

Meadowbrook Public School Council Constitution

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Article 1: Name and Address

The organization will be known as Meadowbrook Public School Council ("Council"). The members of Council shall be responsible for maintaining the Constitution.

Meadowbrook Public School
233 Patterson Street
Newmarket, Ontario
L3Y 3L5
(905) 895-3081

Article 2: Mission Statement

Our Council believes that collaborative partnerships among the school, the family and the community are essential to improving student learning. Our aim is to achieve the highest possible standards of education in an inviting and wholesome environment.

Article 3: Purpose and Objectives

- a) To support improved student learning and develop an increased sense of shared accountability for public education.
- b) To encourage effective parental involvement in the education of our children.
- c) To provide a means for regular communication and dialogue between all partners in education.
- d) To participate in the school improvement planning process.
- e) To provide input into decisions made by the school administration, York Region District School Board (YRDSB) and the Ontario Ministry of Education.
- f) To facilitate the building of a school community that works together in the best interests of our students and their education.
- g) To fundraise to enhance the school life of our students.
- h) To be an arena for parents/guardians to express concerns.
- i) To recognize and respect the personal and professional rights and responsibilities of individual students and staff.

Article 4: Procedures and Operating Guidelines

The operational procedures of Council are outlined in YRDSB Procedure #262. All recommendations and activities of 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 1 voting member on Council from any one household.

5.1: Number of Parent/Guardian Members

The number of parents/guardians on Council shall be no more than 15 (including Executive positions).

5.2: Number of Community Representatives

The number of Community Representatives will be one, if available.

5.3: Other Members

Other members such as Teacher Representative, Student representative, Support Staff Representative and Principal shall be elected/appointed in accordance with YRDSB Policy #262.

5.4: Procedures for Parent/Guardian Members

Parent/guardians may apply to join Council at the September council meeting, by filling out the membership agreement.

Each parent/guardian seeking membership must have a child registered at the school and must declare if he or she is employed by the YRDSB.

If a member of Council misses 2 consecutive meetings, their name will be deleted from the active list, unless they have made a request to the Chair that they remain active.

All parents/guardians are invited to attend Council meetings and speak to issues, but voting will be restricted to the active Council members, holding voting positions.

5.5: Roles and Responsibilities of Council Members

- a) Work cooperatively with the school and Council to enhance the overall effectiveness of the school in the community.
- b) Uphold the constitution and encourage others to do as well.
- c) Regularly attend and participate in Council meetings.
- d) Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues.
- e) Help to achieve the goals established by Council.
- f) Encourage the participation of all parents/guardians and of other people within the school community.
- g) Attend and participate in community based information and/or training sessions
- h) Provide input from the community into Council discussions.
- i) Encourage on-going communication between the school and the community.
- j) Help to promote awareness of the school in the community and encourage increased community involvement.

Article 6: Council Executive

6.1: Council Executive Positions

Executive members of Council (the "Executive") will consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Fundraising Coordinator.

6.2: Roles and Responsibilities of the Executive

The **Chair** of Council shall:

- a) Call monthly Council meetings in consultation with the Principal.
- b) Communicate with parents/guardians about matters under consideration by Council.
- c) Prepare the meeting agenda in consultation with the Principal and the Executive.
- d) Ensure the meeting agendas are distributed prior to the meetings.
- e) Chair meetings according to the agenda.
- f) Ensure that meeting minutes are communicated and distributed.
- g) Ensure that the Constitution is readily available to the school community.
- h) Communicate with and provide advice to the Principal.
- i) Participate in information sessions.
- j) Consult with senior YRDSB staff and trustees, as required.
- k) After consultation with the Executive and school Administration, have the authority to approve expenditures up to \$200 between Council meetings.
- l) Access voice mail/email.
- m) Be responsible for issuing regular Council Newsletters.
- n) Coordinate the assembly of volunteers from the school community as required.

The **Vice-Chair** of Council shall:

- a) Share responsibility for communicating with parents/guardians.
- b) Assist the Council Chair in carrying out her or his responsibilities.
- c) Act on behalf of the Chair in the event of his or her absence.
- d) Perform duties of Secretary and Treasurer in their absence or ensure that the duties are covered.
- e) Coordinate the assembly of volunteers from the school community as required

The **Secretary** of Council shall:

- a) Record, maintain and distribute meeting minutes to the Chair.
- b) Receive membership applications.
- c) Establish and maintain membership lists.
- d) Coordinate the assembly of volunteers from the school community as required.

The **Treasurer** of Council shall:

- a) Keep a proper record of all receipts and disbursements of Council for the current school year.
- b) Prepare and present financial updates for each Council meeting.
- c) Prepare deposits for the school administration staff on site with another Council member or staff member.
- d) Be one of Council's signing officers together with the Chair and Principal.
- e) Approve disbursements as directed by Council in conjunction with Principal.
- f) Communicate the allocation of funds as per Council's decisions in consultation with school Administrators.
- g) Be responsible for keeping money and assets secure at the school.
- h) Coordinate the assembly of volunteers from the school community as required.

The **Fundraising Coordinator** of Council shall:

- a) Review all fundraising mailings and suggestions received by Council.
- b) Collaborate with the Principal on a tentative fundraising plan to share with Council at the September meeting.
- c) Chair and schedule fundraising committee meetings separately from monthly Council meetings.
- d) Coordinate and implement fundraising projects as determined by Council.
- e) Present fundraising updates at each Council meeting.
- f) Coordinate the assembly of volunteers from the school community as required.

6.3: Guidelines for Executive Members

To be an Executive member, a parent/guardian should, ideally, have been a Council member for at least one year. An employee of YRDSB cannot be the Chair (part-time employees excluded, e.g., School Assistants). The Executive will follow the elections procedures outlined in Article 7.

Article 7: Elections

7.1: Acclamations

No election is required if the number of candidates is equal to, or less than the number of positions as outlined in Article 6.1.

7.2: Election Timetable

Prior to and at the **September** Council meeting, nomination forms for Executive positions for the current school year will be distributed.

At the **September** Council meeting, Council will elect/acclaim the Executive for the current school year.

7.3: Election Procedures for Executive Members

Each parent/guardian seeking election must be nominated or self-nominated, must have a child registered at the school, and must declare if he or she is employed by the Board.

Each Council member shall be entitled to one vote for each Executive position on Council.

If an election is required, Council shall follow Board procedures for holding an election, as facilitated by school Administrators.

7.4: Terms of Office

The term of office is one school year. Elected and appointed Executive members may seek additional terms of office.

7.5: Vacancies

A vacancy on the Executive does not prevent Council from exercising its authority.

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 Council members informing them of the vacancies and application by interested volunteers will be sought.
- c) If there are more applications than positions, an election will be called.
- d) When no more candidates are available, Council may request council members to be acclaimed.
- e) Elections for Executive members will be voted on by active Council members.

7.6: Resignations

Anyone who is a Council or Executive member, except the Principal, may resign his or her position by writing a letter of resignation to the Chair. The Chair of Council may resign by writing a letter of resignation to the Council Executive.

Article 8: Sub-Committees

8.1: Establishment

Throughout the school year, sub-committees may be formed to:

- a) Conduct more detailed or in-depth work than is possible during Council meetings.
- b) Make recommendations to Council.
- c) Set out timelines to achieve Council's established goals.

- d) Keep Council informed of issues and developments in its particular area.

8.2: Sub-Committee Membership

Each sub-committee must contain at least one parent/guardian member of Council.

Persons who are not members of Council may be members of sub-committees.

Each sub-committee will appoint its own chair. Fundraising sub-committees should be chaired by the Fundraising Coordinator.

Article 9: Meetings

9.1: Timetable of Meetings

Council will meet monthly from September through June. Up to 2 meetings per school year may be cancelled if required.

The dates and times of Council meetings shall be communicated to the school community in advance of each meeting.

It is recognized that meetings may be rescheduled by the Chair and/or Principal if necessary.

9.2: Quorum

A Council meeting will have quorum if there are sufficient members in attendance to achieve a 50% + 1 vote.

A meeting of Council can be held if there is not quorum and voting may be conducted through e-vote, by the Chair/Co-Chair, with results being communicated by the Chair/Co-Chair.

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 Council members.

In the case where a decision cannot be reached through consensus, the Chair may decide on one of the following:

- a) To decide by vote by way of a show of hands, a silent vote or electronic vote by those present in which a 51% majority shall carry the vote.
- b) To defer the issue to the next meeting.
- c) To defer the issue to a special meeting.
- d) To defer the issue to a sub-committee.

9.4: Conflict of Interest

If an individual Council member perceives him or herself to be in conflict of interest, she or he is honour bound to declare his or her conflict at the earliest possible opportunity, and during a Council meeting, so the minutes may reflect this declaration.

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

9.5: Conflict Resolution

Council will undertake to resolve all internal conflicts within its mandate in a timely manner. Council will abide by the conflict resolution policy issued by the YRDSB.

- a) 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.
- b) 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, so long as the topics are not of a personal nature and are in the interest of the entire school body.
- c) Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.
- d) Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption.
- e) The chair/co-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.
- f) If no common ground can be identified, the chair will seek to clarify preferences among all members before proceeding further.
- g) If all attempts at resolving the conflict have been exhausted, without success, the chair/co-chair shall request the intervention of a Superintendent or Senior Administrator to facilitate a resolution to the conflict.
- h) Any time the school council does business with the potential for monetary gain/loss with any person, agency, or company and a member of the school council has a vested interest in any way with that particular persons, agency or company, that member shall declare a conflict of interest and shall not discuss or vote on any such resolution relating to the matter.

Article 10: Financial Records

10.1: Signing Authorities

The Principal and Treasurer are the signing authorities for council. Both of the signatures will be required on all cheques.

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.

Council must operate without financial gain for its members. Any profit to the organization will be used in promoting the purposes and objectives of Council.

Council will operate any fundraising activities in strict accordance with YRDSB policy under the guidance of the school administrator.

Council shall not be incorporated.

10.3: Audit processes

The Quality Assurance Department of the Board will be responsible for any audits of school council fund records.

10.4: Financial Statements

Financial statements should be available and submitted as part of all meeting minutes.

Article 11: Agendas and Minutes

11.1: Agendas

Proposed agenda items should be submitted to the Chair one week prior to each Council meeting.

The Chair will set the agenda with the Principal, prior to the meeting.

11.2: Minutes

Minutes of Council meetings shall be distributed to council members for approval and then posted for the school community prior to the next Council meeting.

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

Article 12: Constitutional Amendments

Council will review the Constitution every year or as the need arises. The review may be performed by a sub-committee and proposed amendments brought to Council to be approved through a vote.

Amendments to the Constitution must be presented to Council at a regularly scheduled Council meeting.

Constitutional amendments will be voted on as per normal process.

Article 13: Code of Ethics

- a) A Council member shall consider the best interests of all students.
- b) A Council member shall be guided by the school's, YRDSB's and council's mission statements.
- c) A Council member shall act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of a school council, as identified by the school's operating guidelines, the school board, and the Ontario Ministry of Education.
- d) A Council member shall become familiar with the school's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.
- e) A Council member shall maintain the highest standards of integrity.
- f) A Council member shall recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.
- g) A Council member shall treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.
- h) A Council member shall encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
- i) A Council member shall acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of Council.
- j) A Council member shall respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of Council.
- k) A Council member shall not disclose confidential information.

- l) A Council member shall limit discussions at Council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.
- m) A Council member shall use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise.
- n) A Council member shall promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community.
- o) A Council member shall declare any conflict of interest.
- p) A Council member shall not accept any payment, gift or benefit financially through Council involvement.