

**Oak Ridges Public School
2017-2018 Calendar Year
SCHOOL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION**

Article 1: Name and Address

The organization will be known as the Oak Ridges P.S. School Council. The members of the school council shall be responsible for maintaining the constitution.

Oak Ridges P.S.
160 Coons Road
Richmond Hill, ON
L4E 2P7
(905)-773-5572

School Council Website: www.oakridges.ps.yrdsb.edu.on.ca

Article 2: Mission Statement

Our Mission is to support a productive environment whereby students become educated, caring, confident, self-motivated, respectful and industrious citizens. We will foster collaboration and mutual support through shared leadership and a decision-making process favoured by all stakeholders.

Article 3: Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of The Oak Ridges School council is to encourage productive involvement of all stakeholders in the enhancement of student experience and learning by developing school, family, and community partnerships.

This purpose can be achieved by meeting the following objectives:

- i. Assisting in coordinating for the school and parent community, services related to literacy and numeracy, health and nutrition, parenting and socializing, recreation and safety, mental health and modern learning.
- ii. Participating in regular communication and dialogue between all partners in education.
- iii. Participating in the school improvement planning process.
- iv. Providing meaningful consultation and enable involvement of any member of the school community.
- v. Providing input into decisions made by the school administration, The Board and Ministry of Education.

Article 4: Procedures and Operating Guidelines

The operational procedures of this council are outlined in the *YRDSB Policy and Procedures #262* (attached). All recommendations and activities of the council shall comply with all Ministry of Education Act, and York Region District School Board policy, procedures and staff collective agreements.

Article 5: Membership

There shall be no more than one member of school council from any one household.

5.1: Number of Parent Members

The School Council will consist of a minimum of nine (9) and a maximum of 20 voting, parent representatives (including the executive) in any one (1) year term. This is to be reviewed and amended annually. Other parents are welcome to attend this public meeting but will not have voting privileges

5.2: Number of Community Representatives

The number of community representatives will be one (1)

5.3: Student Representatives

The Principal may appoint one to two (1-2) student representatives for consultation as needed.

5.4: Other Members- Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff Representatives

There shall be one (1) teaching staff representative and one (1) non-teaching staff representative.

Article 6: Elections**ELECTION PROCEDURE BYLAWS****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: School Council

- i. The current school council must ensure that a new council is in place within thirty (30) days of the start of the school year in September. The school council should have representation from parents, teaching staff, non-teaching staff and, if deemed necessary, from students.
- ii. The term of office for all school council positions will be one year.
- iii. Appeals related to the school council election process or their results shall be resolved by the school Principal and the chair or co-chairs of the outgoing council by jointly making a ruling.

6.3: Election of Parent/Guardian Representatives

- i. 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.
- ii. Each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school shall be entitled to one (1) vote for each vacant parent/guardian membership position on the council.
- iii. Public notice of the annual elections and nomination forms shall be given out by the principal on behalf of the school council to the parent community at least fourteen 14 days before the date of the election of parent members.
- iv. Notice for the annual election of parent members shall include the date, time and location of the election and sent in writing to every parent of a student who is enrolled in the school and on the date the notice is given.
- v. For all elected positions on the school council, nomination forms are to be filed by all parent-candidates. Parents may nominate themselves or other parents.
- vi. Parents/guardians of a student enrolled at the school are eligible both to vote for and to run as parent candidates. Self-nomination will suffice. No additional qualifiers or quotas may restrict eligibility either to vote for or to run as a parent candidate (e.g., child's program, grade, location of home). Candidates should be prepared to summarize their reasons for running for the school council, if an election is to be held. Individuals must also declare if employed by the School Board.
- vii. Information about each candidate shall be made available to the school community at least one (1) week before the election.
- viii. Candidates are not permitted to distribute or post in the school any school election campaign literature. This information is provided to parents via the school principal in accordance with vii above.
- ix. School resources, both human and material, may not be used to support particular candidates or groups of candidates.
- x. The Principal shall conduct a lottery to determine the ballot position for each candidate.
- xi. Ballots shall be counted by at least two (2) parents who are not election candidates and shall be supervised by the principal.
- xii. If the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of positions, the candidates shall be acclaimed.

- xiii. Elections for school council shall be conducted by secret ballot. Voters must be present at the school on election-day, during the preset hours for voting (to include both daytime and evening hours).
- xiv. All eligible voters shall be entitled to cast one (1) vote for each of the candidate positions available. Casting more than the maximum number of votes permitted in the category spoils the ballot.
- xv. If there is a tie for the final position for a representative on the school council, the winner shall be determined by lot.

6.4 Election of Officers

- i. Any chairs, co-chairs, and officers are to be elected by the new school council.
- ii. A chair or co-chair of a school council shall be a parent member of the council.
- iii. A person who is employed by the board and is a member of a bargaining unit, an administrator or a manager, cannot be the chair or co-chair of a school council.
- iv. A school council may have such other officers as are provided for in the constitution.

6.5 The Appointment or Election of the Student Representative

The Principal will consult with the school council to determine if there is to be a student representative on the council. If a positive decision is reached, the principal appoints a student representative to the council.

6.6 Selection of Community Representative

All appointments of community representatives to the school council are to be by majority vote at a meeting of the school council.

6.7 Election of a Teaching Staff Representative

- i. The Principal, in consultation with the school council, will make the necessary arrangements for the teaching staff representative to be elected.
- ii. Anyone assigned to the teaching staff of the school (full or part-time) other than the Principal for a Vice-Principal may be a candidate.
- iii. Only teachers employed at the school may vote for the teacher member.

6.8 Election of the Non-Teaching Staff Representative

- i. The Principal, in consultation with the school council, will make the necessary arrangements for the non-teaching staff representative to be elected.
- ii. Anyone assigned to the non-teaching staff of the school (full or part time) may be a candidate.
- iii. Only staff employed at the school may vote for the support staff member.

Article 7: Terms of Office

- i. A person elected or appointed as a member of school council holds office from the later of:
 - a. the date that he or she is elected or appointed, and/or;
 - b. the date of the first meeting of the school council after the elections are held in the current school year.
- ii. One term is equivalent to one school year and continues until the date of the first meeting of the school council in the next year after elections.
- iii. Elected and appointed members will serve one (1) term.

Elected and appointed members may seek additional terms in office. Members interested in completing a second term should let their intentions be known by May of the current school year. Any parent member expressing this intention must comply with Article 6.3: Election of Parent/Guardian Representatives.

Article 8: Vacancies in Membership

- i. A vacancy in the membership of a school council does not prevent council from exercising its authority.
- ii. If positions remain vacant, after the election, council may appoint parent members.
- iii. Positions that become vacant due to resignation or removal shall be filled as soon as possible by offering the person with the next highest number of votes, the opportunity to accept the position.

- iv. When there are no more candidates available, council may appoint parent members.
- v. Officer vacancies will be filled as soon as possible according to Article 6.4.

Article 9: Resignations

Anyone who is a council member, except the Principal, may resign his/her position by way of a letter of resignation to the chair or co-chairs. If someone resigns, the position vacated will be filled according to Article 6.3: Election of Parent/Guardian Representatives and Article 8: Vacancies in Membership, if council so chooses.

Article 10: Removal

- i. Should any council member be absent from two (2) council meetings, the chair or co-chairs must approach the member and discuss his/her absences and intention to fulfill his/her duties on council.
- ii. Should the council member be absent three (3) meetings, the council may choose to remove him/her from council and shall undertake to replace that person according to Article 8: Vacancies in Membership.

Article 11: Remuneration

- i. A person shall not receive any remuneration for serving as a member or executive of a school council.
- ii. Reimbursement for expenses incurred as members or executives of a school council shall be in accordance with relevant procedures as outlined in Article 13.6 & Article 19.2.

Article 12: Incorporation

School council shall not be incorporated.

Article 13: Duties of Members of School Council

13.1 Members of School Council

Members of the school council are accountable to the members of the school community whom they represent and to the best of their ability shall:

- i. maintain a school-wide perspective on issues;
- ii. regularly attend school council meetings;
- iii. participate in information gathering, sharing and training programs;
- iv. act as communication link between school council and the community;
- v. encourage the participation of all parents and of the other people within the school community; and
- vi. participate on subcommittees and assist with tasks of the school council as deemed appropriate.

13.2 Appointment of Officers

At the first meeting in September, after the elections, council will elect or appoint the following officers:

- i. School council chair or co-chair
- ii. Secretary
- iii. Treasurer

13.3 Chair or Co-Chairs

An employee of the board cannot be chair or co-chair

13.4 Tasks of the Chair/Co-Chair

The chair/co-chairs of the school council shall carry out the following tasks in accordance with board policies and procedures:

- i. call a minimum of four (4) school council meetings per year in consultation with the Principal;
- ii. ensure that parents be consulted about matters under consideration by the council;
- iii. ensure fundraising activities, management of the proceeds of fundraising and all expenditures are in accordance with applicable board policies and procedures;

- iv. prepare the agendas for school council meetings in consultation with the other members of council and the school's principal;
- v. chair school council meetings according to agendas;
- vi. ensure that minutes of school council meetings are recorded by the secretary on council and are delivered in accordance with Article 22: Minutes;
- vii. ensure and foster regular dialogue and communication through email and other means with members of school council and with the Principal;
- viii. communicate with senior Board staff and trustees, as required; and
- ix. ensure the School Council Constitution and by-laws are reviewed annually.

13.5 Secretary

The secretary shall carry out the following tasks:

- i. take minutes during council meetings noting discussion and outcomes;
- ii. send minutes to members of school council within seven 10 days of the meeting;
- iii. receive changes and submit completed minutes to school council for approval;
- iv. prepare correspondence report itemizing all correspondence to school council, distribute to members of school council and make report available to the school community.

13.6 Treasurer

The treasurer shall carry out the following tasks:

- i. Maintain the books for school council in accordance with proper accounting procedures and in accordance with the board's rules.
- ii. Prepare a report for school council on the bank reconciliation and the monthly summary of income and expenses on the forms provided by the board.
- iii. Receive monies, when required, and support the preparation deposits.
- iv. Pay all and only authorized payment of these expenses approved by school council.
- v. Issue receipts as required.

Article 14: Sub-Committees

14.1 Establishment

At the first meeting of the school year, or as needed during the school year, sub-committees may be formed to:

- i. Conduct more detailed or in-depth work than possible during council meetings, make recommendations to the council, keep the council informed of issues and developments in its particular area. For example, Budget, Education, Election, Social, Communications, Fundraising, Volunteers, Constitution, Health and Safety etc.
- ii. Additional sub-committees may be formed by council as need arises.

14.2 Sub-committee Membership

Each sub-committee shall include at least one member of school council and shall have a majority of parent members. Persons who are not members of the school council may be members of a sub-committee.

14.3 Chair of Sub-Committees

The chair of sub-committee shall be elected at the first meeting of the sub-committee.

Article 15: Meetings

All members of the school community are invited to attend any and all school council meetings.

15.1 Timetable of meetings

At the first meeting of the new school year, a timetable will be created which identifies the meeting dates agreed 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 timetable may change at any time. A copy of the list of dates and times of meetings shall be sent to the local trustees.

15.2 Childcare Provisions

Childcare will be provided for all members' children, at no charge, with the stipulation that participants give notice, to the principal, one week prior to the meeting.

Article 16: Quorum

A meeting will have quorum if:

- i. The majority of council members are present AND
- ii. The majority of those *council members* present are parents

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

Article 17: Conflict Resolution

- i. Council will undertake to resolve all internal conflicts within its mandate in a timely manner as per conflict resolution policy issued by the board.
- ii. 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.
- iii. Every school council member will be given an opportunity to express his or her concern or opinion about the issue in dispute and how the dispute has affected him or her.
- iv. Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.
- v. Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption.
- vi. 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.
- vii. If no common ground can be identified, the chair will seek to clarify preferences among all members before proceeding further.
- viii. If all attempts at resolving the conflict have been exhausted, without success, the chair/co-chair shall request the intervention of a superintendant or senior administrator to facilitate a resolution to the conflict.
- ix. 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 18: Decision Making

Consensus is the preferred method of decision-making. Consensus is a collective opinion or general agreement by ALL council members.

In the case where a vote must be taken, executive members will each have one vote. The rules of order (Robert's Rules of Order) will be followed.

In the case where a decision cannot be reached through consensus, the chair or co-chair may decide on one of the following:

- i. to vote: 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 (only if council has quorum);
- ii. to defer the issue to the next meeting;
- iii. to defer the issue to a special meeting; and
- iv. to defer the issue to a sub-committee.

18.1 Voting

While decisions of the council are best reached by consensus, when voting is necessary, the following applies:

- i. each member of school council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by school council;
- ii. each member of a committee on school council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the committee; and
- iii. the Principal of the school is not entitled to vote in votes taken by school council or by a committee of school council (Robert's Rules of Order).

Article 19: Financial Records**19.1 Signing Authority**

The Principal and the elementary office administrative assistant are the signing authorities.

19.2 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.

19.3 Annual Audit

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

19.4 Financial Statements

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

Article 20: Fundraising

All fundraising by school council must adhere to Board Policy #676.0 School Fundraising and Administration of School Generated Funds.

School Council is responsible for:

- i. providing input to the Principal on fundraising activities, early in the school year, based on the school improvement plan;
- ii. providing a financial report at each school council meeting and record receipt of the report in the minutes;
- iii. working with the Principal to ensure that processes are in place to adequately control the funds;
- iv. ensuring that all funds collected are provided to the school as they are received to be deposited into the school generated funds bank account;
- v. refraining from depositing school generated funds into their own personal bank accounts;
- vi. providing input to the Principal on fundraising activities
- vii. conducting fundraising activities in accordance with the fundraising plan and Board policies and procedures; and
- viii. ensuring that all financial transactions are conducted in accordance with Board policies and procedures.

Article 21: Meeting Agenda

- i. Agenda items should be submitted to the chair or co-chairs before one (1) week prior to council's next meeting.
- ii. Members of council must indicate to the chair or co-chair the amount of time necessary to cover the agenda item.
- iii. Members must inform the chair or co-chairs if he/she will be absent from a council meeting and provide the chair or co-chairs with any reports that the chair will present on his/her behalf.
- iv. The chair or co-chairs, after consulting with members of council by email, will set the agenda with the principal in advance of the next meeting.
- v. The chair or co-chair must circulate the agenda three (3) business days in advance of the next council meeting.

- vi. Agendas must have enough time allocated for any given committee and sub-committee reports.
- vii. Agendas must have time allotted at the end for new business.

Article 22: Minutes

- i. Minutes are to be taken by the secretary of the council.
- ii. Secretary to send minutes to all members of council by email within ten (10) business days of the last meeting and shall be posted in hard copy in the school office the same day.
- iii. The minutes shall include motions, decisions, and actions to be taken.
- iv. In the secretary's absence, another member of council must take minutes.

Article 23: Constitutional Amendments

- i. The constitution is to be reviewed annually by a sub-committee.
- ii. Amendments to the constitution must be presented to council at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- iii. Constitutional amendments need a 2/3majority vote to be passed.

Article 24: Storage of Constitution

- i. A copy of the current School Council constitution is to be stored in PDF format both on the school website and with the Principal.
- ii. A hard copy of the current School Council constitution will be available in the main office for public access.
- iii. A soft copy of the current School Council constitution will be stored with The Elementary Office Administrative Assistant and the Principal. These copies will serve as the working documents whereby changes may be made upon yearly review of the constitution.