

BLUE WILLOW PUBLIC SCHOOL
SCHOOL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION – Updated 2024

Article 1: Name and Address

The organization will be known as Blue Willow Public School Council (“School Council” or “Council”). The members of the School Council shall be responsible for maintaining the constitution.

Blue Willow Public School
250 Blue Willow Drive
Woodbridge, Ontario
L4L 9E1
Tel: (905) 851-0043

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 well-being, as well as increasing a shared sense of accountability for public education. Our aim is to achieve the highest possible standards of education in an open, healthy, safe, and positive environment that promotes learning in our diverse community.

Article 3: Purpose and Objectives

1. Provide a means for regular communication and dialogue between all partners in education.
2. Participate in the school improvement planning process.
3. Encourage, welcome and support effective parental and community involvement in the education of our students and actively seek the views of our school community.
4. Provide a communication link between the school and the school community.
5. Facilitate the building of a viable school community, which works together in the best interests of our students, their education, and their overall school experience.

Article 4: Procedures and Operating Guidelines

School Councils are advisory bodies. A School council may make recommendations to the school principal and, where appropriate, to the Board on any matter that relates to students.

The operational procedures of this council are outlined in the York Region District School Board (“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, YRDSB 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 elected/appointed parents on the School Council shall not exceed thirteen (13) members at any given time, unless the current Council decides from year-to-year to increase the number to a maximum of fifteen (15) members.

Parent members must constitute a majority of the members of School Council. From the parent members, four (4) Executives will be elected, as outlined in Article 7 below.

5.2: Number of Community Representatives

The number of elected/appointed community representatives shall be a maximum of two (2), if available.

5.3: Student Representative

The Principal will invite student representation if the School Council determines it wants a student representative.

5.4: Other Members

Other members such as teacher representative and support staff representative 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

- 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.

6.3: Terms of Office

Council members are elected for a term of one year that lasts from the first meeting of the school year to the first meeting of the following school year. Elected and appointed members may seek additional terms of office.

6.4: Vacancies in Membership

- A vacancy in the membership of 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 additional parent members.
- Positions that become vacant due to resignation or removal shall be filled as soon as possible by:

- (a) Offering the person with the next largest number of votes who was not elected, the opportunity to accept the position;
 - (b) 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;
 - (c) If there are more applications than positions, an election will be called.
 - (d) 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: Resignation from Council

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 Council will fill the position according to Article 6.4 Vacancies in Membership.

6.6: Removal from Council

The Council may choose to remove from council any member who misses more than two consecutive meetings. The council member must be notified of the decision and Council shall undertake to replace that person according to Article 6.4 Vacancies in Membership.

Article 7: The Executive

7.1: The Chair

At the first meeting after the elections, the School Council will elect one Chair or two co-Chairs from the elected/acclaimed parent members.

An employee of the Board cannot be Chair.

7.2: Other Officers

At the first meeting of the school year, the School Council will elect a Secretary, Treasurer and a Vice-Chair if a single chair has been elected from the elected/acclaimed parent members.

7.3: Vacancies in Office

Officer vacancies will be filled as soon as possible according to Article 6.4.

Article 8: Sub-Committees

8.1: Establishment

At the first meeting of the school year, sub-committees (e.g. Fundraising sub-committee) may be formed to:

- conduct more detail 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.

Additional sub-committees may be formed by the Council as the need arises, from year-to-year.

8.2: Sub-Committee Membership

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: Meetings

9.1: Timetable of Meetings

There shall be a minimum of four (4) School Council meetings throughout the school year.

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.

Members of the Council must inform the Chair if they are going to be absent from a council meeting.

A copy of the dates and times of meetings 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 dates and times of meetings will be sent to the local trustee.

9.2: Quorum

A meeting will have a quorum if:

- (a) the majority of Council members are present; and
- (b) the majority of those present are parents.

A meeting of the Council can be held if there is no quorum, however, all voting will be deferred.

9.3: Decision Making

The preferred method to resolve issues by the Council is by consensus. Consensus is a collective opinion or general agreement by all of 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 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; or
- To defer the issue to a sub-committee.

In votes taken by the School Council, each member of Council is entitled to one vote, with the exception of the Principal.

As referenced in Article 12.2 below, any decisions voted on by the School Council must be clearly reflected in the Minutes.

Article 10: Conflict

10.1: Conflict of Interest

If individual Council members perceive themselves to be in a 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. Members who declare a conflict of interest shall not deliberate or vote on that particular issue.

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

10.2: 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 YRDSB.

Article 11: Financial Records

11.1: Disbursement and Allocation of Money

All money must be collected by the end of the school year. Funds should be dispersed or allocated to a specific purpose approved by the Principal with Council's input by the end of the school year.

Article 12: Agendas and Minutes

12.1: Agendas

Agenda items shall be submitted to the Chair one week prior to the next Council meeting. The Chair will set the agenda with the school Principal prior to the meeting.

12.2: Minutes

The Minutes shall include motions, decisions and actions to be taken. The Minutes shall be posted on the Blue Willow Public School website within two weeks following the next School Council meeting.

Article 13: Constitutional Amendments

The School Council will review the school constitution every two years, or as the need arises.

The constitution 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.

Article 14: Protection of School Council Members

The YRDSB holds liability insurance undertaken on behalf of all School Councils and, as such, members of the Blue Willow Public School Council are not personally liable for decisions and activities undertaken in relation to the School Council, with the exception of any willful, destructive or dishonest act or neglect, performed by a particular School Council member for which that person will be held accountable.

Approved by the School Council on February, 2016
