

Pleasantville Public School

School Council Constitution

(Updated 2014-15)

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Pleasantville Public School

School Council Constitution

Article 1: Name and Address

The organization will be known as Pleasantville Public School school council. The members of the school council shall be responsible for maintaining the constitution.

Pleasantville Public School
400 Mill Street
Richmond Hill, Ontario
L4C-4B9
905.884.7431

Article 2: Mission and Vision Statements

The Pleasantville School Council is a collaborative and co-operative body whose aim is to facilitate a partnership between the members of the school community to achieve the highest possible standards of education in an inviting and wholesome environment.

At Pleasantville, our vision is that we believe in the spirit of working together to reach our goal. We preserve and give back to our environment. We look beyond the ordinary to achieve the extraordinary. We empower one another to be the best we can be. We take pride in being active and healthy. We restore our relationships when they break down. United we stand to accept and embrace diversity. Respect is the foundation of our community. Good character is the compass to our success

Article 3: Purpose and Objectives

1. Encourage effective parental engagement 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. Foster parental and community engagement in education.
5. Provide input into decisions made by the school administration, the Board and the Ministry.
6. 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

The operational procedures of this council are outlined in YRDSB Procedure #262, see Appendix I. 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

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

5.1: Number of Parent Members

The number of parents on the school council will be a **minimum** of 6 to a **maximum** of 15.

5.2: Number of Community Representatives

The number of community representatives will be **1**.

5.3: Student Representative

The Principal will appoint the student representative. This position is optional at the elementary level.

5.4: Other Members

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

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 as specified in Article 5.1.

6.2: Election Procedures for Parent Members

1. In accordance with York Region District School Board policy #262.0, school council elections shall be held in the first 30 calendar days of each school year.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. The Principal shall provide a school council nomination form in the information package sent home in the first week of school and indicate on it a deadline for submission.
5. In the event that the number of individuals nominated for school council exceeds the maximum as outlined in Article 5.1, the Principal shall contact all nominated individuals to notify them of the situation and to ensure that they are still interested in a position should an election be necessary.
6. If the number of candidates still exceeds that specified in Article 5.1, an election is necessary. The Principal:
 - ✓ Ensures that the school community is notified of election procedures and election date(s), location and time, at least fourteen days in advance of the election;

- ✓ requests a profile from all candidates and make these available to the electorate;
 - ✓ conducts the elections by secret ballot;
 - ✓ counts the ballots;
 - ✓ notifies all candidates of the results;
 - ✓ keeps all the results and related information confidential;
 - ✓ shall notify all individuals standing for election of the results before the results are released to the school community;
 - ✓ only releases the names of successful candidates A list of candidates and the vote results will be kept on file for use in the event of vacancy on the council.
7. Appeals
- Any appeals related to the school council election process or election results shall be resolved by the Principal and the chair/co-chairs of the outgoing council.
8. If there is a tie vote for the final position on school council, the winner shall be determined by lot.

6.3 Terms of Office

Elected and appointed members will serve a one year term of office from the date of the first meeting until the first meeting in September of the following year and may seek additional terms of office.

6.4: Vacancies in Membership

- ✓ A vacancy in the membership of the council does not prevent the council from exercising its' authority.
- ✓ Vacancies will only be filled until the first meeting in September of the following year, at which time the vacant positions will be filled through September elections.
- ✓ If parent member positions remain vacant on council, after the election, 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 position, 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 his or her position by writing a letter of resignation to the chair.

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

6.6: Attendance at Meetings

Members of School Council shall regularly attend School Council meetings. The Council may choose to vote on the removal of any member who misses three meetings.

Article 7: Executive

One week prior to the first council meeting, the Principal shall contact council members asking them to indicate, by a specified date, whether they intend to seek a position on the executive.

7.1: Acclamations:

Elections for executive positions shall be by acclamation when the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of positions available for each executive position. The Principal will inform the council of the executive prior to the first meeting.

7.2: Election Procedures for Executive

If an election is necessary, it will take place at the first school council meeting involving the members of the new incoming council.

The Principal:

- ✓ requests in advance of the first meeting, a profile from all candidates and makes these available to council members prior to the first meeting;
- ✓ notifies the candidates that at the first meeting, they will make a 1-2 minute speech to express their suitability for the position sought;
- ✓ ensures that the school council is notified of election procedures and election date(s), location and time;
- ✓ conducts the elections by secret ballot;
- ✓ counts the ballots;
- ✓ notifies all candidates of the results;
- ✓ keeps all the results and related information confidential;
- ✓ notifies all individuals standing for election of the results before the results are released to the school council;
- ✓ keeps the vote results on file for use in the event of vacancy on the council.

7.3: Executive Positions:

1: Chair/Co-Chair

School council chairs/co-chairs shall:

- ✓ carry out tasks in accordance with Board policies and procedures and their school council's constitution and by-laws;
- ✓ call school council meetings (minimum four per year) in consultation with the principal;

- ✓ ensure that parents are consulted about matters under consideration by the council;
- ✓ in collaboration with the principal, undertake fundraising and decision making regarding the management and expenditure of such funds in accordance with relevant Board policies and procedures;
- ✓ prepare the agenda for school council meetings in consultation with the school's principal;
- ✓ chair school council meetings according to the agenda;
- ✓ ensure that minutes of school council meetings are recorded;
- ✓ communicate with the school principal;
- ✓ communicate with senior Board staff and trustees, as required; and
- ✓ ensure that the school council constitution and by-laws are reviewed annually.

An employee of the Board cannot be chair.

2: Secretary

School council secretaries shall:

- ✓ record minutes of school council meetings;
- ✓ provide these minutes in a timely fashion, to the chair and principal for possible revisions; and
- ✓ distribute minutes to council members prior to the next meeting.
- ✓ ensure adopted minutes are posted on school website

3: Treasurer

School council treasurers shall:

- ✓ obtain a report in the week prior to a school council meeting from the principal regarding school council funds;
- ✓ prepare a financial report to provide to all council members explaining school council fundraising and expenditures; and
- ✓ explain the financial report at each meeting.

7.4: Vacancies in Office

Officer vacancies will be filled as soon as possible according to Articles 6.4 and 7.

Article 8: Sub-Committees

8.1: Establishment

Sub-committees may be formed to:

- ✓ Conduct more detailed or in-depth work than is possible during council meeting,
- ✓ Make recommendations to the council,
- ✓ Keep the council informed of issues and developments in its particular area

8.2: Sub-Committee Membership

- ✓ Each sub-committee must contain at least one parent member of council.
- ✓ Persons, who are not members of council, may be members of sub-committees.

8.3: Chairs of Sub-Committees

Council will appoint a chair for each sub-committee it forms. This person does not need to be a member of the school council.

Article 9: Meetings

9.1: Timetable of Meetings

- ✓ At the first meeting of the new school year, a timetable will be created which states the meeting dates agreed to for that school year. (There must be a minimum of 4 meetings)
- ✓ 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 will be sent to the local trustee.

9.2: 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.

9.3: 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 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

9.4: 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 remuneration for their work as a member of council

9.5: Conflict Resolution

The council will undertake to resolve all internal conflicts within its mandate in a timely manner.

The conflict resolution bylaws in Appendix IV will be followed where necessary.

Article 10: Financial Records

10.1: Responsibility

The principal is ultimately responsible for all funds raised in the name of the school which includes School Council funds.

For each school year, the School Council, in collaboration with the principal, establishes a plan outlining the purpose and intended use of funds raised (the Plan). All fundraising initiatives should align with the Plan. In most cases, the School Council's plan aligns with the School's Improvement Plan to support student achievement and success. The fundraising plan can be updated throughout the year to reflect any new initiatives.

Any questions or concerns the School Council has about how School Council Funds have been spent or raised are discussed first with the principal and then, if necessary the Superintendent.

10.2: Disbursement and Allocation of Money

School Council funds are maintained through the school's School Generated Funds (SGF) bank account. The Principal and Elementary Office Administrative Assistant (EOAA) are the signing authorities on the SGF bank account.

A cheque request voucher form must be completed prior to payment of any expenditure and must be accompanied by the original receipt(s) and other supporting documents deemed necessary. All cheque request voucher forms are required to be made available for review by the Treasurer.

All monies received from School Council fundraising events should be immediately segregated and kept secured in the school safe prior to deposit. Under no circumstances are monies permitted to be removed from school property except for deposit into the SGF bank account. Monies received from fundraising events must be counted in the presence of both the Treasurer (or School Council designate) and a member of the office staff (principal/EOAA/SOAA). Once the monies are counted, a deposit enveloped is provided to the EOAA/SOAA for timely deposit. The deposit envelope must be signed by both the Treasurer (or School Council designate) and the member of the office staff to evidence their review.

In order to maintain confidentiality regarding amounts received through the Annual Donation Drive, the Treasurer (or School Council Designate) will only have access to the amount donated and not the identity of the donor (i.e., the Treasurer (or School Council Designate) will not review the returned donation slips and precautions will be taken to ensure any identifying information on cheques received is covered prior to review by the Treasurer (or School Council Designate).

10.3: Record Keeping and Reporting

School Council fund records are maintained on the Board's system – SchoolCash.NET. Categories should be established in the school's SchoolCash.NET recordkeeping system to properly track and maintain expenditures in a manner that confirms compliance with the Plan.

The Treasurer requests detailed reports from SchoolCash.NET from the EOAA prior to each School Council meeting and uses the information contained therein to prepare a finance report for presentation to the School Council. Finance reports are reviewed by School Council to confirm that expenditures have been made appropriately and are in compliance with the Plan. The School Council maintains records of motions approved for expenditures which serve as a control measure.

The Treasurer requests an annual report from SchoolCash.NET from the EOAA to prepare a year-end finance report for presentation to the School Council at the last School Council Meeting of the school year (which is held in the following September).

Article 11: Agendas and Minutes

11.1: Agendas

- ✓ Agenda items should be submitted to the chair one week prior to the council's next meeting.
- ✓ The chair will set the agenda with the principal, prior to the meeting.

11.2: Minutes

- Minutes shall be posted in the school prior to the next meeting of the council.
- ✓ The minutes shall include motions, decisions and actions to be taken.

- ✓ Members of the council must inform the chair if they are going to be absent from a council meeting.

Article 12: 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 school council for voting.
- ✓ Amendments to the constitution must be presented to the council, at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- ✓ Constitutional amendments need a 2/3 majority to be passed.