

Wilshire Elementary School Council Constitution (Drafted November 19, 2012)

Article 1: Name and Address

The organization will be known as Wilshire Elementary school council. The members of the school council shall be responsible for maintaining the constitution.

Wilshire Elementary School, 265 Beverly Glen Blvd, Vaughan, ON, 905-889-6767.

Article 2: Mission Statement

Our school council is a collaborative and co-operative body whose mission is to facilitate a partnership between members of the school community to achieve the highest possible standards of education in an inviting and wholesome environment.

Article 3: Purpose and Objectives

To contribute to the optimal effectiveness of Wilshire Elementary School by:

1. Encouraging effective parental involvement in the education of their children,
2. Providing a means for regular communication and dialogue between all partners in education,
3. Participating in the school improvement planning process,
4. Providing meaningful consultation and extensive involvement of all members of the school community,
5. Fostering parental and community involvement in education,
6. Encouraging meaningful involvement of all members of the school community in support of student learning,
7. Providing input into decisions made by the school administration, the Board and the Ministry,
8. Encouraging effective parental involvement by focusing on the following areas: parenting skills, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making and collaborating with community,

9. Helping 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, and
10. Facilitating 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 1. 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

As per Board Procedure #262, there will be six parent members and one community member on school council. There shall be no more than one member on the school council from any one household. Every effort should be made to include student voice on council, therefore, council seeks to have a student representative (either by election of student council, or by appointment by the Principal) liaising with school council and attending meetings whenever possible and appropriate.

Article 6: Elections

Elections will be held to form the school council each year. The following positions on council will be offered: Chair/Co-chairs, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications, Education/Community Events, Fundraising, Food, Member(s) at Large.

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 (six).

6.2: Election Procedures for Parent Members

1. 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.

2. 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.
3. The school council shall strike an election committee in May, to help plan the election process, the gathering of nominations, and the running of the election. No one standing for election, or the spouse of anyone standing for election, shall be a member of the election committee.
4. The election committee shall:
 - provide nomination forms
 - ensure that the school community is notified of election procedures and election date(s), location, and time, at least fourteen days in advance of election;
 - request a profile from all 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 all the results and related information confidential;
 - only release 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.
 - shall notify all individuals standing for election of the results before the results are released to the school community.
5. Elections shall take place just prior to the first council meeting of the school year, in September/October within 30 days of the start of school. The first council meeting shall take place within 35 days of the start of school.

6.3: Terms of Office

Elected and appointed members may seek additional terms of office.

6.4: Vacancies in Membership

A vacancy in the membership of a school council does not prevent the council from exercising its' authority. 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, OR, 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 positions, an election will be called. When no more candidates are available, council may appoint parent members. Vacancies will only be filled until June of the current year, at which time the vacant positions will be filled through September elections.

6.5: Resignations

Anyone who is a 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 6.4 Vacancies.

6.6: Removal

The council may choose to remove from council any member who misses 2 consecutive meetings and shall undertake to replace that person according to Article 6.4: Vacancies. The council may choose to vote to remove from council any member who acts in a manner that contradicts the purpose and objectives of council according to Article 3. In that case, a private meeting of the members of council and the Principal should be held to discuss the issues at hand. A consensus of the remaining members of council is required before action is taken to remove a member of council.

Article 7: Meetings

7.1: 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. 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.

7.2: 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.

7.3: 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

7.4: 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 any remuneration for their work as a member of council.

7.5: 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 8: Financial Records

8.1: Signing Authorities

The treasurer and a second member of council (preferably the chair) are the signing authorities. Both signatures will be required.

8.2: Disbursement and Allocation of Money

All money must be collected by the end of the year. Funds should be dispersed or allocated to a specific purpose by the end of the year.

8.3: Annual Audit

Each year, there will be an independent audit of the school council books performed by an accountant.

Article 9: Agendas and Minutes

9.1: 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.

9.2: 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 10: 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.

Appendix 1

Board Policy #262.0 School Councils

Document Integration Project Format Policy Statement

The York Region District School Board believes that collaborative and inclusive partnerships, among schools, families and their communities, are essential to improving student learning and increasing a shared sense of accountability for public education.

The Board believes that strong partnerships are built from a common vision and common goals, nurtured through regular communication and meaningful consultation, involving all members of the school community through engagement and inclusion.

The Board believes that school councils play an important role in building school, family and community partnerships by providing input into relevant Board and school-level decisions and by encouraging the involvement of all members of the school community in support of student learning.

Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for:

- receiving and considering advice from school councils on the establishment and amendment of Board policies that relate to student achievement and well-being and to the accountability of the education system to parents;
- consulting school councils on the Trustees' Multi-Year Plan;
- considering each recommendation made to the Board by school councils and advise school councils, through the appropriate superintendent, of decisions reached or actions taken in response to recommendations made to the Board by school councils, along with a rationale for these actions or decisions;
- considering internal disputes of school councils that are referred to the Board by the council; and
- not sitting as a member of a school council.

The Director of Education is responsible for:

- implementing and operationalizing the *School Councils* policy;
- consulting school councils on the development of implementation plans for new education initiatives that relate to student achievement and well-being and to the accountability of the education system to parents; and
- consulting school councils on Board planning processes.

Principals are responsible for:

- ensuring that a school council is established that represents the school community and promotes improved student learning through the development of equitable and inclusive school, family and community partnerships;
- communicating and collaborating with school councils;
- actively supporting and encouraging school council members to share their ideas for reducing the student achievement gap and helping inform the school improvement plan;
- actively seeking representation of diverse parent groups on school councils;
- working with the school council to identify opportunities that promote parent education and strategies to support children's learning at home; and
- forwarding information on community resources to school councils.

School councils are responsible for:

- supporting and promoting parent, family and community engagement in support of student learning;
- participating in the development and implementation of the school improvement plan;

- communicating with, and providing ongoing advice to, the principal matters pertaining to the school; and
- collaborating with the principal to coordinate community resources that support student learning needs.

Legislative Context

Education Act

Definitions

School Community

The school community includes, but is not limited to, parents, administrators, teaching staff, support staff, students and members of the local community.

School Councils

School councils are advisory bodies which may make recommendations to the school principal or to the Board on matters as stated in Board policy and procedure. School councils are comprised of parents (constituting the majority of members of the school council), one student representative (optional at elementary level), at least one community representative, the school principal, one teaching staff representative, and one support staff representative.

Department

Director's Office

Policy History

Approved 1996 Reviewed 1997 Amended 2001 Amended 2005 Revised 2007 Revised 2011

It is the expectation of the York Region District School Board that all employees, students and persons invited to or visiting Board property; or partaking/volunteering in Board or school-sponsored events and activities will respect the policies and procedures of the Board. The term "parents" refers to both biological/adoptive parents and guardians in all Board policies and procedures.

Board Procedure #262.0

School Councils

Document Integration Project Format

This procedure outlines how trustees, staff members and school councils work together to support schools, improve student achievement and well-being for all students by engaging parents and community members.

Responsibilities

The Director of Education shall:

- allocate staff and resources to support the *School Councils* procedure;
- receive and consider advice from school councils on the establishment and amendment of Board procedures that relate to student achievement and well-being and to the accountability of the education system to parents; and
- provide insurance protection to school councils and members of councils for actions taken in the course of carrying out their responsibilities, provided that such actions are consistent with all Board policies and procedures.

Superintendent, Equity and Engagement shall:

- coordinate school council forums in each Community Education Centre at least twice annually for the purposes of conducting professional development, sharing effective practices, and facilitating communication among council chairs, council members, local trustees, principals and senior administrators;

- in collaboration with school council representatives, offer relevant professional development for council chairs, principals, and council members; and
- appoint school council representatives to various ad hoc advisory committees, as required by the Ministry or deemed appropriate by the Board.

Superintendents of Schools shall:

- take responsibility for considering and/forwarding recommendations made by school councils to the appropriate person(s); and
- respond to recommendations made by school councils; and annually consult school councils on the school and administrator profiles.

Principals shall:

- be a member of the school council;
- not be entitled to vote in votes taken by the school council or by a committee of the school council;
- attend all school council meetings, unless she or he is unable to do so by reason of illness or other cause beyond his or her control (where possible, the vice-principal shall attend as a designate);
- call the first school council meeting within the first 35 days of the school year;
- provide written notice (at least 14 days) of dates, times and locations of the election to every parent of a student who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school;
- make known the names of members of the school council to parents of students enrolled in the school within 30 days after the determination of the school council;
- advise school council members when there is a need for volunteers in the school;
- provide written notice of the dates, times and locations of the meetings of the school council to every parent of a student who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school;
- ensure that copies of the minutes of the school council meetings are kept at the school and are accessible to all parents;
- ensure that the school council constitution and by-laws are readily available to the school community;
- ensure that school council communications and the school council annual report are accessible to all students and parents/guardians;
- distribute to each member of the school council any materials received from and identified by the Ministry of Education or the Board as being relevant for distribution to school councils;
- act as a resource person to the school council and assist the council in obtaining information regarding the function of school councils, including information relating to relevant legislation, regulations and policies;
- consider each school council recommendation and advise the council of decisions reached or actions taken in response to each recommendation, along with a rationale for these actions or decisions;
- solicit the views of the school council with respect to the establishment and amendment of Board policies and procedures that relate to student achievement and well-being and to the accountability of the education system to parents;
- solicit the views of the school council with respect to the establishment, implementation, review and communication of the school improvement plan and the school profile;
- ensure that any fundraising carried out by the school council aligns with the school improvement plan;
- ensure that the financial records are maintained at the school and available for examination for a seven year period;
- support and promote the school council's operations and activities;
- assist the council in communicating with the school community; and
- advise school councils when they are not in compliance with Board policies and procedures.

School councils shall:

- create by-laws regarding; election procedures and the filling of vacancies between elections, respecting participation in school council proceedings in cases of conflict of interest, and a conflict resolution process for internal school council disputes;
- carry out responsibilities in accordance with relevant Board policies and procedures, and their

- school council's constitution and by-laws;
- hold elections for members of school councils during the first 30 calendar days of each school year;
- fill vacancies in council membership or in the officers of a school council by election or appointment in accordance with the by-laws of the council;
- ensure that a parent qualifies to be school council member in accordance with legislative requirements;
- continue in its duties even if there is a vacancy;
- meet at least four times during the school year (with the first meeting occurring within the first 35 calendar days of the school year) at meetings that are open to the public and in a location accessible to the public;
- hold meetings where decisions are made only when a majority of the members are present and of those present, a majority is comprised of parent members;
- record and maintain minutes of all meetings for a four year period and make them available for examination without charge by any person;
- * complete the annual report template by June 30th of the school year;
- 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 to the Superintendent, Equity and Engagement (if an updated profile is not submitted the most recent version will be considered);
- develop a fundraising plan for each school year that aligns with the school improvement plan;
- ensure compliance with the Board policy on fundraising when taking part in fundraising activities;
- engage in internal conflict resolution activities in accordance with relevant Board policies and procedures, and by-laws of the council;
- consult with parents of students enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by the school council;
- not be incorporated and not be a registered charity;
- not receive any remuneration for serving as a member or officer of a school council; and
- receive reimbursement for expenses incurred as members or officers of the school council in accordance with relevant procedures established by the Board.

School Councils may:

- specify the number of parent members provided that the number would constitute a majority on the school council (otherwise the number of parent members is six);
- specify the number of community representatives as two or more appointed by the other members of the school council (otherwise there will be one community representative appointed by other members of the school council);
- limit the number of times that a school council member may be re-elected or re-appointed (otherwise there is no limit);
- specify that the school council may have two co-chairs (otherwise there is only one);
- specify other officers of the school council;
- establish committees to make recommendations to the school council such that membership on the committee includes at least one parent member of the council and may include persons who are not members of the school council;
- set norms and rules for conducting school council meetings and committees;
- refer internal disputes to the Board for consideration;
- make recommendations (reflected in the minutes of school council meetings) to principals either verbally or in writing; and
- make recommendations (reflected in the minutes of school council meetings) to the Board by submitting them in writing to the superintendent of schools.

School council members shall:

- be elected during the first 30 calendar days of each school year, on a date that is established by the chair or co-chairs of the school council after consulting with the principal of the school;
- in the case of a new school, hold the first election of parent members to the school council during the first 30 calendar days of the school year, on a date that is fixed by the principal;
- hold office from the later of either; the date she or he is elected or appointed, and the date of the first meeting of the school council after the election are held during the school year, or until

- the date of the first meeting of the school council after elections are held in the next school year;
- be able to be re-elected or re-appointed in subsequent years unless otherwise specified in the by-laws of the school council;
- be entitled to one vote, when a consensus cannot be reached and voting is necessary by school council;
- be entitled to one vote, in votes taken by a committee of the school council on which the member sits;
- be accountable to the members of the school community whom they represent;
- maintain a school-wide perspective on issues;
- regularly attend school council meetings;
- participate in information sharing and training programs;
- act as a communication link between the school council and the community;
- encourage the participation of all parents and of other people within the school community; and
- participate on sub-committees and assist with tasks of the school council as appropriate.

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.

School council vice-chairs shall:

- assist the chair/co-chairs in carrying out his/her responsibilities; and
- act on behalf of the chair/co-chairs in the event of his/her absence.

Student representative shall:

- in secondary schools, be named by the student council;
- in elementary schools, be appointed by the principal after consulting with the school council to determine if the school council wants a student representative; and
- not be applicable to a school that is established primarily for adults.

Community representative shall:

- be one community representative or up to four community representatives if the council chooses to so specify in a by-law, provided that the majority of members continues to be parents;
- be appointed by the members of the school council; and
- not be employed at the school as a member of a bargaining unit, an administrator or a manager and if employed in such a capacity elsewhere in the Board must inform the other members of the council of his or her employment before the appointment.

Teaching staff representative shall:

- be one teacher who is employed at the school, other than the principal or vice-principal; and
- only be elected by teachers employed at the school.

Support staff shall:

- be one person who is employed at the school, other than the principal or vice-principal or any other teacher; and
- only be elected by support staff employed at the school.

School council officers (chair, co-chair or officer) shall:

- be elected by the new school council;
- be a parent member of the council; and

- not be a person who is employed by the Board or who is a member of a bargaining unit, an administrator or a manager.

Parents of students enrolled in the school shall:

- each have one vote in the election of school council members;
- be elected to school council by secret ballot; and
- be elected to school council by acclamation when the number of candidates is equal to, or less than the number of parent member positions on the council (if additional vacancies exist, parent members may be appointed by the council according to the by-laws of the council).

Department

Director's Office

Procedure History

September 2002 Revised 2007 Revised 2011

It is the expectation of the York Region District School Board that all employees, students and persons invited to or visiting Board property; or partaking/volunteering in Board or school-sponsored events and activities will respect the policies and procedures of the Board. The term "parents" refers to both biological/adoptive parents and guardians in all Board policies and procedures.