

School Council Constitution

George Street & Aurora Senior Public Schools

1. Name

The name of the School Council will be Aurora Senior and George Street Public School Council. (Hereinafter called “The Council”.)

2. Mission Statement

The Council is made up of a team of school parents, administrators, teachers and students, striving to promote excellence in (education) academics, athletics and the arts in a safe and inclusive environment. The Council’s intention is to enhance the learning environment of our students giving them the opportunity to grow a healthy mind, body and spirit. As an advisory body, it is our mandate to support the School Improvement Plan through recognizing the potential in students and their families. We recognize the importance of maintaining open and effective communication with our school community including our School Board and other community partners.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. “Administrator” means the Principal or Vice-Principal of Aurora Senior and George Street Public Schools.
- 3.2. “Administrative Team” means the Principal and Vice-Principal
- 3.3. “Annual General Meeting” held typically in May or June by the School Council to review the preliminary Annual General Report as required by the York Region District School Board. This meeting is open to all parents.
- 3.4. “Budget Plan” means a general outline of anticipated income and expenditure for the school financial year.
- 3.5. “Co-Chairs(s)” means the Chair and/or Vice-Chair of the School Council.
- 3.6. “Community” means the students, parents, teachers, administration and the Towns for which we draw our students including primarily Aurora.
- 3.7. “Constitution” means this document that guides the activities and priorities of the School Council.
- 3.8. “Co-Opted Council Member” means any person selected by the Council to assist the Council for a specific purpose and a specific period. Such positions are advisory and do not have voting rights on the Council.
- 3.9. “Council” means the Aurora Senior and George Street Public School Council.

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- 3.10. “Councillor” means an elected and/or appointed member, the Executive Member of the Council or the Chair and/or Co-Chair of Aurora Senior and George Street Public School.
- 3.11. “Elected Council Member” means any person elected by the relevant constituency to represent the school staff or the parent or the community.
- 3.12. “Election Committee” means the group of Council members responsible for the Council election process.
- 3.13. “Parent” means the parent, guardian or any person who has actual custody of a student enrolled at Aurora Senior and George Street Public School.
- 3.14. “Parent Community” means all parents of students enrolled at Aurora Senior and George Street Public School.
- 3.15. “Parent Council Member” means any parent elected to the Council. A member of Aurora Senior and George Street Public School Staff may not be a parent member on the Council.
- 3.16. “(The) Principal” means the principal of Aurora Senior and George Street Public School.
- 3.17. “Quorum” means the minimum number of persons required to attend a meeting before any business can be transacted.
- 3.18. “School” means Aurora Senior and George Street Public School.
- 3.19. “School Board” means York Region District School Board.
- 3.20. “School Community” means the school staff, parent and friends of Aurora Senior and George Street Public School.
- 3.21. “School Plan” means the School Improvement Plan.
- 3.22. “School Improvement Plan (SIP)” means the 3-year plan that is created by the Administration and staff to set goals and tracking mechanisms for improvements in the areas of literacy, parent & community involvement, and effective schools.
- 3.23. “School Staff” means all teachers permanent/casual employed at Aurora Senior and George Street Public School by York Region District School Board.
- 3.24. “Staff Council Member” means any School Staff elected to the Council.
- 3.25. “Student” means any student registered in Aurora Senior and George Street Public School.
- 3.26. “Student Representative” means the students from Student Council who attend the School Council meetings and provide updates.

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- 3.27. “Sub-Committee” means a group which is responsible to the School Council to focus on key areas of the School Improvement Plan, Council and Administrative Team priorities and fund raising initiatives.

4. Purpose

- 4.1. **Ensure the collaboration of the two school communities as one working body with a clear focus.**
- 4.2. **Support a positive environment which for the 3 areas of the School Improvement Plan (SIP)**
- 4.2.1. **Literacy and Numeracy**
 - 4.2.2 **Equity & Inclusivity**
 - 4.2.3 **Engagement**
 - 4.2.4 **Well Being**
- 4.3. **Encourage meaningful involvement of Parents and all members of the School Community in support of student achievement.**
- 4.4. **Ensure communications occur between all members of the School Community through a coordinated effort with the Administrative Team.**
- 4.5. **Bring forth Community members’ suggestions and concerns to the Council and Administrative Team.**
- 4.6. **Direct the parent-initiated fundraising activities in accordance with Board Policy #676.0 and allocate raised funds in collaboration with the Administrative Team as prioritized by the SIP and parents’ input.**
- 4.7. **Sponsor education programs to meet the indentified needs of the Council and/or Community.**

5. Procedures and Guidelines

The operational procedures of this Council are outlined in the School Board’s Policy #262. All recommendations and activities of the Council shall comply with the Ministry of Education Act, York Region District School Board Policies and Procedures, Ontario Regulation #612/00 and Staff Collective Agreements

6. Operating Norms

- 6.1. **Elections are held within 30 days of school beginning.**

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- 6.1. All meetings begin and end on time, and will not be longer than 2 hours.
- 6.2. Council decisions are aligned with the School Improvement Plan
- 6.3. Consensus method is used for decision making. If consensus cannot be reached, then a vote is required.
- 6.4. All speakers and opinions are acknowledged and respected.
- 6.5. Council and meeting participants will stay on topic and stay focused. One conversation at a time, no side conversations.
- 6.6. All feedback and discussions are to be positive. Negative statements should come with solutions.
- 6.7. Individual students, parents and teachers are not discussed. Individual parent or student issues will be referred to the Principal.
- 6.8. All activities and/or discussions should lead to the benefit of ALL Students and the greater School Community; ultimately they should support the Students' experience and learning.
- 6.9. Agenda is set and circulated for input in advance of meeting. There are some standard agenda items:
 - 6.9.1. Introductions
 - 6.9.2. Review & acceptance of last month's minutes
 - 6.9.3. School Update from Principal, Vice Principal and teacher rep.
 - 6.9.4. Student Council update
 - 6.9.5. Treasurer's update

In addition there are times of the year when specific issues are discussed:

September:

- Existing council attends along with new parents
- Elections for new Council occur
- Read through the Constitution and the School Improvement Plan as these are the Council's guiding documents. Administrators review of Curriculum and program goals and priorities including Homework Policy.
- Review methods of reporting to the school parents and community

October:

- Establish/Review a Smart Goal to be championed by Council during their term
- New business, action items, priorities
- Identify grant applications opportunities

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November:

- Budget, set the prioritized list for spending of funds raised
- Fine tune activity priorities and assign members to Sub Committees, have Sub-Committee coordinators report back to council several times a year (December, March)
- Identify cost sharing opportunities with the Board
- Holiday Concert Involvement
- Administrator review of School Profile

December:

- Review Board policies at the local level. What is affecting our school and potential actions needed.
- Sub-Committee Reports

January:

- Health and Safety, Code of Behavior
- Spring Fair Committee

March:

- Spring Concert Involvement
- Council involvement in Grade 8 Graduation
- Sub-Committee Reports

April:

- Annual report, school Leadership/Administrators Profile
- Council involvement in Welcome to Kindergarten Night
- Discuss fundraising efforts and volunteers for the upcoming Fall activities

May:

- Annual general meeting to review the annual report
- Set date and role of Council for Meet the Teacher event (if possible), existing council meeting early September, and election date.
- Start the nominations and recruitment process of Council positions and Sub-Committee coordinators.
- Council involvement in Grade 4 Orientation

June:

- Social event for existing Council.

- 6.10. Communication from Council to the Parent Community must be reviewed in a Council Meeting in advance.
- 6.11. Email to Council member may be used to distribute information in advance of meeting. All discussion and decisions will be in Council Meetings only. Not in email. Council members need to be diligent about not “replying to all” so that email is manageable.
- 6.12. Email communications between Sub-Committee members or individual Council members is specific to the parties involved.

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- 6.13. Council member will maintain a School wide perspective.
- 6.14. Requests from non-council members who cannot attend meeting can be submitted to any Council member to bring forward. Information should be included with the request such as description, need(s) being addressed, funds required, school/teacher/administration participation required, benefit to the students, classes affected.
- 6.15. A minimum of 2 members of the executive of the School Council will have discretion to allocate up to \$200.00 as deemed appropriate between meetings without the approval of the full council. Any allocations are to reported back to the full council at the next meeting.

7. Duties and Responsibilities

The Ministry of Education publication “School Council: A Guide for Members” is recommended reading for all Council members. It can be found at:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/guide.html>

Council Member will actively: (review, revise, recommend on the following):

- 7.1. **Participate in Council meeting keeping a school wide perspective**
- 7.2. **Declare any conflicts of interest in advance of discussions to maintain neutrality of the Council**
- 7.3. **Review and update the School Improvement Plan, assess the school curriculum, program goals, priorities and the methods for success**
- 7.4. **Review and Update the Constitution**
- 7.5. **Review and update the School Code of Behaviour and School safety procedures (annual and safety review)**
- 7.6. **Assess School Budget priorities and capital improvement projects**
- 7.7. **Review the responses of the School or School Board to achievement in provincial and Board assessment programs/EQAO (discuss the school’s results and relate this back to the SIP)**
- 7.8. **Revise the School Profile as necessary (this tells the Board who we are and what our special needs and priorities are)**
- 7.9. **Establish the school Council’s budget priorities (the use of parent fundraised monies)**
- 7.10. **Implement School Community communication strategies (Fall information packages, volunteer forms, emails, newsletters, websites, info tables at special events, surveys)**

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- 7.11. Establish methods of reporting to the Parents and the Community (minutes, emails, parent information boards, special meetings, annual reports)
- 7.12. Review School based services and community partnerships (basket program, science in the school, tree planting, study hall, library, etc.)
- 7.13. Develop, implement and review of Board policies at the local level
- 7.14. Review the School Homework Policy
- 7.15. Prepare School Leadership Profile (Character traits, skills, experience, etc. of Administrators)

The Responsibilities of special members will be as follows:

7.16. The Co-Chairs(s):

- 7.16.1. Call and chair Council meetings
- 7.16.2. Prepare agendas for Council meetings in collaboration with the Principal
- 7.16.3. Communicate with the Principal
- 7.16.4. Ensure the regular communications takes place with the School Community
- 7.16.5. Ensure that the council's constitution (the Constitution) is reviewed annually
- 7.16.6. Consult with senior staff members of the school Board and trustees as required
- 7.16.7. Produce an annual report to the director of Education and/or Ministry of Education as required
- 7.16.8. Review Board email and bring relevant issues forward

7.17. The Vice-chair:

- 7.17.1. In the absence of the Co-Chairpersons perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Co-Chairpersons.
- 7.17.2. Assist the Co-Chairperson in any or all of the Co-Chairperson's duties and responsibilities
- 7.17.3. Organize the election committee

7.18. The Secretary:

- 7.18.1. Ensure that the minutes of all Council meetings are recorded and maintained
- 7.18.2. Ensure that the said minutes of all Council meetings reflect attendance of Members
- 7.18.3. Distribute the minutes to Council Members
- 7.18.4. Ensure that the minutes a posted at the School

7.19. The Treasurer

- 7.20.1 Money that is collected is to be counted and verified at the school by the school council and kept in the school safe pending pick up from the bank PACE Savings and Credit Union. A deposit envelope is completed by the school council for funds to be deposited in

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the bank.. The completed deposits are then provided to the school secretary to enter into SchoolCash.NET

7.20.2 All records including invoices, receipts, bank statements and bank reconciliations must be kept at the school and retained for seven years.

7.20.3 On termination of office, surrender all books, records and other properties of the Council to the successor.

7.20.4 Preside over Council meeting in the event that the Chair, Co-Chairs, are absent.

7.20. The Administrative Team (Principal and Vice-Principal)

7.20.1. Help establish the Council and assist in its operations

7.20.2. Ask for advice from the School Community in the areas within its jurisdiction

7.20.3. Assist the Council in communicating with the School Community

7.20.4. Ensure that the Constitution is readily available to the School Community

7.20.5. Present an update of school activities and/or concerns at each meeting

7.20.6. Communicate with the Co-Chairpersons and Vice-Chair of the Council as required

7.20.7. Act as a treasurer for the Council and report all spending to the Council

7.20.8. Act as resource regarding Board policies, laws, regulations and collective agreements

7.20.9. Obtain and provide information required by the Council to enable it to make informed decisions

7.20.10. Approve all information/materials from the Council distributed to the Community

7.21. Student Representative

7.21.1. Report on the activities of the Student Council.

7.21.2. Make any requests for funding or support from the School Council

7.22. Staff Members

7.22.1. Teacher Representatives from Aurora Senior and George Street to attend the Council meetings and ensure the activities and priorities of Council are aligned with the teacher requirements as well.

7.22.2. Bring requests for activities, support or funding to the Council

8. Officers/Membership

8.1. The Council will consist of ten to eighteen members as follows:

8.1.1. Six to thirteen School Parents

8.1.2. One teacher from Aurora Senior Public School

8.1.3. One teacher from George Street Public School

8.1.4. One Community representative

8.1.5. One Principal and/or Vice-Principal

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8.1.6. Student Representative

- 8.2. The length of term will be one year, including September of the following year. Past Council members are encouraged to be available for consultation to the new Council. “Officer” (Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer) will meet with their successor to ensure a smooth transition. Information binders will be given to new members to ensure continuity of information.
- 8.3. Attendance: Council members should do their best not to miss meetings and will inform the secretary of their inability to attend. If a Council Member is unable to continue his/her role for the remainder of the year, the member will inform the Chair and efforts will be made to replace this Member.

9. Election of Councilors

9.1. Acclamations:

Parent election shall be by acclamation when the number of candidates is equal to, or less than the number of parent member positions on the Council.

9.2. Election Procedures for Parent Members:

- 9.2.1. 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/she is employed by the Board.
- 9.2.2. 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.
- 9.2.3. No one standing for election, or the spouse of anyone standing for the election, shall be a member of the election committee.
- 9.2.4. The Election process shall:
- 9.2.4.1. Provide nominations forms
 - 9.2.4.2. Ensure that the School Community is notified of election procedures, election date(s), location, and time, at least fourteen days in advance of election
 - 9.2.4.3. Request a profile from all candidates and make these available to the electorate
 - 9.2.4.4. Conduct the election by secret ballot
 - 9.2.4.5. Count the ballots
 - 9.2.4.6. Keep all the results and related information confidential
 - 9.2.4.7. Only release the names of the successful candidates. A list of candidates and the vote results will be kept on file for use in the event of vacancy on the Council.
 - 9.2.4.8. Shall notify all individuals standing for election of the results before the results are released to the school community.

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10. Meetings

- 10.1. There will be at least six (6) general meetings held within the school year. The Annual General Meeting will be held close to the end of the school year. Notification of meetings will be sent to all parents and staff.

11. Quorum

- 11.1. A quorum is established as the number of people present at the meeting.

12. Non-Profit Organization

- 12.1. The Council will operate without financial gain for its members. Any profit to the organization will be used in promoting its purposes. The Council will conduct any fund raising activities in the strict accordance with Board policy of a school administrator.

13. Amendments

- 13.1. Input regarding any purposed amendment, addition or deletion to the Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the secretary of the Council.
- 13.2. Amendments to the Constitution must be presented to the Council, at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- 13.3. Constitutional amendments need a 2/3 majority of Council members to be passed.

Document History

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