

# Dr. G. W. Williams Council Constitution



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# Dr. G. W. Williams Secondary School

## Council Constitution

### Article 1: Name and Address

The organization shall be known as *Dr. G. W. Williams (GWW) School Council*. The members of the school council shall be responsible for maintaining the constitution. The school's contact information:

39 Dunning Ave, Aurora, ON L4G 1A2

[Tel: 905-202-5960](tel:905-202-5960)

[Fax: 905-202-5964](tel:905-202-5964)

[Website: <http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/drgwwilliams.ss/Pages/default.aspx>](http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/drgwwilliams.ss/Pages/default.aspx)

### Article 2: Mission Statement

The mission of the Dr. G. W. Williams School Council is to cultivate a collaborative and supportive partnership among parents/guardians, educators, and the broader community to elevate the educational experience and overall well-being of our students. Committed to fostering a positive, diverse, and inclusive school culture, our council strives to create an engaging environment that empowers engagement between staff, students and parents/guardians.

### Article 3: Purpose and Objectives

- 1. Diversity and Inclusion:** Embracing and celebrating the rich diversity within our school community by encouraging effective parent/guardian involvement in the education of our children, fostering an inclusive approach that recognizes and embraces the diverse backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives within our school community.
- 2. Equitable Opportunities:** Advocating for and ensuring that all families have equal and equitable access to communication, resources, and support systems, irrespective of their diverse backgrounds or abilities. Committing to make necessary accommodations to get the parent/guardian community as involved as possible.
- 3. Communication:** Provide a means for regular communication and dialogue between all partners in education, ensuring that diverse voices are heard and valued in discussions that shape the educational experience for our students. Achieving this by setting regular meetings and having open communication between all related parties (i.e. council, parents/guardians, school administration, student representatives etc.)
- 4. Cultural Competence:** Promoting cultural competence among parents/guardians, educators, and students to foster mutual understanding and respect for different perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences by providing input and assistance as needed.

5. **Community Engagement:** Actively seeking and incorporating diverse voices and perspectives in our decision-making processes to reflect the broader community we serve. Foster parent/guardian and community involvement in education, promoting an inclusive environment where all individuals feel welcomed and empowered to contribute to our students' educational journey
6. **Education and Learning:** Facilitate a platform where parents/guardians learn and understand the initiatives taken at GWW and provide valuable input into the learning process. Involve the GWW staff in the process of sharing information with parents/guardians so that a collaborative approach to learning is fostered.
7. **Effective Engagement:** Provide meaningful consultation and extensive involvement of all members of the school community, emphasizing diversity and inclusion as essential components in decision-making processes with matters such as school improvement planning; communication and feedback with the board (YRDSB) and the Minister of Education.

## **Article 5: Code of Ethics**

School Council members:

- Shall be guided by the Mission Statement of the School Council and the York Region Education guidelines for School Councils.
- Shall foster an inclusive environment where diverse perspectives are encouraged, welcomed and valued.
- Shall recognize and honor the individuality of each member, building upon their unique strengths.
- Shall uphold the principles of confidentiality in educational settings, understanding its importance and limitations.
- Shall focus School Council discussions on matters that concern the entire school community.
- Shall utilize appropriate communication channels to address questions or concerns.
- Shall strive to promote and uphold high standards of ethical conduct within the school community.
- Shall educate the school community about the roles and responsibilities of the School Council.

## **Article 6: Procedures and Operating Guidelines**

The operational procedures of this council are outlined in [YRDSB Board Policy #262](#). All recommendations and activities of the council shall comply with all Ministry of Education legislation and regulations, York Region District School Board Policies and Procedures and Staff Collective Agreements. It is expected that council seeks the guidance of school administration in adhering to these agreements.

The Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School Council operates as a non-profit organization that shall function without financial gain for its members. Any profit to the organization shall be used in promoting its purposes and objectives (as outlined in Article 3). Any fund-raising activities shall be in strict accordance with Board policy under the guidance of the school principal (and/or other delegated administrative member).

## **Article 7: Membership**

There shall be no more than one member on the school council from any one household. Members hold office from the date they are elected or appointed, or the date of the first school council meeting after the election is

held; and hold office until the first meeting of the school council after elections are held in the next school year. Positions in the council include:

**1. School Principal**

**2. Parent/guardians/family Members**

The number of parent/guardians on the school council may not exceed 12 and elected positions include:

- Chair
- Co-chair (optional)
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Grade 9 parent/guardian Representative

**3. Community Representatives**

- May include 1 community member

**4. Student Representative**

- May include 1 student representative appointed by the students' council

**5. Staff Representative**

Other members such as teacher representative and support staff representative shall be elected/appointed in accordance with YRDSB Policy #262.

- May include 1 teacher employed at the school (excluding principal/vice-principal)
- May include 1 staff employed by the school (excluding teaching staff)

## **Article 8: Elections**

The inaugural council meeting is scheduled to convene within the initial 30 days of the academic calendar, during which elections for council positions shall be conducted.

If the number of parent/guardian nominations exceeds the available positions on the School Council, an election shall be held at the first meeting. Eligible voting parent/guardians (as defined in Section 3) attending the meeting can vote for as many candidates as there are open positions, and the election shall be conducted through a secret ballot.

In the event that the number of candidates is equal to or less than the available parent/guardian member positions, the election shall be uncontested and done by acclamation.

The School Council shall maintain a record of candidate lists and vote results for reference in case a parent/guardian member vacancy occurs.

**1. Notice of Election**

- Within the initial 14 days of the new school year, the principal, representing the School Council, shall provide written notice to every parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school.
- The notice shall specify the date, time, and location of the election, indicating that the election for School Council members shall take place during the first School Council meeting.

**2. Roles and Eligibility for Election**

- **School Principal**

- If unable to attend a meeting, they/ he/she may ask the vice-principal to attend.
  - **Parent/Guardians/Family Members:**
    - Must have a child enrolled at the school, and must be nominated or nominate themselves. Nominations can be submitted via the school administration or YRDSB provided electronic nomination form
    - Employees of GWW staff are not eligible for a parent/guardian member role regardless of their child attending GWW
    - Other YRDSB employees with a child attending GWW are eligible for parent/guardian member roles if a declaration is made in advance
  - **Community Representative:**
    - Is appointed by school council members
    - Cannot be employed at the school as a member of a bargaining unit, an administrator or a manager
    - Can be employed as a member of a bargaining unit, an administrator or a manager elsewhere in the Board, but must inform other members of the council of this before the appointment.
  - **Student Representative:**
    - Named by the student council
  - **Staff Representative**
    - Employed at the school;
    - Elected by teachers employed at the school.
- 3. Eligibility to Vote**
- All parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school and who are present at the first meeting of the school year are eligible to vote for the positions:
    - Parent/guardian Member elected positions
    - Community Representatives.
  - Staff Representatives and Student Representatives are not open for parent/guardian voting.
- 4. Publication of Results**
- All candidates standing for election shall be notified of the results before the results are released to the school community.
  - The School Council shall ensure that the names of members are publicized to the school community within thirty days of the election.
- 5. Terms of Office**
- A person elected or appointed as a member of the Council holds office from the date of the first meeting of the Council immediately following the election or appointment until the elections are held at the first meeting of Council in the next school year.
  - Elected and appointed members may be re-elected or re-appointed.

## **Article 9: Vacancies**

A vacancy in the School Council's membership doesn't hinder its authority. If parent/guardian member positions become vacant, they are filled by appointing non-elected candidates from the last election. If no candidates are interested, interested parent/guardians can apply, and the Council will appoint parent/guardians to fill the

vacancies. If a voting member leaves during their term, a non-member parent/guardian who has attended at least two meetings can fill the spot.

## **Article 10: Removal and replacement of members**

The School Council emphasizes the importance of commitment and ensuring a continuum of representation. If a voting member leaves during their term, a non-member parent/guardian who has attended at least two meetings can fill the spot, thereby maintaining a seamless representation.

Furthermore, the Council has the authority to remove any member who misses three consecutive meetings, highlighting the requirement for commitment. In such cases, the Council will replace that person according to the Vacancy procedure, ensuring the Council operates with a fully engaged and participatory membership.

## **Article 11: Meetings**

### **1. Timetable of Meetings**

- At the first meeting after elections, a timetable shall be created which states the meeting dates agreed to for that school year.
- A copy of these dates and times shall 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 shall be sent to the local trustee upon request from the trustee.

### **2. Quorum**

A meeting shall have quorum if:

- The majority of council members are present
- AND
- The majority of those present are parent/guardians.

A meeting of council can be held if there is no quorum but all voting shall be deferred.

### **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

### **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.

## **Article 12: Financial Records**

### **1. Signing Authorities**

- Signing authority on the school council bank accounts must include the principal and a clear approval or consent from a council member (treasurer or chair/co-chair). This can be provided via an email or during a regular meeting.

### **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 determined by the school admin (Principal Etc.) as well as council.

## **Article 13: Agendas and Minutes**

### **1. Agendas**

- Agenda items should be submitted to the chair one week prior to the council's next meeting.
- Any new business items should be communicated to the chair no later than 24 hours before the council's next meeting.
- The chair shall set the agenda with the principal, prior to the meeting.

### **2. Minutes**

- Minutes shall be posted in the school council webpage 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 14: Constitutional Amendments**

- The school council shall 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.
- Constitution shall be updated if required by the board regardless of the years passed since the last update
- Amendments and updates to the constitution must be presented to the council, at a regularly scheduled meeting.