



# MINUTES

## Windham Ridge Parent Advisory Council

September 21, 2015

6:30-7:30 pm

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### Current Council Attendance

Liz Novatsidis  
Starr Mills  
Mukesh Gautam  
Preeti Kumar  
Julie Romanovich  
Houda Alassad  
Kristina Barybina (regrets)  
Vivian Aitas  
Amir Mirshahi  
Esther Boivin  
Kelly Geisen (Absent – maternity leave)  
Nereo Bonomo  
Cindy Galpin

### Guest Parent Attendance

Joanne Conte Casola  
Karen Sorbara  
Dima Berchalli  
Anne Mason  
Bridget Hijazi  
Sandra Mieves  
Anna Margitta

### Approval of Agenda, Welcome and Introduction

Meeting commences at 6:32 p.m.

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting. Council received communication from the Principal that 19 applications were received for nominations for Council for the year 2015-16.

Agenda approved by council.

***Motion First Liz, Seconded Mukesh, all in favor, motion passed***

## Parent Engagement and Membership Enhancement

Principal welcomed everyone and introduced himself to the council. Round table introductions were held. Place cards were suggested for future meetings so it would be easier to address everyone.

It is the first time we have seen 19 nominations for council.

Two options were presented:

### Option 1 – General vote.

Every parent may vote and the steps involved in a general vote would be:

- All 19 nominees would provide a bio of themselves and submit to the office. A package would be put together with all the bios and sent out to the parents on Wednesday September 23.
- A 'Meet the Candidates' night would be held on Thursday September 24 where all nominees would come and speak about their nomination.
- Voting could be held on PA day September 28 and as well on a weeknight next week where parents could come after work until 9 p.m.

Option 2 – Revise Section 5.01 of the Constitution and remove the cap on the number of elected members.

Two concerns were considered:

1. Section 5.01 of the Constitution. Parents gave feedback that the present number (10+1) of parent council members is not sufficient for a growing school.
2. Section 7.08.iv of the Constitution. Parents gave feedback that present terms of office has an exclusionary aspect and that it does not give the general school community a fair chance to be chair/co-chair of council.

## Council Discussion

Discussion around the table as to who is eligible to vote if a general vote is held. It was decided that the wording in Section 7.02.iv of the Constitution needs to be revised if a vote is going to be held.

Six years ago there was a larger council with 16 members. At that time there were issues regarding:

- Not everyone showed up to the meetings
- Same people were doing all the work
- Quorum was not met
- Members at large who were not assigned to committees were not contributing with workload

Question: Will council members be elected into positions? School Administration advised that members would be assigned positions at the first council meeting.

Discussion occurred around Section 7.08.iv on terms of office needs to be more inclusionary. Current council members advised that when Constitution was changed in June 2015, the intention was not to

exclude anyone. Current council members agreed that chair/co-chair must have one-year experience on a school council for succession and continuity reasons alone.

It was suggested by attendee that Code of Ethics should be added to the Constitution and that Section 8.07 on conflict resolution be expanded and have more details added.

Discussion occurred around the difficulty in decision-making with a larger group. It was suggested we need to put measures in place if things get out of hand. Member suggested we take time to think more before voting. Concerns raised about members not contributing and not being held accountable.

Discussion occurred around meeting dates. Meeting dates for the year will be voted on after a discussion at the first council meeting on October 6<sup>th</sup>.

General discussion on how a larger council could benefit the school. More committees could be set up and all members would be assigned a committee so there will be no members-at-large.

General discussion on how our Constitution needs revisions. Council reviews each year as a general practice.

## **Conclusion**

It was decided by the council to make the following changes:

1. Change to Constitution Section 5.01 – Number of Parent Members – no more than 20  
***Motion raised by Liz, seconded by Vivian, 9 in favour, 1 opposed, motion passed***
2. Change to Constitution Section 7.08.iv – Terms of Office – new wording to read as follows:  
-To be considered for the position of chair, it is highly recommended that a person should have served as a member of any parent council for a minimum of one year.  
***Motion raised by Liz, seconded by Julie, 8 in favour, 2 opposed, motion passed***

No general vote will be required. All new members will be acclaimed at the first council meeting on October 6, 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.