



## **WESTMINSTER PUBLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION**

### **ARTICLE 1: NAME AND ADDRESS**

This organization will be known as Westminster Public School Council. The school address is known as:  
Westminster Public School  
366 Mullen Dr.  
Thornhill, ON  
L4J 2P3  
(905) 731-2963

### **ARTICLE 2: PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose and objectives of Westminster Public School Council are to:

1. Encourage effective parental and community involvement 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. Provide informed advice to the Principal to assist in making decisions. This advice should reflect the views of the school community and the best interests of the students.
5. Provide meaningful consultation and extensive involvement of all members of the school community.
6. Provide input into decisions made by the school administration, the Board and the Ministry.
7. Help to co-ordinate the services for school, family and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational and nutrition programs that assist in the education of children.
8. Facilitate the building of a viable school community, which works together in the best interests of our students and their education.
9. Fundraise to support and supplement the School Improvement and Fundraising plan.

### **ARTICLE 3: 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 4: ELECTIONS**

### **4.1: Acclamations**

Parent member 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. Parents must form the majority of Council members. If the number of candidates is greater than the number of parent member positions, elections will be carried out as below.

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

1. Elections shall occur within the first thirty days of the start 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, must declare if he or she is employed by the Board and must be present at the first Council meeting to be elected.
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. Voting can take place in person at the first meeting of the school year. Voting can also take place by submitting a ballot 2 days prior to the first meeting, in the school office.
5. The list of candidates and information on voting times will be made available to school parents one week before elections.

### **4.3: Terms of Office**

1. Each position shall be in office for one school year (September to June).
2. Elected and appointed members may seek additional terms of office the following September.
3. Chair Resignation: If a Chair person wishes to relinquish their position they may tender their written resignation before the principal and school council and a new election will be held. Such election may be held in the fall or at the next Council meeting or at a time that is convenient to School Council.

### **4.4: Vacancies in Membership**

1. A vacancy in the membership of a School Council does not prevent the Council from exercising its authority.
2. If positions remain vacant after the election the Council may appoint parent members.
3. Positions that become vacant due to resignations shall be filled as soon as possible by offering the position to the candidate that acquired the next highest number of votes, (in the original September election process) the opportunity to accept the position.
4. Anyone who is a Council member, except the principal, may resign their position by writing a letter of resignation to the chair.
5. When there are no more candidates available, council may appoint parent members.
6. Vacancies will only be filled until June of the current year; at which time the vacant positions will be filled through September elections.

## **ARTICLE 5: MEMBERSHIP**

### **5.1 Number of Parent Members**

The number of parents/guardians on the school council will be a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12.

## **5.2 Number of Community Representatives**

The number of community representatives may be 1.

## **5.3 Student Representative**

The Student Council/student body may elect one student or failing that, the School Council or Principal may appoint one student. The student representative must have a parent or guardian that is not a voting member of the Parent Council. The Student representative does not have a vote on Council.

## **5.4 Other Members**

Teacher representative and support staff representative shall be elected by staff or appointed by the Principal. The Principal will be a member of Council.

## **5.5 Roles and Responsibilities of all Council Members**

All Council members will:

1. Regularly attend and participate in Council meetings.
2. Maintain a school wide perspective on issues.
3. Help to achieve the goals established by the Council.
4. Encourage the participation of all parents and of other people within the school community.
5. Participate in one or more of the Council's sub-committees and assist with the tasks of the committee(s) and of Council as required.
6. Send regrets to the Chair or Secretary if they cannot attend a meeting.
7. If a Council member misses two consecutive meetings, without informing the Chair, the Council may choose to remove the member from Council.
8. All members of Council have one vote with the exception of the Principal.
9. All parents are invited to attend Council meetings and speak to issues, but voting will be restricted to members of Council.
10. In an effort to facilitate members of the Council in their decision making process, the Principal, who is a Council member, is encouraged to make their best efforts in providing transparency relating to YRDSB policy, funding and school budgets.
11. If a voting member misses more than two consecutive meetings Council may move to remove that member from council and reduce the total quantity of members required for voting quorum. Removal of such member(s) may be reduced to a minimum of 10 voting council members per school year. Notice of such removal shall be provided to the specific Council member immediately thereafter.
12. The eliminated member, as set out in 5.5.11, doesn't preclude that member from attending, listening and participating in any future Council meetings.

## **ARTICLE 6: THE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

### **6.1: The Chair/Co-Chairs**

At the first meeting of the school year, the Council will elect one Chair or two Co-Chairs. An employee of the Board cannot be Chair or Co-Chair.

The Chair or Co-Chairs shall:

1. Call Council meetings in consultation with the Principal.
2. Communicate with parents about matters under consideration by the Council.
3. Prepare the agenda for Council meeting in consultation with the Principal.
4. Ensure that the agenda is distributed to Council members 3-5 days prior to an upcoming meeting.

5. Chair Council meetings according to the agenda.
6. Ensure the Westminster Public School Council Constitution is readily available to the school community.
7. Communicate with and provide advice to the school Principal on behalf of the Council.
8. Participate in information sessions.
9. Consult with senior Board staff and trustees, as required.
10. After consultation with the Executive have the authority to approve urgent/emergent expenditures up to \$200 between council meetings.
11. The Chair shall meet with the Principal on a regular basis to go over affairs of Council.

## **6.2: Other Officers of the Executive**

At the first meeting of the school year, the Council will elect (from the Parent members) a Treasurer and Secretary.

*The Treasurer of Council shall:*

1. Keep a proper record of all receipts and disbursements of the Council, as per school records.
2. Prepare and update a budget for the activities of the Council.
3. Prepare the preliminary treasurer's report and review with the Principal and Chair generally 7-10 days prior to the next meeting.
4. Prepare financial updates and a Treasurers report for each Council meeting. The Treasurer's report shall be distributed to Council members generally 72 hours prior to an upcoming meeting, e-mailed to Council ideally 3-5 days in advance.
5. Perform all duties in accordance with the Ministry of Education regulation 612; YRDSB policy 262 (School Councils) and 676 (School Fundraising and Administration of School Generated Funds) and Procedure NP 133 (Financial Management for School Councils and Other Parent Fundraising Groups)

*The Secretary of Council shall:*

1. Ensure that the minutes of Council meetings are recorded appropriately, communicated and distributed to Council members within fourteen days following each Council meeting and posted on the Council website.
2. Keep the official record of all meetings, attendance at those meetings and all documents.
3. Establish the membership list for distribution and keep the membership and executive lists up to date.
4. Determine who is eligible to vote at the beginning of each meeting.
5. Confirm that a quorum is present at a Council meeting if and when voting is required.

## **6.3: Vacancies in Executive Office**

Officer vacancies will be filled as soon as possible.

## **ARTICLE 7: SUB-COMMITTEES**

At the first meeting of the school year, sub-committees may be formed to:

1. Conduct more in-depth or detailed work than is possible during Council meetings.
2. Make recommendations to the Council.
3. Keep the Council informed of issues and developments in its particular area. Additional sub-committees will be formed as the need arises. Sub-committees must include at least one voting parent member of Council and may include persons who are not members of the School Council. Each sub-committee will elect its own Chair. All members of the subcommittee will have a vote during deliberations of that sub-committee even if they are not voting members of the Council.

## **ARTICLE 8: MEETINGS**

### **8.1 Timetable of Meetings**

1. 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.
2. A copy of these dates and times will be included in communication(s) to the families of the school.
3. It is recognized that the timetable may change with a majority vote of the Council.
4. A copy of the list of dates and times of meetings will be sent to the local Trustee.
5. School Council shall have a minimum of 4 meetings per school year.

### **8.2 Quorum**

A meeting will have quorum if:

1. The majority of Council members are present AND
2. 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.

### **8.3 Decision-making**

1. The preferred method to resolve issues on Council is by consensus. Consensus is a collective opinion or general agreement by ALL the Council members.
2. In the case where a decision cannot be reached through consensus, the chair may 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 issues to a special meeting
  - d) To defer the issue to a sub-committee.

In case of a tie vote motion the Chair can have an additional vote.

3. Occasional email votes will be accepted only upon the request of the Chair.

### **8.4: 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 this declaration. Any time the School Council does business with the potential for monetary gain/loss with any person, agency, or company, and a member of the School Council has a vested interest in any way with that particular person, agency, or company, that member shall declare a conflict of interest and shall not discuss or vote on any such resolution relating to the matter.

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

## **8.5: Conflict Resolution**

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

## **9: AGENDAS AND MINUTES**

### **9.1: Agendas**

1. Agenda items should be submitted to the Chair at least 3-5 calendar days prior to the Council's next meeting.
2. The Chair will set the agenda in consultation with the Principal prior to the meeting. Preparation of the agenda may involve one other council/executive member when necessary. The agenda will be made available to members of Council and posted on the Council website.

### **9.2: Minutes**

1. Minutes will be made available to members of Council and shall be posted on the Council website.
2. The minutes shall include motions, decisions and actions to be taken.

## **ARTICLE 10: CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

The School Council will review the Constitution at least every two years or as the need arises. Constitutional amendments must be presented to Council and need a 2/3 majority to be passed. The members of the School Council shall be responsible for maintaining the Constitution.

This Constitution is being adopted by members of the current School Council on September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019.