

Fairwood Public School
School Council
Constitution

Article 1: Name and Address

The organization will be known as "Fairwood Public School" school council. the members of the school council shall be responsible for maintaining the constitution.

Fairwood Public School
201 Fairwood Drive
Keswick, Ontario
L4P 3Y5
Tel: 905 476 5447

Article 2: Mission Statement

Fairwood's 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 in a safe and nurturing environment.

Article 3: Purpose and Objectives

Our Council will develop a Communication Plan that will ensure that Students, Teachers, Parents, and the Georgina Community are connected to Fairwood.

Our Council will develop and implement strategies to encourage Parental and the Business Community's involvement to support the Students and Teachers of Fairwood.

Our Council will fundraise based on goals that have been clearly established with the input of Students, Teachers, Parents and the local community in mind.

Our Council will plan, co- ordinate and implement educational and social events that will draw the Students, Teachers, Parents and the Business and Local Community to Fairwood.

Our Council will provide input into the decisions made by the Fairwood Administration, the Board and the Ministry of Education.

Our Council will work directly with the Teachers and Principal to review and provide input, support and assistance regarding Provincial Testing and results.

Our Council will work directly with the teachers to provide additional support and resources as required to enhance the students' education.

Article 4: Procedures and Guidelines

The operational procedures of the council are outlined in the 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

5.1: Number of Parent Members

The number of parents on the school council will be less than or equal to 20 voting members.

5.2: Number of Community Representatives

The number of Community Representatives will be less than or equal to 5.

5.3: Student Representative

The Principal will appoint the Student Representative (at some meetings) or as needed..

5.4: Other Members

Other members such as Teacher Representatives, Support Staff Representative, and Principal/Vice Principal shall be elected/ appointed in accordance to 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 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.

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.

The election committee shall:

- provide nomination forms in the school start-up package sent home from the school
- 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 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
- 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 and appointed members may seek additional terms of office.

6.4: Vacancies in Membership

- A vacancy in 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:(election or appointment in accordance with council bylaws)
 - 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 applications 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/vice principal, may resign from his or her 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 in Membership*.

6.6: Removal

The council may choose to remove from council any member who fails to abide by the YRDSB *Code of Ethics* as outlined by the *Fairwood P.S. School Advisory Council Code of Ethics*, and shall undertake to replace that person according to *Article 6.4 Vacancies in Membership*. *If a member is absent for 4 or more consecutive meetings they lose the right to vote on nominations.*

Article 7: Executive

7.1: Chair/Co-Chair

At the first meeting after the elections, the council will elect a Chair or two Co-Chairs. **An employee of the York Region District School Board cannot be Chair.**

Responsibilities of the Chair/Co-Chair:

- Call school council meetings, prepare the agenda and chair the meetings.
- Communicate with the school principal, senior Board staff and trustees, as required.
- Ensure that minutes are recorded, parents are consulted, fundraising meets Board policies, and the bylaws are reviewed annually.

7.2: Other Officers

At the first meeting after the school year, the council will elect or appoint the following officers:

- Secretary, and
- Treasurer

7.3: Vacancies in Office

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

Constitution, Election, Fundraising, and Volunteer sub-committees will be formed.

Council will form additional sub-committees as the need arises.

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 will appoint its own chair.

Article 9: Meetings

9.1. Timetable

- 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 recognised 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.

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 simple majority of 51% 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 all internal conflicts of interest within its mandate in a timely manner. YRDSB Handbook suggests a four-step approach to resolving internal conflicts:

- 1) Acknowledge the conflict.
- 2) Plan how to deal with the conflict.
- 3) Provide time for discussion.
- 4) Seek the best solution.

Article 10: Financial

10.1: Signing Authorities

The principal/vice principal and EOAA can be signing authorities. Two signatures will be required on the account.

10.2: Disbursement and Allocation of Funds

All money must be collected by the end of the year. 90% of all funds raised should be dispersed or allocated to a specific purpose by the end of the year.

10.3: Annual Audit

Each year there will be an audit of the school council books performed by an accountant.

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's website prior to the next meeting of council and once approved/ adopted by the school council.
- The minutes shall include motions, decisions and actions taken.
- Members of the 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/ update the constitution every other year 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 $\frac{2}{3}$ majority to be passed.

This document was last updated: November 07,2017

Appendices

Appendix I

The following link will connect to YRDSB Policy and Procedure #262.0

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

Appendix II

The following link will connect to Ministry of Education document *The Election process for Use by School Council, June 2001*

<http://www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca/pdf/w/schools/parentalinvolvement.pdf>

Appendix III

Fairwood's Ethics Policy for School Advisory Council Members

Attaining an elected position within one's community is a privilege that carries significant responsibilities and obligations. Members of Council are held to a high standard as leaders of the community and they are expected to become well informed on all aspects of the school community. They are also expected to carry out their duties in a fair, impartial, transparent and professional manner.

The key constituents represent a broad base of interests and concerns that require fair and open attention. These constituents include but are not limited to:

- **Students**
- **Parents**
- **School Staff-teaching and non teaching**
- **Board staff**
- **Community Members**

To assist School Advisory Council members in interacting effectively with all constituents, the following obligations are expected of each of them;

- a. **That they subscribe to the principles within the Fairwood School Advisory Council's Constitution with respect to Mission Statement and Purpose and Objectives.**
- b. **That they learn and follow the Board's and the School's own code of conduct.**
- c. **that they read and understand the roles and responsibilities of a School Advisory Council Member in the School Advisory Council Handbook provided by the Government of Ontario.**

A "Code of Ethics" for Members of Council has been prepared for their personal review and reference so as to;

- i. **to provide present and future Councils with additional assistance and guidelines as they perform their elected duties and responsibilities, and**
- ii. **to assist Members of Council in providing leadership by example to the the whole school community.**

It is hoped that each Member of Council will view this as a valuable added resource and guideline to assist them in fulfilling their mandate in an effective, open and efficient manner.

**Fairwood P.S.
CODE OF ETHICS
For
Members of School Advisory Council**

The Members of Council fundamentally understand that;

- a. **there are open and proper channels for decision making and approval of policy,**
- b. **conflicts between personal interests and public responsibilities are unacceptable and must be avoided, and**
- c. **as leaders of the school community, they are held to a higher standard of behaviour and conduct.**

The following areas and guidelines are paramount to the process of an effective School Advisory Council;

1. **Roles and Obligations**
2. **Use of Information**
3. **Communications**
4. **Use of Property**
5. **Transparency**
6. **Public Input**
7. **Norms of Collaboration and traits : Promoting a spirit of inquiry, pausing, paraphrasing, probing for specificity, putting ideas on the table, paying attention to self and others, presuming positive intentions, effective communication, don't make assumptions, don't take things personally and try our best**

Accordingly this document will provide a guideline for School Advisory Council Members in exercising their policy-making role having regard to the statements and ideals as enunciated hereunder.

1. Roles and Obligations

Council Members recognize their mandate incorporates tasks to include;

- Fairly representing the diversity of community views *in* developing an overall strategy for our school
- Setting objectives and determining strategies to achieve Council's objectives as stated in the Council's constitution
- Achieving sound financial management planning and accountability
- Being aware of and conversant with the statutory obligations imposed on Council as a whole, as well as each individual Member of Council by the Government of Ontario's "Education Act" (ONTARIO REGULATION 612/00).

2. Use of Information

In their decision making process, Members of Council are sometimes privy to information that may be confidential. It is expected that they will;

- Use "insider" information appropriately, so as not to be used to their personal advantage
- Use confidential information appropriately so as not to cause detriment or benefit to others

3. Communications

Members of Council will accurately and adequately communicate the attitudes and decisions of Fairwood's Council, even if they disagree with a majority decision of Council so that;

- There is respect for the decision making processes of Council
- Official information related to decisions and resolutions made by Council will normally be communicated in the first instance to the community in an official capacity by the Chair/Co-Chair/Vice Chair or designate.
- Information concerning adopted policies, procedures and decisions of the Council is conveyed openly and accurately.

4. Use of Property

Members of Council will;

- Only use school property, equipment, supplies or services of consequence, for activities connected with the discharge of official duties or associated community activities having the sanction of Council or its Committees.

5. Transparency & Openness in Decision Making

Members of Council will endeavor to; conduct and convey Council business in an open and public manner so that members of the school community can obtain the process, logic and rationale which was used to reach conclusions or decisions.

6. Public Input

Council will periodically use formal and informal opportunities to seek public input as a component of the decision making process which has broad impacts on the community.

The purpose of the exercise will be to provide constituents with a mechanism to provide opinions and advice so that the widest range of views and information is available before final decisions are made.

YRDSB Code of Ethics

- A member shall consider the best interests of all students.
- A member shall be guided by the school and the Board's mission statements.
- A member shall act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of a school council, as identified in the Education Act, its regulations, and the applicable bylaws and procedures.
- 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 conduct themselves in accordance with the Board's Equity and Inclusivity Education Policy.
- 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 act in accordance with relevant laws, including Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), and relevant Board policies and procedures.
- A member shall advise the principal immediately if the member believes that there may have been a privacy breach.
- A member shall abide by applicable laws and policies with respect to access, use or disclosure of Board data and 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.

