

# **CONSTITUTION**

## **Park Avenue Public School School Council Constitution**

**Article 1: Name and Address**

The name of the organization is Park Avenue P.S. School Council (herein referred to as the “Council”). The address is:

Park Avenue Public School  
36 Sunrise Street, East Gwillimbury, ON L9N 1H5  
905-836-5951 park.avenue.ps@yrdsb.ca

**Article 2: Mission Statement**

The Council supports collaboration between the students, their families, the school, and the community in order to establish and maintain an open, trusting environment that promotes learning in our community.

**Article 3: Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose and objectives of the Council are to

- Provide positive and innovative advice to the school
- Participate actively and support the annual school improvement planning process
- Provide input into decisions made by the school administration, the Board and the Ministry
- Encourage shared responsibility for student learning among students, parents and teachers
- Develop an increased sense of shared accountability for public education
- Support school, family and community partnerships that assist parents in the education of their children
- Encourage effective parental involvement in the education of their children
- Present educational and informative material to the school community
- Provide a means of regular communication and dialogue between all partners in education
- Fundraise to enhance the educational experience of our students
- Coordinate the services of social, health, safety recreational and extra-curricular activities that assist in the education and well-being of our children

#### **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 and personnel matters may not be addressed by School Councils. Nor are School Councils to discuss confidential information on individual students. All recommendations and activities of the Council shall comply with the Ministry of Education Acts, outlined in York Region District School Board (YRDSB) Procedure # 262.

#### **Article 5: Norms of Behaviour and Practice**

The school council shall develop norms of behavior at meetings on an annual basis through discussion, activity, and consensus

#### **SAMPLE:**

- Agenda set by members and circulated in advance
- Meetings begin and end on time
- Consensus decision-making
- All speakers and opinions are respected
- Individual students, parents and staff are not discussed
- Be open-minded and objective
- Refer parent or student issues to the teacher or principal

#### **Article 6: Membership**

##### **6.1: Parent Members**

The number of parent members on the Council shall be a minimum of six (6) and a maximum of fifteen (15) elected parents of children enrolled in Park Avenue Public School.

##### **6.2: Community Representatives**

The number of community representatives shall be a maximum of two (2) where possible.

##### **6.3: Student Representatives**

The principal shall appoint a student representative from the group of students elected to Student School Council.

#### **6.4: Teaching Staff Representative**

There will be one (1) teacher representative from the school at each meeting. This position may be shared by more than one support staff on a rotating basis.

#### **6.5: Support Staff Representative**

There will be one (1) support staff representative at each meeting where possible.

#### **6.6: General (Non-Voting) Membership**

All parents of students attending Park Avenue Public School, all staff of Park Avenue Public School and all public school ratepayers within the area serviced by the school boundaries have the right to attend parent council meetings of Park Avenue Public School.

#### **6.7: 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. The minutes of the meeting will reflect this declaration. As a result, the Council member is ineligible to vote on the issue(s) relating to their conflict of interest.

#### **6.8: Remuneration**

Council members cannot receive remuneration for their work as a member of Council.

#### **6.9: Membership Responsibilities**

School Council Members

- are accountable to the constituents they serve
- maintain a school-wide perspective on issues
- participate regularly in Council meetings
- act as a link between the Council and the community
- encourage the participation of parents from all groups as well as participation by community members
- are willing to be an equal member and share in the duties and initiatives undertaken by the Council

## The Principal

- supports and promotes the Council's operations and activities as an equal member of the Council
- seeks input from the Council in areas that have been identified as priorities and is prepared to provide a rationale for decisions made
- Encourages the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the community serves as an effective liaison between the Council and other school community organizations

## **Article 7: Elections**

### **7.1: Date**

Elections for Council membership shall take place annually, no later than the October Council meeting.

### **7.2: Election Procedures for Parent Members**

Each parent seeking election must be nominated or self-nominated. They must have a child registered at Park Avenue Public School, and must declare if he or she is employed by the Board. Each family of a student enrolled in Park Avenue Public School shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent member position on the Council.

### **7.3: Acclamation**

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.

### **7.4: Election of the Executive**

Once the parent members are elected, the newly elected Council votes on its Executive for the year. (See Article 8 for list of positions)

### **7.5: Terms of Office**

Council members serve a one-year term of office. There are no restrictions to the number of times a member can be re-elected.

**7.6: Resignations** Anyone who is a Council member, except for the principal, may resign his or her position by writing a letter of resignation to the chair. If someone resigns, the Council will fill the position according to Article 7.8: Vacancies.

### **7.7: Removal**

The Council may choose to remove from the Council any member who misses three (3) consecutive meetings and shall undertake to replace that person according to Article 7.8: Vacancies.

### **7.8: Vacancies**

A vacancy in the membership of Council does not prevent the Council from exercising its authority. The Council should fill positions that become vacant due to resignation or removal 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.
- notifying all parents of the vacancies and requesting written application by interested volunteers
- calling an election if there are more applications than positions, or
- Appointing a parent member when no more candidates are available.

The Council will fill vacancies only until May of the current school year, after which time Council will fill the vacant positions through the annual October election.

## ***Article 8: The Executive***

### **8.1: Executive**

The Executive is elected from the newly elected parent members of the Council and shall consist of:

- 1 Chair or 2 Co-Chairs
- Secretary
- Treasurer

### **8.2: Chair or Co-Chairs**

An employee of the Board cannot be chair or co-chair.

The chair or co-chairs shall

- call and chair Council meetings
- prepare an agenda for meetings, in consultation with other Council members and the principal

- ensure that the minutes of the meetings are recorded and maintained
- coordinate the activities of the Council as well as the subcommittees of the Council
- communicate with the principal
- sign any contracts, this constitution and other documents which the Council has authorized
- liaise with the Trustees and Board as required
- ensure that the Council constitution is reviewed each year
- will submit an annual report to YRDSB at the end of every school year

**8.3: Secretary**

The Secretary shall

- record attendance and the minutes of the meetings of the Council
- distribute the minutes of the meetings by e-mail to all Council members within 14 days of the meeting

**8.4: Treasurer**

The treasurer shall

- prepare a Treasurer’s Report and distribute copies to attendees at Council meetings

***Article 9: Subcommittees***

**9.1: Establishment**

Ongoing subcommittees of the Park Avenue Public School Council are

- fundraising
- events

As the need arises, Council may form more committees to deal with specific issues that may arise.

**9.2: Purpose**

The purpose of the subcommittee is to

- conduct the detailed, in-depth work that is not possible during council meetings
- make recommendations to the Council and
- keep the Council informed of issues and developments in its particular area.

### **9.3: Membership**

Subcommittees will draw their membership from the members of the school community. Each subcommittee must contain at least one parent member of Council and may include parents who are not members of the Council.

### **9.4: Chair**

Each subcommittee will appoint its own chair. The subcommittee chair does not have to be a member of the Council.

### **9.5: Meetings**

Subcommittees will meet regularly between Council meetings to ensure they conduct their business in a timely manner.

### **9.6: Updates and Recommendations**

All subcommittee chairs are required to provide updates at the Council meeting when indicated on the agenda. If they cannot attend the Council meeting, they will submit a written update.

All subcommittees shall report to the Council to obtain final approval of the subcommittee's recommendations.

## ***Article 10: meetings***

### **10.1: Meeting Dates**

The Council will publicize all meeting dates to the families of the school. It is recognized that the meeting date may change from time to time. The Council will publicize any such changes to the families of the school.

By mandate the Council must meet at least six times a year. Further monthly or sub-committee meetings may occur as the need arises.

### **10.2: Attendance**

Members of the Council must either send regrets to the chair directly or via another Council member if they are unable to make the Council meeting.

### **10.3: Quorum**

A meeting will have quorum if

- the majority of Council members are present and
- the majority of those present are parents



The Council can still meet if there is no quorum, but will defer all voting.

#### **10.4: Decision-making**

The preferred method to resolve issues on Council is through consensus. Consensus is a collective opinion or general agreement by all members present. Comments and opinions from all meeting attendees are welcome, regardless of membership status.

In the case where a decision cannot be reached through consensus, the chair may decide to either

- call for a vote by way of a show of hands or a ballot by those present in which case a 51% majority will carry the vote
- defer the issue top the next meeting, or
- Defer the issue to a special meeting, or established subcommittee for continued deliberation.

A Council member may request a ballot vote on any issue.

#### **10.5: Notice of Motion**

Notice is a means of showing an intention to discuss and/or vote on something at a particular meeting. The advantage of this is that Council members and other interested community members become aware of the motion and have time to consider its implications.

Any Council member may submit a Notice of Motion for consideration at any meeting of the Council. Such Notice shall be delivered in writing to the chair at a Council meeting at least one month prior to the Council meeting at which the motion is to be considered. This ensures that the Notice can be delivered to all Council members (via the meeting minutes) and community members (via the school newsletter). The chair will add the motion in the agenda of the Council meeting at which it will be considered.

Notice is not mandatory and need not be given on every issue discussed and/or voted on by the Council. Rather, it is intended to ensure adequate input and attendance on important issues such as constitutional amendments and major funding decisions.

#### **10.6: Communication**

The Council shall announce its meetings in the school newsletter at least two weeks in advance of the meeting date.

### **10.7: Agenda**

Agenda items should be submitted to the chair at least one week prior to the next Council meeting. The chair must set the agenda at least one week prior to the next meeting. The agenda is distributed to Council members and interested parents by e-mail no later than 3 days prior to the upcoming meeting. This affords all those concerned to come to the meeting prepared for meaningful discussion.

The Executive may consider additional items for the final agenda up to the day before the meeting. Attendees may not add agenda items at the meeting.

### **10.8: Structure**

When necessary the council will use Robert's Rule of Order.

Council meetings will adhere to the following structure:

- Welcome and introductions
- Principal's Report
- Treasurer's Report and acceptance by motion and vote
- New business items
- Subcommittee updates, including next meeting date and time
- Meeting adjourned

### **10.9: Minutes**

The secretary will distribute the minutes by e-mail to all Council members within 14 days of the meeting. Interested attendees and parents will have access to the minutes via the Park Avenue Public School website. It is the principal's responsibility to post the minutes on the website. Minutes shall include attendance, a synopsis of discussions, motions, decisions and actions to be taken.

### **10.10: 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 issue by the Board.

### ***Article 11: Financial Management***

- All fundraising activities must be in accordance with the Board's School Fundraising and Administration of School Generated Funds policy and procedure
- All expenses should be school related and at a reasonable cost.
- All non-budgeted items require Council approval.
- All cash receipts should be handled, collected, counted and totaled in the presence of at least two (2) Council members or volunteers from different families.
- As Per the Board's School Fundraising and Administration of School Generated Funds policy and procedure, the school is to have one school generated funds account through with all school generated funds flow, the allocation of said funds being under the responsibility of the Principal.
- Release of funds will occur based on the decisions of the council.
- All money must be collected by the end of the year.
- All funds raised by the Council shall be collected for the purpose of enhancing the educational experience of the students of Park Avenue Public School.
- The treasurer will present a written update of the financial record to the Council at each meeting.

### ***Article 12: School Advisory Council Constitution***

#### **12.1: Review**

The Council will review the constitution every year or as the need arises. The Council members will perform the review and present their proposed amendments to the Council for voting.

#### **12.2: Amendments**

Amendments to the constitution must be presented to the Council at least 30 days in advance at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Constitutional amendments need a 2/3 majority vote to be passed.

***Article 13: Protection of School Council Members***

The York Region District School Board holds liability insurance undertaken on behalf of all Councils and, as such, members of the Park Avenue Public School Council are not personally liable for decisions and activities undertaken in relation to the Council, with the exception of any wilful, destructive or dishonest act or neglect, performed by a particular Council member for which that person will be held accountable.

Constitution Reviewed and Accepted on:

*January 12, 2017*