

Bayview Secondary School School Council Constitution

Article 1: Name and Address

The organization will be known as *Bayview Secondary School Council*. The members of the School Council shall be responsible for maintaining the constitution.

Bayview Secondary School
10077 Bayview Avenue
Richmond Hill, Ontario
L4C 2L4
(905) 884-4453

Article 2: Mission Statement

Bayview Secondary School Council will promote and facilitate parental engagement by collaborating with administration, teachers, support staff, students and the community with the goal of providing educational excellence to every student enabling them to acquire the skills and attitudes to prepare them for life-long learning in an ever-changing global society.

Article 3: Purpose and Objectives

1. Encourage meaningful involvement of parents and all members of the school community in support of student learning by focusing on the following areas: parenting skills, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with the community.
2. Facilitate the building of a viable school community, which works together in the best interests of our students and their education.
3. Provide a means for regular communication and dialogue between all partners in education.
4. Help to co-ordinate the services for school, family and community partnerships related to social, health, safety, recreational and nutrition programs that assist in the education of children.
5. Provide input into decisions made by the school administration, the Board and the Ministry.
6. Participate in the school improvement planning process.

Article 4: Procedures and Operating Guidelines

The operational procedures of this Council are outlined in YRDSB Policy #262. All recommendations and activities of the Council shall comply with all Ministry of Education Acts, York Region District School Board Policies and Procedures, Ontario Regulations 612/00 and 298, and Staff Collective Agreements.

Article 5: Membership

The School Council is composed of parent members, the principal (and vice principals) and representatives of community, students, teachers and support staff as specified below. Each member of the Council is considered a voting member, with the exception of the principal (and vice principals).

5.1: Parent Members

- The number of parents on the School Council will be a minimum of 6 and no more than 20. It is recommended to have 5 parents from each grade of the student body. In the event that the number of volunteers significantly exceeds the number of places set out in the constitution, then the Council may consider reviewing their structure for that school year. The parent members must form the majority of Council members (i.e., 50% +1).
- There shall be no more than one member on the School Council from any one household. Other members of the same household may attend meetings as a non-voting participant.
- A parent member cannot be employed at the school with the exception of school (lay) assistants.
- If a parent works for the Board but not at the school, they can be a parent member as long as he/she informs the school community prior to the election.

5.2: Expectation of Council Members

- Attend monthly council meeting
- Participate in council supported events
- Support the council financially
- Join and actively participate in sub-committee(s)

5.3 Community Representatives

- The number of community representatives will be at least one and no more than four appointed by the Council.
- A community representative cannot be employed at the school with the exception of school (lay) assistants.
- If a member of community works for the Board but not at the school, they can be a community representative as long as he/she informs the school community prior to the election.

5.3: Student Representative

There will be at least one student and no more than two, appointed by the Student Council.

5.4: Other Members

- Principal (*ex-officio*). In the absence of principal, a vice principal shall attend the meeting.
- One teacher representative (elected or appointed in accordance with YRDSB Policy #262)

- One support staff representative (elected or appointed in accordance with YRDSB Policy #262)

Article 6: Elections

6.1: Acclamations

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

6.2: Election Procedures for Parent Members

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 or she is employed by the Board.
2. All nomination and member profile forms should be submitted to the Election Committee one week prior to the elections which take place at the beginning of the academic school year during the September timeframe.
3. During election, 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.
4. The election committee, composed of the previous year's council members, shall:
 - provide nomination and member profile 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;
 - request a written or verbal profile from all candidates and make these available to the electorate;
 - conduct the elections by secret ballot at the first meeting;
 - count the ballots;
 - 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 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. Elected and appointed members may seek additional terms of office.

6.4: Vacancies in Membership

- A vacancy in the membership of the School Council does not prevent the Council from exercising its authority.
- If at any time during the school year, due to resignation or removal, the parent/guardian majority falls below 50% + 1, the Council shall recruit additional members to restore the majority.
- If parent member positions remain vacant on the Council, after the election, the Council may appoint parent members.

- Positions that become vacant due to resignation or removal shall be filled as soon as possible in the following order:
 - i) By offering the person with the next largest number of votes who was not elected, the opportunity to accept the position.
 - ii) 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.
 - iii) If there are more applications than positions, an election will be called.
 - iv) When no more candidates are available, the Council may appoint parent members.
- Vacancies will only be filled until June of the current year, at which time the vacant positions will be filled through September elections.

6.5: Resignations

- Anyone who is a council member, except the principal, may resign their position by writing a letter of resignation to the Chair/Co-chairs.
- If someone resigns, the position vacated will be filled according to Article 6.4: Vacancies.

6.6: Removal

The Council may choose to remove from council any member who misses three (3) consecutive meetings and shall undertake to replace that person according to Article 6.4: Vacancies.

Article 7: Executive Officers

7.1: Role of the Executive

1. Act as deciding body for any emergencies that may arise between council meetings
2. Deal with administrative and financial matters
3. If needed, review and draft funding guidelines to the board for final approval
4. Screen applicants for council funding and make recommendations to the board for final approval
5. Draft a tentative budget as a guideline at the beginning of the school year which is to be approved by the December council meeting
6. Appoint election committee at the end of the academic school year

7.2: Co-Chairs

At the first meeting of the school year, the Council will elect two Co-chairs from among the members elected/appointed to the Council. The Council may choose to have one Chair and one Vice Chair instead of two Co-chairs. The Co-chairs (or Chair and Vice Chair) must be parent members and cannot be an employee of the Board.

7.3: Other Officers

At the first meeting of the school year, the Council will elect the following two officers from among the members elected/appointed to the Council: Secretary and Treasurer with provisions for their absence.

7.4: Secretary/Co-secretary

- To take council meeting minutes which are to be forwarded to the chair/co-chair for review prior to distributing to all council members.
- Post any communication to parents through the website and school council bulletin board, as applicable.
- Inform all members of upcoming council meetings or special events

7.5: Treasurer

- To maintain and present council financial reports to school council

7.6: Vacancies in Office

Officer vacancies will be filled as soon as possible according to Article 7.2 and 7.3.

Article 8: Sub-Committees

8.1: Establishment

At the first meeting of the school year or at any regular meeting throughout the year, subcommittees may be formed to:

- conduct more detailed or in-depth work than is possible during council meetings,
- make recommendations to the Council,
- keep the Council informed of issues and developments in its particular area.

8.2: Sub-Committee Membership

- Each sub-committee must contain at least one parent member of the Council.
- Persons, who are not members of council, may be members of sub-committees.

8.3: Chairs of Sub-Committees

Each sub-committee will appoint its own chair.

1. Fundraising Chair

- To coordinate and chair fundraising committee
- To explore different ways to raise funds for the development of the school
- To submit proposals from the Fundraising committee to the School Council
- To oversee and carry out fundraising events that are approved by the school council
- To ensure all donations and expenses are clearly documented with a copy sent to the council treasurer
- To deliver the collected or raised funds to the school Budget Secretary

2. Engagement Chair

- To coordinate and chair engagement committee
- To explore and organize workshops/seminars to educate on parenting issues

- To lead the Engagement committee in building a stronger relationship with parents to support school events and finances
 - To oversee and implement parents’ engagement events that are approved by the school council
 - To apply for PRO Grant application in May and report back after the event takes place or before June 30 of the current academic year.
3. Other Reps:
- The council can appoint representatives to liaise with the approved school-wide projects to further assist with such initiatives as Eco Team, Relay for Life, etc.

Article 9: Meetings

9.1: Timetable of Meetings

- At the last meeting of the school year, a tentative timetable will be created that proposes the meeting dates and times for the following year.
- At the first meeting of the new school year, the new Council shall review and approve the proposed meeting dates for that school year. A copy of these dates and times will be included in communication(s) to the families of the school.
- A copy of the list of dates and times of meetings will be sent to the local trustee.
- It is recognized that the timetable may change at any time.

9.2: Quorum

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.

9.3: Decision-making

The preferred method to resolve issues on council is by consensus. Consensus is a collective opinion or general agreement by ALL the Council members.

In the case where a decision cannot be reached through consensus, the chair may decide on one of the following:

- To have a vote by way of a show of hands or a silent vote by those present in which a 50% +1 majority shall carry the vote
- To defer the issue to the next meeting
- To defer the issue to a special meeting
- To defer the issue to a sub-committee

9.4: 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 and at the time of the meeting, so the minutes may reflect this declaration.

- Council members cannot receive any remuneration for their work as a member of council.

9.5: 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 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: Financial Records

10.1: Signing Authorities

The principal, the treasurer and the chair can be signing authorities. Two of three signatures will be required on the account.

10.2: Disbursement and Allocation of Money

All money must be collected by the end of the year. Funds should be dispersed or allocated to a specific purpose by the end of the year.

10.3: Annual Report

It is Council's responsibility to publish a financial statement when it files its year-end report with the YRDSB.

Article 11: Agendas and Minutes

11.1: Agendas

- Agenda items should be submitted to the chair one week prior to the Council's next meeting.
- The chair will set the agenda with the principal, prior to the meeting.

11.2: Minutes

- Minutes shall be posted in the school prior to the next meeting of the Council.
- The minutes shall include motions, decisions and actions to be taken.
- Members of the Council must inform the chair or the secretary if they are going to be absent from a Council meeting.

Article 12: Constitutional Amendments

- The School Council will review the constitution at least once every two years or as the need arises.
- A sub-committee can perform the review and bring proposed amendments to the School Council for voting.
- Amendments to the constitution must be presented to the Council, at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- Constitutional amendments need a 2/3 majority to be passed.

References:

[1] York Region District School Board Policy #262.0 (School Councils)

<http://www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/pdfs/p&p/a/policy/262.pdf>

[2] Ontario Regulation 612/00 (School Councils)

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_000612_e.htm#Top

or

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/council02.pdf>

[3] Ontario Regulation 298, Amended to O. Reg. 613/00 (Operation of Schools – General)

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/council02.pdf>

APPENDIX A

Code of Ethics

- *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.

Source: Adapted from the bylaws of the Port Arthur Collegiate Institute School Council, Lakehead Board of Education, Thunder Bay, Ontario.