

# **Black Walnut P.S. School Council Constitution**

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# **Black Walnut P.S. School Council Constitution**

## **Article 1: Name and Address**

The organisation will be known as (*name of school*) school council. The members of the school council shall be responsible for maintaining the constitution.

Black Walnut P.S.  
30 John Allan Cameron Street  
Markham, Ontario. L6B 0P4  
905-471-1119  
905-471-6413 (fax)

## **Article 2: Mission Statement**

Our school council believes that collaborative partnerships among the school, the family, and the community are essential to improving student learning and increasing a shared sense of accountability for public education.

## **Article 3: Purpose and Objectives**

*Individual councils should choose objectives and purposes that reflect their beliefs.  
Here are some examples:*

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

## **Article 4: Procedures and Operating Guidelines**

**The operational procedures of this council are outlined in YRDSB Procedure #262, see Appendix 1. 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.**

## **Article 5: Membership**

There shall be no more than one member on the school council from any one household.

### **5.1: Number of Parent Members**

The number of parents on the school council will be 17.

5.2: Number of Community Representatives

The number of community representatives will be 1.

5.3: Student Representative

The Principal will appoint the student representative.

5.4: Other Members

**Other members such as teacher representative, support staff representative and principal shall be elected/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. **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.**
3. The school council shall strike an election committee in May, to help plan the election process, the gathering of nominations, and the running of the election. No one standing for election, or the spouse of anyone standing for election, shall be a member of the election committee.
4. The election committee 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;
  - request a profile from all candidates and make these available to the electorate;
  - conduct the elections by secret ballot;
  - count the ballots;
  - help the principal notify all candidates of the results;
  - keep all the results 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.
  - shall notify all individuals standing for election of the results before the results are released to the school community.

6.3: Terms of Office

Elected officers may seek additional terms of office to a maximum of 3 years in the same position.

6.4: Vacancies in Membership

- **A vacancy in the membership of a school council does not prevent the council from exercising its' authority.**
- If parent member positions remain vacant on 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 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.
- If there are more applications than positions, an election will be called.
- When no more candidates are available, 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.
- 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 3 consecutive meetings and shall undertake to replace that person according to Article 6.4: Vacancies.

### **Article 7: Executive**

#### 7.1: Chair/Co-Chair

At the first meeting after elections, the Council will elect a Chair or two Co-Chairs.

**An employee of the Board cannot be chair.**

#### 7.2: Other Officers

At the first meeting of the school year, the council will elect or appoint the following officers: Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

#### 7.3: Vacancies in Office

Officer vacancies will be filled as soon as possible according to Article 7.1 and 7.2.

### **Article 8: Sub-Committees**

#### 8.1: Establishment

At the first meeting of the school year, sub-committees 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.

The following sub-committees will be formed after the election of officers:  
(Additional sub-committees can be formed as determined by the Council.)

Teaching and Learning  
Parent Engagement  
Fundraising  
Positive Climates

## 8.2: Sub-Committee Membership

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

## 8.3: Chairs of Sub-Committees

- Each sub-committee shall elect its own Chair or two Co-chairs

# **Article 9: Meetings**

## 9.1: Timetable of Meetings

- At the first meeting of the new school year, a timetable will be created which states the meeting dates agreed to for that school year.
- A copy of these dates and times will be included in communication(s) to the families of the school.
- It is recognized that the timetable may change at any time.
- A copy of the list of dates and times of meetings will be sent to the local trustee.

## 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 51% 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.**

## **Article 10: Financial Records**

### 10.1: Signing Authorities

The school signing authorities will be responsible for all financial receipts and expenditures of the Council. No additional signing authorities or accounts will be established for Council business

### 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.

## **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 if they are going to be absent from a council meeting.

## **Article 12: Constitutional Amendments**

- The school council will review the constitution 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.

***Note: All items in bold are mandated and cannot be changed. All items in italics are suggestions for the writing of a constitution and should not appear in the constitution itself. Items that appear with an \* are bylaws which MUST be included (although you may choose to change the wording) as per Ministry of Education Regulation #612/613.***