chair/Co-chairs in consultation with the principal shall agree on a mediator. The mediator can be the school trustee or a community representative who is not a member of the Council.
- In the event of unsuccessful mediation, the matter will be taken to the Superintendent of Education who will assess the situation and determine an appropriate approach. In the event that a dispute is between a parent member and a staff member, the Superintendent may ask other Board executives to get involved

Article 10: Meetings

- There will be at least 4 regular meetings during the school year. The dates of each meeting shall be determined at the first meeting in the fall.
- All meetings of the School Council are open to the school community; however, the right is reserved to hold a virtual session should a situation warrant.
- Upon the written request of 3 voting members to call an extraordinary meeting of the School Council, the Chair shall ensure that such a meeting is held within 14 days of the receipt of the request.
- Normally, only 1 Chair or Vice Chair will chair each meeting.
- A meeting will have quorum if the majority of council members are present, and the majority of those present are parents. A meeting of council can be held if there is no quorum but all voting will be deferred.
- The proposed agenda for each meeting will be set by the Chair and the Principal, and will be made available in advance of the scheduled meeting. Additional items for inclusion are to be given to the Chair or the Principal 10 days prior to each meeting if possible, otherwise the topic may be deferred to the next meeting.
- Requests for further items to be added to the agenda may be made to the Chair(s) at the beginning of each meeting.
- Records of the minutes of all meetings, resolutions, and correspondence of the School Council and its sub-committees shall be maintained and be made available to any member of the school community upon request.
- Decisions at meetings will normally be reached by consensus and shall be recorded as such in the minutes.
- Should a decision by consensus not be possible the Chair shall advise the meeting that a motion shall be formulated to :
 - have a vote, following established protocol and procedure (The motion shall pass or fail by simple majority.); or
 - defer the issue to the next meeting, a special meeting or to a sub-committee review.
- Voting shall be allowed via email in circumstances where a decision is required prior to the next scheduled meeting but further consideration is required and/or quorum is not reached at the scheduled meeting.

Article 11: Constitutional Amendments

- The Constitution and Bylaws of the School Council shall remain in effect unless or until amended.
- An opportunity shall be provided for an annual review of the Constitution and the Bylaws of the School Council.
- Any proposed amendment(s) to the Constitution or the Bylaws shall be submitted in writing to the secretary of the School Council a minimum of 10 days in advance of the next scheduled meeting. The secretary will then circulate the proposed amendment(s) to the school council a minimum of 7 days in advance of the next scheduled meeting.

Article 12: Financial Records and Reporting

Alexander Mackenzie High School shall abide by the procedures as outlined in Board Policy and Procedures 676 School Fundraising and Administration of School Generated Funds.

- Copies of all records/documents shall be deposited with the secretary of the School Council and will serve as official copies for the record. The Treasurer and the Principal shall be responsible for the oversight of record keeping.
- All funds shall be deposited into the school generated funds bank account. The school administration shall provide a monthly summary report of all school council financial activities to the treasurer who will table it at each scheduled council meeting.
- No member of school council shall have signing authority – only the principal has signing authority on all cheques.
- If funds are received for school council activities, they are to be counted on school premises with a minimum of 1 school council member present (2 if possible). Deposit records will be completed based on the requirements of the administrative team.
- If disbursements are required from the school council generated funds, a cheque requisition, either in writing or via email from either the Treasurer or the Chair will be sent to the Principal who will arrange for a cheque.

Article 13: Council Reports

- The School Council will prepare/review and submit annually no later than November of each school year or as requested by the superintendent, an administrator profile outlining the preferred characteristics of the school's principal and/or vice principal.
- The School Council Chair shall complete the annual reporting template at the end of the school year outlining all school council activities. There is no requirement for an annual financial report on school council activities as monthly updates are provided and recorded in the minutes.

Article 14: Protection of School Council Members

All school councils; consequently, members of the School Council, when acting in good faith and in accordance with the above guidelines, shall not be held personally or corporately liable for the decisions and activities of its members.

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- A member shall consider the best interests of all students.
- A member shall be guided by the school's and the school board's mission statements.
- A member shall act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of a School Council, as identified by the school's operating guidelines, the school board, and the Ontario Ministry of Education.
- A member shall become familiar with the school's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.
- A member shall maintain the highest standards of integrity.
- A member shall recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.
- A member shall treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.
- A member shall encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
- A member shall acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the council.
- A member shall respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the School Council.
- A member shall not disclose confidential information.
- A member shall limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.
- A member shall use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise.
- A member shall promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community.
- A member shall declare any conflict of interest.
- A member shall not accept any payment or benefit financially through school council involvement.