

PHOEBE GILMAN PUBLIC SCHOOL  
School Council Constitution

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**Article 1: Name and Address**

The organization will be known as Phoebe Gilman Public School Council. The members of the School Council shall be responsible for maintaining the constitution.

Phoebe Gilman Public School  
145 Harvest Hills  
East Gwillimbury, Ontario  
L9N 0C1  
905-235-5136

**Article 2: Mission Statement**

Our School Council believes in enhancing and supporting every student's optimal learning opportunities. Through the collaboration of family, community and school, School Council will actively promote involvement of the greater school community in support of Council goals as part of the School Improvement Plan.

**Article 3: Purpose and Objectives**

1. Provide a forum to facilitate and perpetuate effective community involvement in the education of the student body through the contributions of parents and community members.
2. Facilitate, support and encourage communication between all members of the School Community including the student body.
3. Provide meaningful input to the School Improvement Plan, through the entire process, from conception to the greater school community.
4. To be accessible and accountable to the greater school community.
5. Provide input and recommendations to the School Administration, the Board and the Ministry.
6. To encourage effective community involvement in the school in areas where needs have been recognized or assistance has been requested.
7. To participate in events initiated within the larger community, which impact the School Community.
8. To create achievable Council specific goals consistent with the School Improvement Plan, which are reviewed annually, and as required.

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**Article 4: Procedures and Operating Guidelines**

The operational procedures of this 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.

**Article 5: Membership**

**5.1: Number of Parent Members**

The number of parents on the School Council will be no less than six (6).

**5.2: Number of Community Representatives**

The number of community representatives may be one (1).

**5.3: Other Members**

Other members such as teacher representative and support staff representative shall be elected/appointed in accordance with YRDSB Policy #262.

**Article 6: Elections**

**6.1: Acclamations**

Parent elections shall be by acclamation when no upper maximum number is established for parent members. If an upper maximum has been established then follow Article 6.2.

**6.2: Election Procedures for Parent Members**

1. **School council election committee.** The current school council will establish a school council election committee. The committee must ensure that a new council is in place within thirty (30) days of the start of the school year in September. The committee should have representation from parents, teaching staff, and may have non-teaching staff, and students.
2. **Considerations for the school council election process.** In any given year, the term of office for all school council positions is one year. Appeals related to the school council election process or results shall be resolved by the school council election committee. If the situation is not resolved, the school principal and the chair of the outgoing council shall jointly make a ruling.
3. **Election of parent/guardian representatives.**
  - a) 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. With the exception of Article 5, 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, and location of home). Candidates should be prepared to summarize their reasons for running for the school council. They must also declare if they are employed by the school board.
  - b) All parent candidates for elected positions on School Council shall file nomination forms. Parents may nominate themselves or other parents.
  - c) Information about candidates shall be made available to the school community at least one week before the election.
  - d) If the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of positions, the candidates shall be acclaimed.
  - e) No individual campaign literature for school council elections may be distributed or posted in the school.
  - f) School resources, both human and material, may not be used to support particular candidates or groups of candidates.

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- g) The Election Day proceedings shall be publicized by the principal at least fourteen (14) days prior to the election.
- h) The Election Day proceedings shall be supervised by the principal.
- i) The principal shall conduct a lottery to determine the ballot position for each candidate.
- j) Elections for school council shall be conducted by secret ballot. Voters must be present at the school on the election days(s) during the preset hours for voting (to include both daytime and evening hours).
- k) All eligible voters shall be entitled to cast one vote for each of the candidate positions available. Casting more than the maximum number of votes permitted in the category spoils the ballot.
- l) The principal in the presence of at least two parents who are not election candidates shall count ballots.
- m) If there is a tie for the final position for a representative on the school council the winner shall be determined by lot.

**4. Election of the teaching staff representative.**

- a) The principal, in consultation with the election committee, will make the necessary arrangements for the teaching staff representative to be elected.
- b) Anyone assigned to the teaching staff of the school (full or part-time) other than the principal or a vice-principal may be a candidate.

**5. Election of non-teaching staff representative.**

- a) The principal, in consultation with the election committee may make the necessary arrangements for the non-teaching staff representative to be elected.
- b) Anyone assigned to the non-teaching staff of the school (full or part-time) other than the principal or a vice-principal may be a candidate.

**6. Appointment or election of the student representative.**

The principal will consult with other members of 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.

**7. Selection of community representatives.**

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

**6.3: Terms of Office**

Elected and appointed members may seek re-election.

**6.4: Vacancies in Membership**

- 1. A vacancy in the membership of a School Council does not prevent the council from exercising its' authority
- 2. If parent member positions remain vacant on Council, after the election, the Council may appoint parent members.
- 3. 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.

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4. 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.
5. If there are more applications the positions, an election will be called.
6. When no more candidates are available, Council may appoint parent members.
7. Vacancies will only be filled through vote of council.

**6.5: Resignations**

1. Anyone who is a Council member, except the principal, may resign his or her position by writing a letter of resignation to the chair.
2. 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 who misses, *without regrets*, three (3) consecutive meetings and shall undertake to replace that person according to Article 6.4: Vacancies.

**Article 7: Executive**

**7:1 Chair/ Co-Chair**

At the first meeting after the elections, Council will elect a chair or two (2) co-chairs. An employee of the Board cannot be chair.

**7.2: Other Officers**

The Council may elect or appoint the following Officers at Councils discretion: Recording Secretary or Co-Recording Secretaries, Communications Director, Vice-Chair. Any or all the above positions can be shared positions at Council's discretion.

**7.3: Vacancies in Office**

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

**Article 8: Sub-Committees**

**8.1: Establishment**

Sub-committees may be formed to:

- a) Conduct more detailed or in-depth work than is possible during Council meetings
- b) Make recommendations to the Council
- c) Keep the Council informed of issues and developments with their committee

Council may form additional sub-committees as the need arises

**Article 9: Meetings**

**9.1: Timetable of Meetings**

1. At the first meeting of the new school year, a timetable will be created which states the general meeting dates agreed to for that school year.  
(Minimum of 4 Meetings per year)
2. Dates and times will be included in communications to the families of the school.
3. It is recognized that the timetable may change at any time by Administration with notice to Council.

**9.2: Quorum**

A meeting will have quorum if:

- a) fifty percent plus one (50%+1) Council members are present  
AND
- b) The majority of those present are parent members.

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

**9.3: Decision-making**

1. The preferred method to resolve an issue 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, Council will decide on one of the following:
  - a) 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
  - 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**

1. 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 the declaration.
2. Council members cannot receive any remuneration for their work as a member of Council.

**9.5: Conflict Resolution**

The Council will undertake to resolve all internal conflicts within it's' mandate in a timely manner. The Council will abide by any conflict resolution policy issued by the Board.

**Article 10: Agendas and minutes**

**10.1: Agendas**

1. The chair or co-chairs will set the agenda in collaboration with the principal, prior to the meeting.

**10.2: Minutes**

1. Minutes shall be available in the school and posted on the school website and emailed to members prior to the next meeting of the council.
2. The minutes shall include motions, decisions and actions to be taken.
3. Members of the Council must inform a member of Council if they are going to be absent from a Council meeting (see Article 6.6).

**Article 11: Constitutional Amendments**

1. The School Council will review the constitution bi-annually or as the need arises. A sub-committee can perform the review and bring proposed amendments to the School Council for voting.
2. Amendments to the constitution must be presented to the Council, at a regularly scheduled meeting. Council members may have up to thirty (30) days to review proposed amendments before a vote is taken.
3. Constitutional amendments need a 2/3 majority vote of voting members to be passed. A member who wishes to vote by proxy will be allowed to do so by giving a voting member a signed and dated statement to such effect.

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