

Sir John A. Macdonald Public School

School Council Constitution

Revised and adopted December 1, 2012

Revised Summer 2017 – with Lisa Zhou (current Chair) and Kathy Lott (Principal)

Table of Contents:

Article 1: Name and Address

Article 2: Mission Statement

Article 3: Purpose and Objectives

Article 4: Procedures and Guidelines

Article 5: Membership

5.1: Number of Parent Members

5.2: Number of Community Representatives

5.3: Other Members

5.4: General (non-Voting) Participants

Article 6: Elections

6.1: Acclamations

6.2: Election Procedures for Parent Members

6.3: Terms of Office

6.4: Vacancies in Membership

6.5: Resignations

6.6: Removal

Article 7: Executive

7.1: Chair/Co-Chair

7.2: Officers

7.3: Vacancies in Office

Article 8: Sub-Committees

8.1: Establishment

8.2: Sub-Committee Membership

8.3: Chairs of Sub-Committees

Article 9: Meetings

9.1: Timetable

9.2: Agendas

9.3: Minutes

9.4: Rules of Order

9.5 Quorum

9.6: Decision-Making

9.7: Conflict of Interest

9.8: Conflict Resolution

Article 10: Financial

10.1: Signing Authorities

10.2: Disbursement and Allocation of Funds

Article 11: Constitutional Amendments

Appendices:

Appendix I: YRDSB Policy and Procedure #262

Appendix II: Ministry of Education, *The Election Process for Use by School Councils*, June 2001

Sir John A. Macdonald Public School School Council Constitution

Article 1: Name and Address

The name of the Council shall be “**Sir John A. Macdonald Public School Council**” hereinafter referred to as the “**Council**”. The members of the school council shall be responsible for maintaining the constitution, a copy of which can be accessed in the Principal’s office at:

Sir John A., Macdonald Public School
45 Murison Drive,
Markham, ON
L6C 0J4
905.888.5777

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 increasing a shared sense of accountability for public education.

Article 3: Purpose and Objectives

The objectives of the School Council are to:

1. Encourage effective parental involvement in the education of their children.
2. Provide a means for regular communication and dialogue between all partners in education.
3. Participate in the school improvement planning process.
4. Provide meaningful consultation and extensive involvement of all members of the school community.
5. Foster parental and community involvement in education.
6. Encourage meaningful involvement of all members of the school community in support of student learning.
7. Provide input into decisions made by the school administration, the Board and the Ministry.
8. Encourage effective parental involvement by focusing on the following areas: parenting skills, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with community.
9. Help to co-ordinate the services for school, family and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational and nutrition programs that assist in the education of children.
10. Facilitate the building of a viable school community, which works together in the best interests of our students and their education.

Article 4: Procedures and Operating Guidelines

School Councils are advisory bodies. A School Council will provide advice to the school principal and, where appropriate, to the Board on any matter that relates to student learning.

Notwithstanding the above, confidential personnel matters may not be addressed by School Councils. Nor are School Councils to discuss confidential information on individual students.

The operational procedures of the Council are outlined in YRDSB Procedure #262. 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.

The Council will operate without financial gain for its members. Any profit to the organization will be used in promoting its purpose.

The Council will operate all fundraising activities in accordance with Board Policy under the guidance of the school administrator.

Article 5: Membership

ALL ARE WELCOME! All parents/guardians who have children registered at SJAM– are welcome to attend any and all general School Council Meetings. An open invitation and agenda will be sent to the community (by the school) prior to each general School Council Meeting. There shall be no more than one voting parent member on the School Council from any one household.

Council Membership will be made up of a majority of parents, as specified in Article 5.1 herein.

There shall be no more than one member on the School Council from any one household.

The number of persons elected, acclaimed or appointed shall be as follows:

5.1: Number of Parent Members

Membership will be defined at the beginning of the school year based on the outcome of the School Council election process as outlined in Article 7.

The number of parents on the School Council will be a maximum of 8.

5.2: Number of Community Representatives

The number of community representatives will be a maximum of 1.

5.3: Other Members

Other Members shall be elected/appointed in accordance with YRDSB Policy #262, and shall be comprised of:

- Principal (or Vice Principal if designated) of SJAMPS
- 1 teacher employed at SJAMPS, other than the principal or vice-principal

- 1 non-teaching employee at SJAMPS
- 1 student (optional) at SJAMPS, as selected by the Principal

5.4: General (non-Voting) Participants:

All parents/guardians of students who attend Sir John A. Macdonald Public School, all staff of Sir John A. Macdonald Public School and any community members are welcome.

5.5: Roles and Responsibilities of all School Council Members

- Act as a link between School Council and our community
- regularly attend and participate in School Council meetings
- maintain a school-wide perspective on issues
- help to achieve the goals established by the School Council
- encourage the participation of all parents and of other people within the school community
- School Council members are encouraged to participate in one or more of School Council's sub-committees (see article 8), and assist with tasks of the committee(s) and of School Council as required

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.

Each fall, an election committee or the principal shall:

- provide nomination forms;
- 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 (if numbers warrant it) by secret ballot;
- count the ballots;
- notify all candidates of the results;
- keep all the results and related information confidential;
- only release the names of successful candidates;
- notify all individuals standing for election of the results before the results are released to the school community.

A list of candidates and the vote results will be kept on file for use in the event of vacancy on the Council.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Chair or 2 Co-Chairs of the School Council shall:

- call School Council meetings (minimum 4 per year) in consultation with the principal
- communicate with parents about matters under consideration by the School Council
- in consultation with the principal and Executive members, prepare the agenda for School Council meetings and ensure it is distributed to School Council members seven days prior to an upcoming meeting
- chair School Council meetings according to the agenda
- ensure the minutes of School Council meetings are communicated appropriately to School Council members within 14 days (max) following each School Council meeting
- ensure the School Council Constitution by-laws are reviewed every two years and are readily available to the school community
- communicate with and provide advice to the school principal on behalf of the School Council
- participate in information sessions and Council Forums
- consult with senior Board staff and trustees, as required
- after consultation with the Executive and the principal, have the authority to approve expenditures up to \$300, between School Council meetings

The Vice-Chair OR 2 Co-Vice Chairs of the School Council shall:

- assist the Chair of the School Council in carrying out his/her responsibilities
- act on behalf of the Chair/Co-Chair in the event of his/her absence
- perform duties of Secretary and Treasurer in their absence

The Communications Officer OR 2 Co-Communications Officers of the School Council shall:

- provide School Council communications to the school for posting to our newsletter, to our SJAM twitter feed, etc.
- record, maintain and distribute minutes (final draft) of meetings to School Council members and the school community within 14 days (max) following each meeting
- prior to the final draft, provide a draft of minutes to the Executive for approval
- receive membership applications and establish the membership list for distribution
- maintain all Council communications in the School Council Documentation binder in the office
- keep School Council Executive and membership lists up to date
- determine who is eligible to vote at the outset of each meeting
- confirm that a quorum is present at a School Council meeting if a formal vote is required

The Treasurer OR 2 Co-Treasurers of the Council shall:

- request the school EOAA (Elementary Office Administrative Assistant) to prepare financial updates for the treasurer to report to council at each meeting
- review the record of all receipts and disbursements of School Council, and the reconciliation of the School Council funds for the current fiscal year
- collect all monies in the name and credit of Sir John A Macdonald School Council and provide these funds to the principal or their delegate to deposit

- approve the disbursement of funds as voted by the School Council after reasonable consultation with the principal. In the event of an emergency, disbursements may be approved by the executive in consultation with the principal
- school administration is responsible for providing a copy of the financial statements for current fiscal year (July - June) for school council's review

6.3: Terms of Office

Officers shall hold office for a period of one year, unless an officer resigns or is removed from Council in accordance with Article 6.6.

Vacancies will only be filled until June of the current year, at which time the vacant positions will be filled through September elections.

Elected and appointed Members and Officers may seek additional terms of office in successive and subsequent years.

6.4: Vacancies in Membership

A vacancy in the membership of the School Council does not prevent the Council from exercising its authority.

If, after an election, parent Member positions remain vacant, the Council may appoint parent Members.

Positions that become vacant due to resignation or removal shall be filled as soon as possible by 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 application 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.

6.5: Resignations

Anyone who is a Council Member, except the principal, may resign their position by writing a letter of resignation to the Chair/Co-Chair.

If someone resigns, the position vacated will be filled according to Article 6.4.

6.6: Removal

The Council may choose to remove from Council any Member for the following reasons:

1. A Council Member misses 3 consecutive meetings
2. The Council member is proven to have mismanaged or misappropriated funds controlled by the Council.

3. In the event a motion to remove the Council member is passed by at least a 2/3 majority of votes cast at a general meeting of the Council, provided that notice of such motion was given at a previous meeting at least three weeks prior to the motion.

In all cases, the Council shall undertake to replace that person according to Article 6.4.

Article 7: Executive

7.1: Election Timetable

Elections must be held during the first 30 calendar days of each school year, as outlined in YRDSB Procedure #262.

7.2: Election Procedures for Parent Members

- all parents/guardians of children registered at Sir John A Macdonald Public School are invited to become School Council members – and membership is OPEN to all at any time during the year
- parent member elections shall be by acclamation
- each parent/guardian seeking election must be nominated or self-nominated using the School Council Candidate Nomination Form (included in the School Start Up Package for all YRDSB schools), must have a child registered at the school, and must declare if he or she is employed by the YRDSB
- application forms are requested at, or prior to, the first School Council meeting in September – and are handed out to all students/families the first week of school
- the outgoing members of the Executive shall administer the membership process as outlined above
- the names and number of parent members forming the School Council shall be determined and communicated at the first School Council meeting – following the new school year School Council Executive Election

7.3: Election Procedures for Executive Members

- at the first meeting in September, following the acclamation of parent members, the assembled School Council will entertain nominations for Executive positions
- nominations will be made on a volunteer basis, and Executive appointments shall be by acclamation when the number of candidates is not more than one for each position
- each parent/guardian seeking election for an Executive position 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 YRDSB
- In employee of the YRDSB cannot seek election as the Chair/Co-Chair
- if more than one member seeks nomination for a particular Executive position, election procedures will be as follows:
- Each School Council member shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant Executive position on the School Council.
- The election committee shall:
 - a) Conduct the elections by secret ballot.
 - b) Count the ballots.
 - c) Shall notify all individuals standing for election and all School Council members of the results.

7.3: Vacancies in Office

Officer vacancies will be filled as soon as possible according to Article 7.1 and 7.2.

Article 8: Sub-Committees

8.1: Establishment

As required and deemed necessary, 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 (eg. Communication, Fundraising, Volunteers, etc.).

Additional sub-committees will be formed by Council as the need arises.

All sub-committees must submit reports and/or recommendations to the Council for final approval.

8.2: Sub-Committee Membership

- each sub-committee should have at least one parent member of School Council
- all School Council members are encouraged to participate in one or more sub-committees and assist with tasks of the committee as required
- persons, who are not members of School Council, may be members of sub-committees
- meetings shall be governed by the same normative rules that govern the council with respect to membership, attendance, and voting

8.3: Chairs of Sub-Committees

- each sub-committee will nominate it's own chair
- the Chair of the sub-committee should report to School Council when necessary
- may have access to the School at any time for subcommittee meetings (in consultation with Admin)
- will provide committee updates at each General Meeting
- are encouraged to write reports/communications to the Chair to be shared with the Principal for inclusion in school communications.

8.4: Other Sub-Committees

Additional sub-committees may be formed as the need arises.

Article 9: Meetings

9.1: Scheduling of Meetings

At the first meeting of the new school year, a schedule 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 recognized that the meeting schedule may change at any time.

9.2: Agendas

Meeting agendas shall be prepared by the Council Chair/Co-Chairs and approved by the Principal a minimum of 7 days prior to the scheduled meeting.

The meeting agenda will be issued to Council Members prior to each meeting.

Members and Participants may request items be placed on the agenda by contacting the Chair/Co-Chairs within 10 days prior to the scheduled meeting.

Members and Participants may make presentations to the Council as scheduled on the agenda. The Chair/Co-Chairs will reserve the right to limit the number and length of presentations and discussions at any meeting.

9.3 Minutes

Minutes shall be posted on the school website **within 14 days** of the conclusion of the Council meeting.

The minutes shall include motions, decisions and actions to be taken.

Minutes must be approved and recorded as accurate at each subsequent Council meeting.

9.4 Rules of Order

Members of the Council must inform the Chair/Co-Chairs if they are going to be absent from a Council meeting.

The Chair/co-Chairs may table discussion on an agenda item for a following meeting.

Discussion shall be restricted to the items on the agenda.

9.5: Quorum

A meeting will have quorum if the majority of Council Members are present AND the majority of those present are parents.

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

9.6: 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/Co-Chairs 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 for further review.

9.7: 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 in any form of payment, service, or kind, for their work as a member of Council.

9.8: 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 Board.

Article 10: Financial Records

10.1: 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, unless a multi-year funding proposal has been previously agreed upon in accordance with Article 9.6, and all Board and Ministry Policy related to school-generated funds and fundraising.

Article 11: Constitutional Amendments

The School Council will review the Constitution every two years or as the need arises.

A sub-committee can perform the review and bring proposed amendments to the Council for voting.

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

Constitutional amendments must be agreed upon in accordance with actions outlined in Articles 9.5 and 9.6.

Article 12: School Council Documentation Binder

This binder is housed in the school office and is to include our YRDSB School Council Handbook, relevant Council communications and documents including PRO Grant information as well as the Annual School Council Report.

12.1: Constitution

- a copy of the Constitution is kept in the School Council Documentation Binder and on our school website
- School Council will review the constitution a minimum of every two years or as the need arises
- the Constitution committee can perform the review and bring proposed amendments to the School Council for voting
- amendments to the constitution must be presented to the School Council, at a regularly scheduled School Council meeting
- constitutional amendments need a 2/3 majority to be passed

Article 13: Protection of School Council Members

The York Region District School Board holds liability insurance undertaken on behalf of all School Councils and, as such, members of the Sir John A Macdonald 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.

Revised Constitution

By way of email correspondence, August 25, 2017

Date

Lisa Zhou

Chair, Sir John A. Macdonald Public School Council, on behalf of the Sir John A. Macdonald Public School Community and Council

Kathy Lott

Principal, Sir John A. Macdonald Public School