

**Keswick High School  
100 Biscayne Blvd.  
Keswick, Ontario  
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## **Keswick High School--School Council Constitution**

The Keswick High School--School Council (KHS—SC) provides a forum through which parents and other members of the school community can contribute to improving student achievement and school performance.

KHS—SC operates in accordance with Ontario Regulation 612/00 and with York Region District School Board Policy #262.0.

KHS—SC operates summarized below and as detailed in the attached by-laws:

1. Membership
2. Election Procedures and Filling Vacancies
3. Conflict of Interest
4. Conflict Resolution Procedures

## **Objectives**

The KHS—SC plays an important role in building school, family and community partnerships by providing input into relevant board and school level decisions and by encouraging the involvement of all members of the school community in support of student learning.

The purpose of the KHS—SC is:

1. through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents.
2. to make recommendations in accordance with regulations to the principal of the school and the board that established the council.

## **Operating Norms**

The KHS—SC meets once per month. Meeting dates, times and locations will be set by the administration and are published in the student agenda and communicated to the school community via the electronic newsletter and posted in the School Council section of the School's website.

Meetings locations will be accessible to the public. All meetings of the KHS—SC are open to the public.

All members of KHS—SC will observe the council's established by-laws.

References to "parents" by KHS—SC include parents, guardians or other relationships recognized as having parental authority of students of Keswick High School.

An agenda will be set by the chair prior to each meeting, in consultation with the principal. Items to include on the agenda are to be submitted to the chair one week prior to the next meeting.

Minutes will be taken at each meeting and will subsequently be posted on the KHS—SC page, once approved by council, on the School website for access by the school community

Should the need arise, sub-committees may be established on a permanent or ad-hoc basis. A sub-committee of the KHS-SC will include a minimum of one parent member of the KHS—SC. A sub-committee of the KHS—SC must establish a statement of purpose including an estimated timeline, and must report on progress to KHS—SC regularly. A sub-committee may be required to establish by-laws prior to beginning, as determined by the chair. Any member of KHS—SC may participate in sub-committees established by council.

Fundraising is not an objective of the KHS—SC. From time to time, KHS—SC may lead or participate in grant/proposal submissions. At Keswick High School, fundraising activities are undertaken by the Student Council. The KHS—SC will consider requests for fundraising support in the form of a campaign or event on an individual basis.

Members shall maintain a school-wide perspective on issues discussed at council meetings. Items of an individual or personal nature will be discussed outside of council meetings as appropriate.

If a member of the executive is unable to attend a meeting, that member is obliged to make arrangements with a designate to ensure duties are performed.

Each year, the KHS—SC files a report on its activities with the York Region District School Board in accordance with requirements, as they exist from time to time.

A copy of the KHS—SC Constitution and by-laws will be made available to each member of council and posted on the council area of the school website.

## **Keswick High School—School Council By-law 1: Membership**

Membership of the Keswick High School—School Council is governed by Ontario Regulation 612/00. Membership includes:

Non-voting members:

- Principal

Voting members:

- Teacher employed at the school who is not the principal or vice principal
- Non-teaching representative
- Pupil appointed by student council
- One community representative appointed by the other members of council
- Parent members

### **Parent Membership**

Parent members must comprise the majority of the council. Parent membership includes members that are elected to executive positions and general members. Parent membership is a minimum of 7 with no maximum. Parent members will present themselves for membership in person at a meeting of the KHS—SC.

Parent members are voting members who:

- Commit to attending council meetings regularly;
- Participate regularly in council meetings and on any committees established by the school council;
- Contribute to the discussions of the school council;
- Solicit the views of other parents and members of the community to share with the school council
- Observe the council's established by-laws.

The following executive positions shall be filled by election each year in accordance with the KHS—SC Election by-law from the parent membership.

- Chair
- Vice-Chair
- Secretary
- Correspondence Secretary

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The roles and responsibilities of council members include but are not limited to the following:

Chair

- Arranges for meetings;
- Prepares agendas;
- Chairs council meetings;
- Facilitates the resolution of conflict;
- May participate as ex-officio member of all committees established by the school council;

- Ensures that any sub-committee of the KHS—SC establishes appropriate operating protocol;
- Communicates with the school principal on behalf of the council;
- Reports annually with the York Region District School Board.

#### Vice Chair

- Acts on behalf of the Chair as required.

#### Secretary

- Ensures that minutes from each council meeting are recorded and maintained, and shares with Chair for dissemination to the school community.

#### Correspondence Secretary

- Collects, sorts and reports on mail received for the school council.

#### Community Representative

- Represents the community's perspective;
- Helps build partnerships and links between the school and the community.

#### Principal

- Distributes promptly to council chair material identified by the ministry for distribution to school council members;
- Acts as a resource to the council on laws, regulations, and board policies;
- Attends all school council meetings, or designates a vice-principal to attend if circumstances arise that prohibit the principal from attending;
- Considers each recommendation made by the school council to the principal and returns to the council with the action taken in response to the recommendation;
- Consults with council on the School Plan for Continuous Improvement, School Dress Code and other matters as may be legislated;
- Solicits views on matters pertaining to the establishment or amendment of school policies and guidelines relating to student achievement, accountability of the education system to parents, and the communication of those plans to the public.

#### Student Representative

- Solicits the views of other students to share with the school council;
- Communicates information from the council to other students.

#### School Staff (teaching and non-teaching) Representatives

- Solicits views from their staff groups to share with the school council;
- Communicates information back to their staff groups;

**Keswick High School—School Council**  
**By-law 2: Election Procedures for Parent Members**

1. Elections shall occur within the first thirty days of the start of each school year.
2. The Chair will ensure that required forms/materials are in place for the election.
3. Each parent seeking election must be nominated or self-nominated in writing, must have a child registered at the school, and must declare if s/he is employed by the school board.
4. Each parent of a student enrolled in the school shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent/guardian membership position on the council.
5. An open invitation, including a self-nomination form (sample attached), will be extended to the school community via new student registration packages, electronic communications and via the school website. Outreach will also take place within the school as appropriate.
6. At the first meeting in the fall, nominees will be presented for election. If not acclaimed, an election will take place. Candidates will be required to present an introduction and brief platform. Votes will be made by secret ballot. Ballots will be tabulated by the principal or designate.
7. Only the names of the successful candidates shall be made public. A list of candidates and the vote results will be kept on file by the council for use in the event that a vacancy on the council occurs.
8. All individuals standing for election shall be notified of the results before the results are released to the school community. The chair will ensure that the names of new members are publicized to the school community within thirty days of the election.
9. Vacancies
  - a. Members of council executive who wish to resign shall do so in writing to the chair.
  - b. Should an elected parent council position become vacant before the next election, the council shall fill the vacancy by appointment from the non-elected candidates from the previous election according to the original number of votes recorded.
  - c. If none of the previous candidates remain interested in becoming an elected member, the council may request that interested parents from the school community submit their names for consideration. Council will follow election procedures if interest is expressed by multiple community members.
  - d. When a vacant spot on council is filled, the new member's term shall expire at the time of the next election.

A vacancy in membership does not prevent the council from operating or exercising its authority.

**Keswick High School—School Council**  
**By-law 3: Conflict of Interest**

1. A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential.
2. Members of the council shall declare a conflict of interest in matters that they, members of their families, or business entities in which they may have an interest, stand to benefit either directly or indirectly by decisions of the council.
3. A member shall exclude him or herself from discussions in which:
  - a. A conflict of interest is likely to result;
  - b. The member's ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities as a member of the school council may be jeopardized;
  - c. The council member, his or her relatives, or a business entity in which the member may have an interest, may gain or benefit either directly or indirectly as a result of actions that may be taken by the principal or board in response to advice that the council provides to the principal or to the board.
4. A member shall not accept favours or economic benefits from any individuals, organizations, or entities known to be seeking business contracts with the school.

**Keswick High School—School Council**  
**By-law 4: Decision Making and Conflict Resolution**

The preferred method to resolve issues of the KHS—SC is by consensus. Consensus is a collective opinion or general agreement by all members of council.

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.

At the KHS—SC table:

1. Every school council member will be given an opportunity to express his or her concern or opinion about the issue at dispute and how the dispute has affected him or her.
2. Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.
3. Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption.
4. The chair's responsibility is to clarify the statements made by all speakers, to identify common ground among the points of view raised, and to set out the joint interests of all members.
5. If no common ground can be identified, the chair will seek to clarify preferences among all members before proceeding further.
6. If all attempts at resolving the conflict have been exhausted without success, the chair shall request the intervention of a superintendent or other senior administrator to facilitate a resolution to the conflict.

**Quorum**

A meeting will have quorum if the majority of those in attendance are parent members.