

Unionville Public School Council Constitution

May 2012

Article 1: Name and Address

The name of the organization shall be the Unionville Public School Council and is also referred to by its acronym "UPSC" or as the UPS Council. The address is:

300 Main Street

Unionville, Ontario L3R 2H2

Telephone Number 905-477-1824

Article 2: Mission Statement

The Mission of Unionville Public School Council is for parents, staff, and administration to work collaboratively to promote a respectful workplace and an inviting and safe environment with learning as its focus. We strive to foster in each student the values, knowledge and skills needed to make a meaningful contribution to our community and a changing Canadian society.

The Mission Statement of the UPS Council complements the Unionville Public School Touch Stone:

I am a member of the Unionville Public School Community. We embrace diversity and cherish individuality. We are risk-takers who learn from our mistakes. We are committed to supporting and learning from each other. We respect the rights, feelings, and property of others. I will take responsibility for creating a safe and enjoyable learning environment. We believe in honest efforts to achieve our personal best. We protect the environment. We value education and those who seek to teach us. We laugh, learn, and care as a community. I am a member of the Unionville Public School community and I am free to be myself.

Article 3: Purpose and Objectives

Working within the framework of this mission statement and constitution, and governed by the policies, mission and goals of Unionville Public School, York Region District School Board, and the Education Act and Regulations, the Council will:

1. Facilitate the building of a school community that works together in the best interests of our students and their education. The term *school community* includes parents, administrators, teaching staff, support staff, students and members of the local community.
2. Encourage effective parental involvement in the education of their children through initiatives that extend on in-school learning with the aim of improving student achievement. Areas of focus may include but are not limited to topics such as parenting skills, communication, volunteering, and learning at home.

3. Provide a means for regular communication and dialogue between all members of the school community.
4. Work to coordinate the services for school, family and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational and nutritional programs as they relate to the education of Unionville Public School children.
5. Provide links to information between the YRDSB, Ministry and school community.
6. UPS Council members shall maintain a school-wide focus on all topics. UPS Council meetings shall not be a forum for discussion regarding individual students, staff, trustees or other Council members unrelated to an election or acclamation process.

Article 4: Procedures and Operating Guidelines

The operational procedures of this Council are outlined in the York Region District School Board Policy and Procedure #262. All recommendations and activities of the UPS Council shall comply with the Ministry of Education Acts, York Region District School Board Policies and Procedures, and Staff Collective Agreements.

Article 5: Membership

The following shall be members of the UPS Council, elected or appointed as per Article 6, in accordance with the provisions described.

Parents must form the majority of the UPS Council members.

There will be no remuneration paid to the members of the UPS Council.

There shall be no more than one voting member on the UPS Council from any one household.

The minimum number of voting members on the UPS Council will be six and the maximum number of voting members on the UPS Council will be twelve.

Roles and Responsibilities of members of the UPS Council are detailed in Appendix A.

Voting Members

5.1 Voting Parent Members of the UPS Council

To be a voting member on the UPS Council, a parent must declare if they are an employee of the YRDSB. Chair and Vice/Co-chair positions cannot be held by a YRDSB employee.

Each voting member of the UPS Council will be allocated one vote.

Mandatory portfolio positions of the UPS Council include Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. Additional portfolios may include, but are not limited to Past Chair, Vice/Co-Chair, Fundraising, Healthy School/Lunch Programs, Community Outreach/ Communication, and Members at Large. Overall responsibilities of these positions are detailed in Appendix A.

There will be a minimum of one voting member participating on each of the sub-committees and they will be expected to facilitate the activities and bring these perspectives back to Council.

5.2 Voting Community Representatives

There will be one voting member position given to a representative of the community. The community representative will be appointed by the UPS Council.

If a community representative cannot be appointed, the number of parent positions may be increased by one only if the voting member maximum will not be exceeded.

Non-voting Members of the UPS School Council

5.3 Parent Representatives/Visitors to Council Meetings

Parents/Guardians/Community members are encouraged to regularly attend the Council meetings and to participate in the many volunteer and committee opportunities that the work of the Council presents.

There will be no limit set on the number of non-voting representatives that may attend the meetings other than the capacity limit of the meeting facility itself.

5.4 Student Representative

A non-voting student representative may be appointed to the UPS Council at the discretion and recommendation of the Principal.

5.5 Principal and/or Vice-Principal

The Principal of the school must attend the UPS Council meetings or send the Vice Principal as a designate. The Principal or Vice-Principal cannot fill the school representative position(s).

5.6 School Representatives

Teacher representatives and support staff representatives will be elected or appointed in accordance with YRDSB Policy #262 and will form part of the non-voting members of the UPS Council.

5.7 School Board Personnel

Supervisory officers in their official capacity may act as resource personnel, but not as members of the Council or its committees. If requested, Trustees are to receive copies of UPS Council agenda and minutes and are invited to attend and participate in School Council meetings within their jurisdiction, but not as voting members.

Article 6: Elections and Terms of Office

6.1 Acclamations

Parent member positions shall be appointed by acclamation when the number of candidates is equal to, or less than the number of voting parent member positions on the Council.

6.2 Election Procedures for Voting Parent Members

The UPS Council shall strike an election committee in May to help plan the election process for the following year. No one standing for election, or the spouse of anyone standing for election, shall be a member of the election committee.

The following is based on Ontario Regulation 612/00, School Councils – A guide for Members (Ministry of Ontario)

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/council02.pdf>

- Elections or Acclamation of a School Council will occur on a yearly basis. Elections will occur within the first 30 days of school.
- The term of office will be one year starting in September to the following September when the new council is brought in. Members may seek additional terms of office.

The following outlines the timeline for the Unionville Public School Council's Election or Acclamation Process:

May/June

- A committee is established to deal with the school council election/acclamation of parent members. If the election committee member(s) cannot be found within the attendees of the May/June council meeting, a written request will be sent home with the UPS students to seek an appropriate candidate.
- A plan is put in place to deal with how the school council election/acclamation will occur.
- By the last council meeting of the school year, the date, time, and location of the tentative election are determined, as well as how the election will be advertised in the fall.
- A nomination form is also developed. **An election will only occur if there are more than 12 persons interested in holding voting positions.**

School council chair(s) must have the necessary information for the election to the Principal well in advance of the election.

Early September

- In the welcome-back-to-school mailing, the Principal includes parent-candidate nomination forms and information about the date by which nominations must be received at the school, who is eligible to stand for election, the date of the election, and other information about the election/acclamation. This package must be in parents' hands at least 14 days prior to the election.

- 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 York Region District School Board.
- The Principal posts UPS Council election information in an area of the school that is easily accessible to parents. Suitable venues would be the bulletin board and the school website. Parents return candidacy nomination forms to the school.

Mid- September

- A list of parent nominees with brief biographies is sent home or mailed or e-mailed out, with a reminder of the election date and information on the election process. **This will only occur if there are more than 12 candidates.** If there are 12 or less an acclamation of members will occur at the first council meeting. Each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent membership position on the Council.
- The election of the teacher, non-teacher, and student representatives may or may not take place at the same time or shortly after the election of parent representatives. The Principal along with the election committee will decide on these members in conjunction with the staff and students.

Late September to early October

- The first meeting of the new UPS Council takes place, and meeting dates, times, and locations for the upcoming year are determined.
- The names of the new UPS Council members are publicized to the school community within thirty days of the election, as are the dates, times, and locations of future meetings.

6.3 Vacancies in Membership

A vacancy in the membership of the UPS Council does not prevent the Council from exercising its authority.

Voting parent positions that remain vacant on the UPS Council after acclamations or elections are held, or that become vacant due to resignation or removal, shall be filled for the current year term in the following manner:

- Offering the position to the person with the next largest number of votes who was not elected; or,
- Seeking volunteers from the parent community if all members were acclaimed, and
- Calling an election if the number of volunteers exceeds the number of vacancies, or
- Appointing parent members.

When the vacant position is for a community member, the UPS Council will seek volunteers and make an appointment.

After May 1, voting positions that become vacant will remain vacant until the following year unless the vacancy reduces voting membership to less than six.

6.4 Resignations

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

If someone resigns, the position vacated will be filled according to Article 6.3 Vacancies.

6.5 Removal

If any voting member of the UPS Council misses two meetings throughout their term of office, they will be notified in writing of the intent to remove them from Council. At a third meeting missed, the member will be excused from voting membership and Council will initiate replacement as per Article 6.4.

Any member of the UPS Council who fails to perform his/her duties or who fails to adhere to UPS Council norms may forfeit membership upon discussion and agreement of the Administration and Chair of the Council.

Article 7: Executive

7.1 Chair/Co-Chair

An employee of the York Region District School Board cannot be Chair, Co-Chair or Vice Chair.

7.2 Officers of the Council

The mandatory Officers of the UPS Council shall consist of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

The optional Officers of the UPS Council may consist of Past Chair, Vice/Co-chair, Fundraising, Healthy School, Lunch Programs, Community Outreach, Communication, and other roles as deemed necessary by the UPS Council on a year by year basis.

7.3 Vacancies in Office

Officer 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 throughout the year to:

- Conduct more detailed or in-depth work than is possible during UPS Council meetings.
- Make recommendations to the UPS Council.
- Keep the UPS Council informed of issues and developments in its' particular area of focus.

Sub-committees may include but are not limited to:

Budget	Education	Fundraising
Playground	Election	Volunteer/Community Outreach
Communications	Environmental	Policy and Procedure
Constitution	Healthy Schools	Lunch Programs

Council shall form and disband sub-committees as deemed necessary.

8.2 Sub-Committee Membership

Each sub-committee must contain at least one voting member.

Persons who are not voting members of UPS Council may be members of sub-committees.

The Principal/Vice Principal and Chair/Co-Chair will be assumed to be members of all sub-committees and will be kept apprised of meetings and outcomes.

Article 9: Meetings

9.1 Timetable of Meetings and Agenda

The UPS Council will meet a minimum of four times during the school year.

The Chair in conjunction with the UPS Council will establish a monthly meeting schedule and will make sure that these dates and times are communicated to the school community at the beginning of the year. Meetings are open to the school community.

The Chair, in conjunction with the agenda committee (see Article 11) will determine if the monthly meeting is necessary and will inform the UPS Council members of a cancellation of a meeting if it is not required.

Any meeting outside of the regularly scheduled meetings of the UPS Council shall be considered a special meeting. Special meetings may be called by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Council. The topic and timing of the special meeting will be communicated to the UPS Council members via telephone or e-mail a minimum of two school days in advance. When appropriate, this communication will also be made to the school community as a whole.

A copy of the list of dates and times of meeting will be sent to the Local Trustee if requested.

9.2 Quorum

A meeting will have quorum if the majority (51%) of UPS Council members are present AND the majority of those present are voting parents.

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

9.3 Decision Making

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

In the cases where a decision cannot be reached by consensus, the Chair may use one of the following approaches:

1. 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.
2. To defer the issue to the next meeting.
3. To defer the issue to a special meeting.
4. To defer the issue to a sub-committee.

9.4 Conflict of Interest

If individual UPS Council members are in conflict of interest of an agenda item intended for discussion, they are honour bound to declare their conflict at the earliest possible opportunity so that the minutes may reflect this declaration.

The UPS Council member will be expected to remain out of the discussion and out of any motions or voting as pertains to the conflict. If necessary, the member may be excused during discussion and voting.

9.5 Conflict Resolution

The UPS Council will abide by any conflict resolution policy issued by the York Region District School Board.

The UPS Council will undertake to resolve all internal conflicts that occur within its' mandate within a timely manner. If necessary, the Council will seek the advice of the Principal or the YRDSB Community Liaison.

Article 10: Financial Records

Financial records will be presented monthly and be accepted by motion and vote of the UPS Council. Financial records will be kept for a period of seven years on school property.

10.1: Disbursement and Allocation of Money

UPS Council funds must be used solely for the benefit of the Unionville Public School students.

Funds will be dispersed or allocated to a specific purpose by the end of the year.

In the event of Capital Asset Fundraising, funds may be allocated and carried forward to future years. A Tangible Capital Asset (TCA) is an item that has a useful life of at least five years and a cost of greater than \$5,000 per item (e.g., Gymnasium/stage curtain systems) before taxes or playgrounds with a cost of greater than \$10,000 before taxes.

Article 11: Agendas and Minutes

11.1 Agenda Items

An agenda committee will be comprised of the Chair and/or Vice Chair and the Principal in the week preceding the UPS Council meeting. The Chair acts as the facilitator of this meeting.

Any agenda items will be added to the itinerary with an estimated time allocated for discussion.

The agenda will be distributed to the UPS Council members at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

Agenda items must be provided in advance of the meeting. New items that are identified during the meeting that will require a UPS Council vote must be deferred to a future meeting to ensure all interested parties have the opportunity to attend and participate.

11.2 Minutes

Minutes shall be distributed via e-mail at a minimum of one week in advance of the next UPS Council meeting to allow time for corrections and revisions prior to acceptance at the next meeting.

Minutes will include all pertinent information from the meeting including attendance, motions, decisions and actions to be taken.

Approved minutes will be made available to the school community and posted to the UPS Council and/or the UPS website.

Article 12: Constitutional Amendments

UPS 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 UPS Council for voting.

A revised constitution must be presented to the UPS Council, at a regularly scheduled meeting.

Constitutional amendments require a two-thirds majority to be passed.

Revision History:

May 2012 – Constitution Committee (Chair–Pamela Nitert; Vice-Chair–Kristen Hansen; Past Chair–Hilary Seppanen; Principal–Helen Hart; Vice-Principal–Carolyn Brndiar). Submitted for Approval at May 22, 2012 UPS Council Meeting.

May 2010– Constitution Committee (Chair–Hilary Seppanen; Vice Chair-Pamela Nitert; Principal–Dr. Debbie Donsky). Approved by UPS Council June 2010.

Appendix A: Roles and Responsibilities of Council Members

Overall Responsibilities

All UPS Council members (voting and non-voting) share the following roles and responsibilities:

- Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues, acting as a non-biased link between the UPS Council and school community.
- Encourage active involvement of members of the school community.
- Participate actively in the sub- committees to which they are designated or have volunteered.
- Adhere to meeting norms.
- Submit potential agenda items to the Agenda committee. Members who have requested items on the agenda may be called on to present or discuss them during the meeting.
- Ensure that current, correct contact information is provided to the Chair and Secretary of the Council to facilitate effective communication between members.

Voting members of the UPS Council must also:

- Attend all scheduled and special meetings of the UPS Council.
- Notify the Chair of any absences from UPS Council meetings.
- Participate in YRDSB forums, if requested and available.
- Vote on school-wide topics when required.

In addition to overall responsibilities, specific officers of the UPS Council have additional requirements as follows:

Chair (or Co-Chairs) shall:

- Oversee the transition of UPS Council from one year to the next.
- Plan the schedule of meetings for the UPS Council and call any special meetings as required.
- Act as the Chair of the Agenda committee and prepare agenda for meetings.
- Facilitate UPS Council meetings in an orderly and efficient manner that ensures adherence to the operating norms.
- Ensure that the minutes and other documentation of the UPS Council are recorded and accurate.
- Communicate with the Principal.
- Ensure communication with the school community.
- Consult with Board Staff and Trustees, as required.
- Participate in YRDSB forums.
- Prepare the annual report for approval by the UPS Council prior to submission to the Director of Education prior to the end of the school year.
- Ensure that the UPS Council Constitution is reviewed at minimum once every two years or more often if needed.

- Update the School Principal Profile annually.
- Apply for Ministry Pro-grant funding, if available.

Vice-Chair shall:

- Act on behalf of the Chair as required.

Secretary shall:

- Record attendance and minutes of all meetings.
- Compile and maintain a listing of contact information for UPS Council members.
- Maintain a listing of actions items to be included on subsequent agendas and provide these to the agenda committee.
- Distribute minutes, collect feedback and republish final minutes prior to Council meetings to facilitate acceptance.

Treasurer shall:

- Take responsibility for the receipt and disbursement of all funds to the appropriate school administration staff.
- Submit an up to date financial report at each UPS Council meeting to facilitate acceptance.

Principal/Vice Principal shall:

- Support and promote the UPS Council's operations and activities.
- Seek input from the UPS Council in areas of priority and be prepared to provide information necessary to make informed decisions.
- Provide updates on school-wide endeavours and accomplishments.
- Provide or gather resources on laws, regulations, Board Policies, Collective Agreements to enable informed decisions.
- Ensure that the copies of the minutes of the UPS Council are kept at the school for a four year period as per YRDSB policy.
- Ensure that the copies of the financial records of the UPS Council are kept at the school for a seven year period.
- Ensure that the Constitution and Bylaws are readily available to the school community.
- Assist the UPS Council in communicating with the school community.
- Lend support to school community organizations which operate separately from the UPS Council, and provide for an effective liaison between the Council and the organization.
- Seek opportunities for additional funding which will allow enhanced education and leadership opportunities for students at Unionville Public School.

Appendix B: Bylaw – Conduct of Council Affairs

Meetings of the UPS Council will be facilitated according to the following norms:

1. Start and stop on time, adhering to the timelines and timekeeper.
2. Be respectful by listening and not participating in side conversations, and by speaking to fellow members as you would like to be spoken to.
3. Support fellow UPS Council members and decisions within the community.
4. Read minutes and all information presented to have a clear understanding prior to the meeting.
5. After a discussion is completed, the outcome will be clearly stated so that the action and/or date of completion is understood by all.
6. Confidential information obtained during UPS Council meetings must be kept private and confidential.

Appendix C: Bylaw – Unionville Public School Council Election Procedures

The election committee shall:

- Provide nomination forms.
- Ensure that the school community is notified of the election procedures. Information detailing the election process, date and time of the election meeting, officer positions for the year, and nomination forms will be sent to all households of students registered in the school. This information will be provided to families a minimum of 14 days prior to the anticipated election date.
- Request a profile from the candidates and make these available to the electorate;
- Conduct the elections by secret ballot;
- Count the ballots.
- Help the Principal notify all candidates of the results.
- Keep the results and related information confidential.

Administration shall ensure:

- Only the names of the successful candidates shall be made public. A list of candidates and vote results will be kept on file for 10 months by the UPS Council for use in the event of vacancy on the Council.
- All individuals standing for election shall be notified of the results before the results are released to the school community.
- The UPS Council shall help the principal ensure that the names of new members are publicized to the school community.