

# Thornlea Secondary School School Council Constitution

8075 Bayview Avenue, Thornhill, Ontario L3T 4N4  
Council email: thornlea.ss@sc.yrdsb.ca



Version	Date	Summary
1.0	February 25, 2022	Initial creation

## **Article 1: Name and Address**

The organization will be known as Thornlea Secondary School Council:

Location:

8075 Bayview Avenue, Thornhill, Ontario L3T 4N4

Council email: [thornlea.ss@sc.yrdsb.ca](mailto:thornlea.ss@sc.yrdsb.ca)

## **Article 2: Mission Statement**

Our school council is a collaborative and cooperative body whose mission is to facilitate partnership and engagement between/among members of the school community to support high standards of students' achievements and well-being in an inclusive environment.

## **Article 3: Purpose and Objectives**

The purpose of the School Council is, through the active participation of parents and guardians, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents, guardians and school community. The School Council is to act as an advisory body to the principal and, where appropriate, to the York Region District School Board regarding matters including, but not limited to:

- a) creation and maintenance of an environment which is conducive to improving student learning and school effectiveness;
- b) enhancement of communication among parents, guardians, administrators, teachers and students in the school community;
- c) provision of a forum for input into educational matters for members of the school community;
- d) communication of School Council members' ideas, recommendations and concerns to the Board of Education;
- e) development, implementation and review of the School Plan for Continuous Improvement;
- f) support for school, family and community partnerships that assist parents in the education of students;
- g) sponsorship of additional programs, such as educating the School Council on how the Board of Education operates, which would not otherwise be available;
- h) fundraise to support and supplement the School Improvement and Fundraising plan
- i) build a viable school community which works together in the interest of students and education at the School;
- j) offer advice on criteria for the selection of the leadership team (principal and vice-principals) through means such as the School Profile
- k) to promote the building of a vibrant school community which will have as its common interest the education of students served by Thornlea Secondary School

The Thornlea Secondary School Council (the "**Council**") shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its members, and any profits, interest or other accruals shall be used solely to promote the objectives listed above.

## **Article 4: Procedures and Operating Guidelines**

The operational procedures of this Council are outlined in the YRDSB Policy and Procedure #262, available on the Board's website. 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: Parent Members**

The numbers of parents/guardians on the school council will be a maximum of 15, which includes the Executive Members (see Article 7)

Ideally, the membership of the school will reflect the diversity of its school community. A person is qualified to be a parent / guardian member of Council if he/she/they:

- a) is a parent or guardian of a **pupil** who is **enrolled** in the School;
- b) is **not employed** at the school;
- c) is **not employed** elsewhere by the **YRDSB**, **unless** he or she takes reasonable steps to **inform people** qualified to vote in the election of Parent Members of that employment by declaring it on the nomination form;
- d) is **nominated** or **self-nominated** in writing and submitted to the office by the deadline stipulated on the flyer or communiqué, or nominated from the floor of the annual election (if there are still available positions);
- e) **does not distribute or post** campaign literature in the school; and

- f) does **not use school resources**, both human and material, to support particular candidates or groups of candidates.

### **5.2: Principal and Vice Principal Representative**

The principal and vice principal does not have a vote on Council.

### **5.3: Teacher and Support Staff Representatives**

The teacher and support staff representatives shall be elected / appointed in accordance with YRDSB Policy #262 and have one vote

### **5.4: Student Representative**

The student representative(s) shall be the Student Council President(s), or designate.

### **5.5: Number of Community Representatives**

The number of community representatives will be one. A community representative may be appointed by other members of the council, and they would be qualified if he/she/they:

- is not employed at the school; or
- is a board member elsewhere but is not employed at the school, and as long as they notify the other parent members of their employment prior to the appointment.

## **Article 6: Elections**

### **6.1: Acclamations**

Parent /guardian 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**

- a) 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/she/they is employed by the Board.
- b) Each parent/guardian of a child enrolled in the school shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent/guardian membership position on the council.

### **6.2.1: Election of Parent Members**

#### **6.2.1.A: Voting Eligibility**

A person is qualified to vote in an election of parent members of Council if he/she/they is a parent of a pupil who is enrolled in the school (*O. Reg. 612/00, s. 4 (3)*).

Voters must attend the meeting on the election day during the pre-set hours for voting or may submit a proxy to the Principal in advance of the election if they are unable to attend.

All eligible voters shall be entitled to cast one vote for each of the candidate positions available.

#### **6.2.1.B: Timing and Notice of Election**

- a) An election of parent members of a School Council shall be held during the **first 30 days of each school year**, on a date that is fixed by the Chair or Co-Chair of the school council after consulting with the Principal of the school. (*O. Reg. 612/00, s. 4 (4)*)
- b) The Principal of a school shall, at least **14 days** before the date of the election of parent members, on behalf of the school council, give **written notice** of the date, time and location of the election to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school. (*O. Reg. 612/00, s. 4 (6)*)
- c) The **notice** required may be **given** by either:
  - d) giving the notice to the parent's child for **delivery** to his or her parent; or
  - e) **posting the notice** in the school in a location that is accessible to parents. (*O. Reg. 612/00, s. 4 (7)*); or
  - f) any other way which will be received by the parents.
- g) The election of parent Members shall be by **secret ballot**. (*O. Reg. 612/00, s. 4(8)*)

- h) Each **parent or guardian** of a child enrolled in the school shall be entitled to **one vote** for each parent member position on Council

### 6.2.1.C: Eligibility

A person is qualified to be a Parent Member of Council if he or she they:

- a) is a parent or guardian of a **pupil** who is **enrolled** in the School;
- b) is **not employed** at the school;
- c) is **not employed** elsewhere by the **YRDSB**, **unless** he or she takes reasonable steps to **inform people** qualified to vote in the election of Parent Members of that employment by declaring it on the nomination form;
- d) is **nominated** or **self-nominated** in writing and submitted to the office by the deadline stipulated on the flyer or communiqué, or nominated from the floor of the annual election (if there are still available positions);
- e) **does not distribute or post** campaign literature in the school; and
- f) does **not use school resources**, both human and material, to support particular candidates or groups of candidates.

### 6.2.1.D: Number of School Council Parent/ Guardians Members

The number of parent members which shall comprise each year's SC shall be **no more than 15** parents/guardians with children registered at the school as per the school's records at the time of the annual election.

An election will be deemed necessary if parent member nominations exceed 15 people.

### 6.2.1.E: Nomination Committee (optional)

- a) Prior to the end of the previous school year **Council may appoint** a Chair of the Nomination Committee ("Nomination Committee") and such committee may be comprised of a minimum of 1 person or a maximum of 3 people. **If this has not been done** then the **Principal may nominate** a parent within the first 10 days of the first day of school.
- b) The nomination committee shall **not serve or seek** to be a member of Council for the year in which they are gathering nominations.
- c) The **Roles and Responsibilities** of the nomination committee are as follows:
  - i. If the number of nominations are **less than or equal 15 parent/guardian members** with children registered at the School at the time of the annual election, the candidates shall be acclaimed and the nomination committee will **not conduct the election**;
  - ii. Shall allow each nominee the option of making a **speech** for a maximum of one minute at the annual election prior to the distribution of ballots. Speeches will be conducted in order of names on the ballot or as determined by the Chair of the nomination committee;
  - iii. Conduct the elections of parent members by **secret ballot** within first 30 days of the first day of the school year;
  - iv. **Count and report on the ballots** in the presence of a designated YRDSB representative such as the Principal;
  - v. If there is a **tie** for the final position for a representative on the school council, the winner shall be determined by **lot**; and
  - vi. Provide the Principal with a **sealed envelope** with all the unused ballots which will be **destroyed** one day prior to the next year's Council elections.

### 6.2.2: Election of Non-Parent Members

#### **Teaching Staff Representative**

- The **Principal or Vice Principal** will make the necessary arrangements for the teaching staff representative to be elected or appointed.
- Anyone **assigned to the teaching staff** of the school (full or part-time) other than the Principal or the Vice-Principal(s) may be a candidate.

- The teaching staff representative has one vote.

### **Non-Teaching Representative**

- The **Principal or Vice Principal** will make the necessary arrangements for the non-teaching staff representative to be elected or appointed.
- Anyone **assigned to the non-teaching staff** of the school (full or part-time) may be a candidate.
- **Employees** of the YRDSB, who also **work at the school** and have children attending the school cannot be parent members of Council but can participate as a member as a teaching staff representative
- The non-teaching representative has one vote

### **6.2.3: Election of Student Representative**

The **Principal or Vice Principal** may make the necessary arrangements for the student representative to be elected or appointed with consultations and approval with Council and have one vote

### **6.2.4: Selection of community representative**

If there is an appointment of a community representative(s) to Council, then it is to be done by majority vote at a Council meeting. Eligible voters for this vote will include staff members. It is wise for councils to first set their goals for the year, then choose a representative to support them.

Employees of the YRDSB who work at the school may not be a community representative.

No more than one community members can be appointed to Council, and they should not be connected to the school

### **6.2.5 Results of Elections**

The Principal or Vice Principal shall notify all individuals standing for election of the results before the results are published to the school community. The Principal or Vice Principal shall publish a list of successful candidates to the Thornlea Community (Thornlea website or via newsletter) within five (5) days of the election.

### **\*6.4: Terms of Office** (O. Reg 612/00, s. 6)

A person elected or appointed as a member of a school council holds office from the later of,

- the **date** he or she is **elected** or appointed; and
- the **date** of the **first meeting of the school council after the elections** held under sections 4 and 5 in the school year, until the date of the first meeting of the school council after the elections held under sections 4 and 5 in the next school year. (O. Reg. 612/00, s. 6 (1)).

A Member of a school council **may be re-elected or reappointed**, unless otherwise provided by the by-laws of the council. (O. Reg. 612/00, s. 6 (2)).

In the spirit of **mentoring and succession planning** a Council member shall **disclose** their previous Council Executive positions.

### **\*6.5: Vacancies in Membership**

- A vacancy in the membership of a school **council does not prevent the council from exercising its' authority**.
- If positions remain vacant, 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 highest number of votes, the opportunity to accept the position. When there are no more candidates available, council may appoint parent members.

### **6.6: Resignations**

Anyone who is a council member, except the principal, may resign their position by writing a letter of resignation to the Chair.

## **6.7: Removal**

The Council may choose to remove from Council any member who misses two consecutive meetings without sending regrets to the chair.

## **Article 7: The Executive**

The following shall be the **Members** of the Council Executive:

### **7.1: Chair/Co-Chair**

At the first meeting, following the elections of council members, the council will elect either:

- a) one chair or
- b) two co-chairs

An employee of the YRDSB cannot be chair.

### **7.2: Other Executive Members:**

Following the election of Chair/Co-Chairs, the council will elect the following:

- Treasurer; and
- Secretary

### **7.3: Additional Executive Members:**

Other Executive Members of the Council Executive may include, but are not limited to:

- Extra-Curricular Activities Co-ordinator;
- Volunteer Co-ordinator;
- Fundraising Co-ordinator, and.
- Communications Co-ordinator.

### **7.4: New Executive Positions**

Council Members may either by consensus or by a vote decide to create new Executive positions for the current school year.

Such positions will terminate at the end of the Council Executive term.

### **7.3: Vacancies in Executive Council members**

Vacancies will 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 as the need arises to conduct more in-depth work or to make recommendations to the council.

### **8.2: Sub-Committee Membership**

- Sub-committees must include at least one parent member of council and may include persons who are not members of the school council.
- The chair is a member *ex officio* of every sub-committee.

### **8.3: Chairs of Sub-Committees**

Council will appoint a committee Chair who is a council member, for each sub-committee as it forms. The committee Chair will report back to Council for approval on position statements or direction setting, and Council will make recommendations and have the final say

### **8.4: Sub committee spending**

Committees must follow by-laws regarding any financial spending and approval

## **Article 9: Meetings**

### **9.1: Timetable of Meetings**

At the first meeting of the school year, a timetable will be created which states the meeting dates agreed to for that school year.

Meeting dates to be communicated to the school community.

### **9.2: Quorum**

A meeting will have quorum if 50% plus one of parent council members are present. 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 or by voting during Council meetings as described in Article 9.1.

- a) **Consensus** is done by finding alternatives to which everyone shall agree. Once a decision is reached by consensus, Council may formalize it through a motion and the result of the vote should be unanimous.
- b) **Voting** is done by,
  - i. providing council with the **information** it requires to make a decision;
  - ii. making a **motion** (a simple statement of the question to be voted on);
  - iii. **"seconding"** the motion (which means that it is worthy of a discussion or vote);
  - iv. **discussing** the issue relating to the motion; and
  - v. **voting** by either a show of hands or by secret ballot, which a majority (50% plus 1 vote) shall carry the motion

Decisions by consensus or voting are **null and void** if they contradict provincial laws, regulation, local policy or school council by-laws.

Decisions regarding Council priorities, special events, fundraising events and allocation of funds are to be made in accordance with a majority vote of Council Members.

In the event where an emergency decision needs to be made outside of Council meetings (Article 9.1), an e-vote (via email) will be sent out to all Council members, with a maximum spending of \$250 is allowed:

- a) Chair or Co-Chair to send out an email detailing out the emergency vote to all Members (Article 5), with a deadline to respond (minimum 24 hours)
- b) To ensure transparency, members shall **"reply all"** with their decision by date indicated in the email.
- c) After the deadline, Chair or Co-Chair shall summarize the results and send to all Members, including the final decision, which a majority (50% plus 1 vote) shall carry the motion
- d) At the next Council meeting, the chair shall summarize the emergency decision, and Secretary to record the motion and decision in the meeting minutes.

Any Council external communication, in any format, other than event/project flyers, shall be circulated amongst the Council Executive for review and comment at least one day prior to dissemination. In the event of an emergency the notice period may be less than one day.

All Council communication shall be signed as **"Thornlea Secondary School Council"** with the applicable author's contact information if necessary.

### **\*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 recuse himself/herself at the time of the meeting for the subject matter discussions, so the minutes may reflect this declaration.
- 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 its' 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: Agenda**

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

## **10.2: Minutes**

- Minutes shall be distributed to all council members prior to the next council meeting.
- 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 11: Financial Obligations (Reg. 612/00, Section 16 & 22)**

### **11.1: General**

Council shall keep records of all its financial transactions.

The financial records for the last seven years shall be available at the school for examination without charge by any person.

A general reserve of an amount not less than \$500.00 must be carried at all times. For the upcoming 2021-2022 school year, if \$500 cannot be reserved, Council should put 20% of net funds raised during the school year into a general reserve

### **11.2: Budget**

Council, in performing its mandate, will require an approved budget to manage funds donated and distributed and the following should be used to guide the management and distribution of those funds.

The elected Treasurer along with the Chair/Co-Chairs, Principal and Vice Principal will determine the budgetary needs for the school year following the elections and must be approved by the school council within the next 2 meetings following elections.

### **11.3: Prior Approval**

All Council expenditures will require a pre-approval of disbursement(s) by a majority vote at a Council meeting with the exception of Miscellaneous Expenditures.

The following members in article 5 have the following votes:

- a) Parent Members: each member has one vote
- b) Principal or Vice Principal: no votes
- c) Teacher and Support Staff Representatives: 1 vote
- d) Student Representative: 1 vote
- e) Community Representatives: combined, 1 vote

Miscellaneous expenditures not exceeding \$20 may be incurred with the prior approval of the Treasurer, unless such disbursements are made on an emergency basis.

The Treasurer shall not reimburse any person who fails to comply with the above.

### **11.4: Signing Authority**

- I. The Treasurer and Principal/Vice-Principal shall sign all Council cheque requisition forms

### **11.5: Reimbursements**

- a) To ensure proper control and timely reporting, all bills and invoices/receipts must be submitted for reimbursement, either directly to the Treasurer; or left with the office to the attention of the Treasurer, and advise the Treasurer of the items left for pick-up, within 21 days of the last day of the program/event or the date of the expenditure, whichever is later.
- b) The Treasurer **shall not approve the reimbursement to** any person who fails to comply with above.
- c) The Treasurer has the authority to make an exception to (I) and (II) if the individual seeking reimbursement obtains prior approval from the Treasurer prior to the last day of the program/event or the date of the expenditure, whichever is later.
- d) Upon receiving bills and invoices/receipts in compliance with 11.5(I-III), the Treasurer shall approve the requisition /reimbursement and the school administration to reimburse within 14 days.

### **\*11.6: Fundraising (O. Reg 612/00, s. 22)**



- a) All fundraising on behalf of Council is only permitted when pre-approved by Council.
- b) Subject to subsection (c), a school council may engage in fundraising activities. (*O. Reg. 612/00, s. 22 (1)*).
- c) A school council shall not engage in fundraising activities unless,
  - i. the activities are conducted in accordance with any applicable policies established by the board; and
  - ii. the activities are to raise funds for a purpose approved by the board or authorized by any applicable policies established by the board. (*O. Reg. 612/00, s. 22 (2)*).
- d) A school council shall ensure that the funds raised by it are used in accordance with any applicable policies established by the YRDSB. (*O. Reg. 612/00, s. 22 (3)*). All efforts will be made to spend/finance projects that are equally spread throughout the divisions.

#### **11.7: Funds Collected (not within School Cash Online)**

- a) Any and all monies collected on behalf of Council must be given to its **Treasurer**, labelled with the **program** it relates to and with a dollar value total written on the envelope or bag.
- b) For accuracy and transparency purposes, counting of the money should always be **done by 2 council members**.
- c) To ensure control and timely reporting, all funds received shall be submitted directly to the Treasurer, or to the School office to the attention of the Treasurer or Thornlea Secondary School Council to be deposited into the Council bank account **within 4 days** following the last day of a program/event.

#### **11.8: Reporting Requirements**

The Treasurer shall complete and submit the following financial reports to the Council, Principal, and YRDSB:

##### **11.8.1: Annually Financial Reporting**

Annually, The Treasurer, on behalf of Council shall submit a written report on its activities to the Principal and YRDSB. (*O. Reg. 612/00, s. 24 (1)*). Please refer to YRDSB's School Council Annual Report for more information.

If the school council engages in fundraising activities, the annual report shall include a report on those activities. (*O. Reg. 612/00, s. 24 (2)*)

The principal shall, on behalf of the school council, give a copy of the report to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the copy is given, is enrolled in the school. (*O. Reg. 612/00, s. 24 (3)*).

School Council Public Sector Accounting Board Report 20YY for the period August 1, 20XX to July 31, 20XY - this has to be signed by the Treasurer and the Principal. The following documents must be attached,

- a copy of the July 31, 20XY bank statement; and
- bank reconciliation for July 31, 20XY

##### **11.8.2: Monthly Financial Reporting**

"Monthly Financial Report" shall be prepared and presented by the Treasurer and circulated to all Council members one day prior to the Council Meeting

##### **11.8.3: Spending of Funds**

On or before the last SAC meeting of the school year, Council members shall determine a tentative allocation for funds available on hand as at July 31, 20XY

Funds should all be spent within a two year period, except for the yearly reserve amount, of the end of the fiscal year in which they are raised, unless designated for a specific project in which case there should be a defined time frame.

##### **11.8.4: Other Reporting Requirements**

The Council will prepare/review and submit annually, no later than November of each school year or as requested by the superintendent, an administrator profile outlining the preferred characteristics of the school's principal and/or vice principal.

#### **\*Article 13: Remuneration (O.Reg. 612/00, s. 11)**

A person shall not receive any remuneration for serving as a member, executive officer or committee member of Council.

#### **Article 14: Constitutional Amendments**

- The school council will review the constitution every year.
- Amendments to the constitution must be presented to the council at a regularly scheduled meeting.
- Constitutional amendments need a majority (50% plus 1 vote) to be passed.

Note: Items that appear with an \* are bylaws which MUST be included as per Ministry of Education Regulation #612/613 (O.Reg. 612).