**North Agincourt JPS - School Council Bylaws**

The Education Act and Ontario Regulation 612/00 states that “school councils shall create by-laws that govern parent election procedures and the filling of vacancies in the membership of the council, establishes rules for participation in council proceeding in cases of conflict of interest and outlines a conflict resolution process for internal school disputes”.

These by-laws are revised for the North Agincourt JPS School Council (NASC) and are declared in effect from September 2016.

1. **Name**

The name of this organization shall remain North Agincourt Junior Public School School Council (herein referred to as Council)

**2. Membership**

School Council shall be composed of :

1. Seven parents/guardians of children in the school who are elected to the Council.
2. One teacher employed in the school, to be elected by the teaching staff of the school.
3. One non-teaching employee in the school, other than the principal or vice-principal.
4. The Principal or his/her designate (ex-officio member).
5. One community representative may be appointed by the School Council following elections of Executive Officers.

Any committees/sub-committees created by Council shall include:

1. At least 1 Council Executive member
2. Other parent/guardian representatives (vote at committee/sub-committee level only)
3. Other school staff member(s) - as appropriate (vote at committee/sub-committee only)

**3. Election of Parent /guardian Members**

1. Elections shall occur within the first 30 (school) days of the school year in accordance with Ontario Regulation 612/00.
2. The Principal on behalf of the Council shall at least 14 days before the date of the election of parent/guardian members, give written notice of date, time and location of the election to every parent/guardian of a student in the school.
3. Each parent/guardian seeking election must be a parent/guardian of student currently attending the school to be nominated or self‐nominated in writing and must declare if s/he is employed by the Toronto District School Board, and summarize their reasons for seeking election. Nominations will not be accepted from the floor on the evening of elections.
4. Nomination forms supplied by the school/council shall be filed by all parent/guardian candidates to the school (principal or designate) no less than seven (7) days prior to elections.
5. Information about each candidate supplied by the candidate him/herself shall be made available to the school community at least one week prior to the election.
6. If the number of declared candidates is less than or equal to the number of positions, the candidates will be acclaimed at the meeting scheduled for the Annual General Meeting / Parent/Guardian Election at the beginning of the academic year as per 3(a).
7. If the number of declared candidates is higher than the number of positions, then an election will occur at this meeting.
8. Elections for school Council shall be supervised by the Principal (or designate) and parents/parent member(s) of previous council not seeking (re)election.
9. The Principal shall conduct a lottery of candidate names to determine randomly selected ballot positions for each candidate.
10. Voting shall be by secret ballot and neither proxy nor absentee voting is permitted.
11. Each parent/guardian of a student currently enrolled in the school shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent/guardian Member position on the Council.
12. Only the names of the successful candidates shall be made public (in the school’s/Council’s communications).
13. A vacancy in the parent membership of the council shall be filled by election using the process outline in 3(a-m).
14. Elections for teaching staff and non-teaching staff representative on council will be held by staff during the first 30 days of each school year.

**4. Term of Office**

1. The term of office for all School Council representatives is one academic year, (September until end of June) and any member may, if qualified, seek re‐election or re‐appointment.
2. A person elected or appointed to council will hold office until, but not including, the first meeting of the new school council after elections.

**5. Executive Officers**

1. The following executive officer positions are elected by/from the nine voting Council Members at the first meeting of each new School Council (Appendix A):

* A Chair
* A Vice-Chair
* A Secretary
* A Treasurer
* A Communications Chair
* An Event Coordinator
* A School Program & Classroom Liaison Chair

The following positions are considered Council Executive positions:

* A North Agincourt Teacher (may not be elected as Chair)
* A North Agincourt Non-teaching Staff Member (may not be elected as Chair)
* Principal or designate (Vice-Principal) – ex-officio member (non-voting)

Any member holding more than one position will only be assigned one vote (i.e. in cases where there is not a full Council and/or where a Teacher/Non-teacher is elected as an officer)

1. Voting shall be by secret ballot and neither proxy nor absentee voting is permitted.
2. Only elected members of council shall be eligible to vote for executive officers.
3. Vacancies in the position of any officer shall be filled by election of another Member of Council as outlined in 3(a-m).

**6. Meetings**

* 1. A minimum of four meetings per year, the first of which occurring within 15 days of elections for that school year.
  2. An Annual General Meeting of the Council (this constitutes the final meeting of the previous year’s council) is held to coincide with the Parent/Guardian Member Elections at the beginning of the school year as per bylaw 3(a).
  3. All committees, including the Fundraising Committee, will meet as required throughout the year to carry out the strategic plans for Council’s objectives and will make recommendations to, and report to Council, on its activities.
  4. Should a member of Council miss three consecutive meetings without sufficient notification to council, the executive may call a meeting with the member to determine the members interest in the council.
  5. All Council members are required to attend a majority of the Council meetings.
  6. A meeting of the Council cannot be held unless:
* The Principal or his/her designate is present at the meeting
* A majority (51%) of the current elected Members of the Council are present at the meeting
* A majority of the Members (51%) of the Council who are present in the meeting are elected parent/guardian Members
  1. All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public and be held at a location that is accessible to the public.

**7. Quorum**

Quorum will be a simple majority (51%) of elected School Council Members.

**8. Voting**

1. Each elected member of the School Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the Council.
2. Each Council committee/sub‐committee member is entitled to one vote in votes taken at the committee/sub‐committee level.
3. The Principal of the school, or designate, is not entitled to vote in votes taken by the Council or by a Committee of the School Council.

**9. Finances**

1. All expenditures of the Council require prior approval of the Council.
2. All expenditures are to be reported in a financial statement to be made available at each council meeting.
3. The Council will not borrow funds or enter into any financial commitment for which funds are not already in hand.
4. The Council shall maintain a bank account to which Council funds shall be deposited and from which payments by the Council shall be made.
5. Those authorized as signatories to this account shall include the Chair, Treasurer and school Principal/designate at all times and may include Vice-Chair.
6. Cheques drawn on the bank account of the Council shall require the signature of two elected members of the Council Executive (Chair, Vice-Chair and/or Treasurer) or one Executive Member (i.e. Chair, or Treasurer) and the Principal/designate.

**10. Conflict of Interest**

A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived or potential. Members of Council shall declare any conflict of interest in matters that they, members of their families, or business entities in which they may have an interest, stand to benefit either directly or indirectly by decisions of Council.

A Member shall exclude herself/himself from discussions which:

* A conflict of interest is likely to result.
* The Member’s ability to carry out his/her duties and responsibilities as a Member of school Council may be jeopardized.
* The Council Member, his/her relatives, or a business entity in which the Member may have an interest, may gain or benefit either directly or indirectly as a result of actions that may be taken by the Principal or Board in response to advice that the Council provides to the Principal or Board.

**11. Conflict Resolution**

**General Principles**

The intent of this section is to provide a process for resolving conflict between School Council Members, between Members and the Chair, or between School Council and school administration that affects the function and/or the physical or social environment of the Council at North Agincourt JPS*.*

It is the intent of this process to encourage School Council Members to resolve conflicts and foster good will through direct dialogue whenever possible, before following this formal resolution procedure.

It is also the intent of this process to keep relations at the school and School Council constructive so that parents/council members can carry out its purpose.

This policy is intended to work in tandem with existing TDSB laws/policies including the Employment Standards Act and the Human Rights Act, and not to supersede those laws or any policies of the TDSB.

11. a. **Definitions**

*Conflict*: A strong disagreement or a dispute between School Council Members, between Members and the Chair, between School Council and school administration or between parents/guardians and the School Council resulting from.

* differences of opinion, belief or understanding, or
* differences of personality or behaviour, or
* violation of Council by-laws/school code of conduct.

*Council Member*: Any parent/guardian, community member or staff of the school who has been elected/identified as a member of the School Council.

*Staff*: Teaching or Non-teaching school staff member elected as staff representative to the Council.

*School Council Chair***:** Member of the School Council elected by membership as Chair of the Council.

*Administration***:**  The Principal or his/her designate.

*Mediation*: A process where a neutral third party assists two conflicting people/parties to come to agreement. This could involve the mediator speaking individually with those in conflict, but ultimately must include the mediator facilitating a meeting among all of the conflicting people(s).

*Resolution*: An agreement by parties that solves the conflict.

**11. b. Procedure**

In light of a conflict between School Council Members, between Members and the Chair, or between School Council and school administration, Council Members the Chair, with support of administration will:

1. Request a private meeting with the parties to try and resolve the conflict
2. If conflict is within the entire Council a special meeting will be called by the Chair with the support of administration (Principal/designate) to mediate the conflict. Such a meeting will utilize Restorative Practices methods of communication and resolution:

* Every Council Member and any other party involved will be given an opportunity to express his/her concern or opinion about the issue and impact of the dispute.
* The Chair’s responsibility, with support from school administration (Principal/designate), is to clarify the statements made by all speakers, to identify common ground among the points of view raised, and to set out the joint interests of all Members.
* If no common ground can be identified, the Chair will seek to clarify preferences from all members before proceeding.
* If all attempts at resolving the conflict have been exhausted without success, the Chair/Principal shall request intervention of an independent third party to assist in achieving a resolution.
* An independent third party may be a Board official or another individual mutually agreed on by the parties involved in the dispute.

1. If the conflict is with or between the Chair and Council then the Vice-Chair or another Council Member or Principal/designate will lead the outlined process.
2. If the conflict is with the administration and the School Council the Chair/Vice-Chair will lead the outlined process.
3. If the conflict is between the Chair and administration, the Vice-Chair or another Council Member will lead the outlined process or an external mediator may be identified to lead the process.
4. If the conflict is with the Chair and members of the executive, including Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, Council may request that the administrator lead the process or identify an external mediator to lead the process.
5. If the conflict occurs at a Council Meeting and a Council Member or meeting attendee becomes disruptive during a meeting, the Chair, after unsuccessfully asking for order, shall seek Council approval for the removal of the party(ies) from the meeting, citing reasons for the request. This does not prevent the Member(s)/attendee(s) from participating in future meetings of Council following provision in bylaw 11(b) (viii).
6. When the Chair has requested the removal of a Member(s) or attendee(s) from the meeting, the Chair shall request that the disputing Member(s) or attendee(s) participate in a special meeting, the purpose of which will be to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution to the dispute. Such a meeting may be a private meeting, and shall not be construed as a meeting of the Council.

**12. Social Media/online communication**

* 1. Council at its discretion will utilize any social media (twitter; Facebook; Instagram etc.) that will assist in fulfilling its purpose. All social media and on-line communication will:
     + Be coordinated and managed by a specified Council Executive Member with the Chair/Vice-Chair and school Administrator having full access,
     + Adhere to all Anti-spam legislation and TDSB on-line Code of Conduct,
     + Not compromise privacy of any parent/guardian of Council or the school: and
     + Be shut down at the discretion of Council and/or school administrator.
  2. At the discretion of school administrator, School Council may have access to existing social media/online communication tools and will follow the criteria in 12(a).

**14. By-law Reform**

1. Amendments to this by-law require a two‐thirds majority of elected Members present at a meeting of the Council.
2. Proposed amendments will be made available to all School Council Members, including school administration no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the Council Meeting at which these proposals will be voted upon.
3. Reviewed at the first meeting of each new Council following election of Members.
4. Bylaws affecting Member and/or Executive Member Positions shall only take affect prior to the next election of these Members.
   1. Notwithstanding 14(d) additional Members may be elected according to bylaw amendments as long as this will not detrimentally interfere with the responsibilities of the current elected Council.

**Appendix A – School Council Executive Position Descriptions**

All School Council Roles must be in accordance with O. Reg. 612/00. Where a discrepancy may be perceived, statements made in O. Reg. 612/00 take precedence.

The following guidelines outline the general roles of each elected School Council Member and may not describe each role in its entirety.

**Chair:**

* Call and chair all School Council meetings.
* Prepare the agenda for NASC meetings and ensure that it is distributed to all members and the school community (this may be by electronics means).
* Ensure that the minutes of the NASC meetings are recorded and maintained (role may be delegated to Secretary).
* Provide leadership at any special events or meetings (leadership may be delegated).
* Coordinate formation of committees and call for reports from committees (role may be delegated to Vice-chair).
* Receive external correspondence and forward to appropriate member/committee.
* Ensure other Executive roles are carried out and call for reports from Executive Members on a regular basis.
* Ensure regular communication with the school community.
* Participate in related information sessions and training programs.
* Prepare the annual report for presentation at the Annual General Meeting.
  + Ensure other Executive positions are represented in this report.
* Share financial responsibility for School Council and act as a signatory for financial activities.

**Vice-Chair:**

* Temporarily carry out roles of Chair in their absence.
  + May run in bi-election should the need arise to replace the Chair if qualified.
* Oversee sub-committees.
* Ensure appointment of Election Committee and their distribution of election information.
* Support Chair in calling and maintaining order at NASC meetings.
* May be asked to share financial responsibility for School Council and act as a signatory for financial activities.
* Provide leadership as allocated by Chair.

**Treasurer:**

* Administer all financial operations of the NASC.
* Share financial responsibility for School Council and act as a signatory for financial activities.
* Keep accurate, up-to-date records of these operations.
* Prepare financial reports as required.
  + Provide update at each NASC meeting
  + Prepare PSAB
  + Chair committee to prepare the annual School Council Fundraising plan and present this plan to Council for approval.
* Receive and account for all monies.
* Ensure all debts owing are paid in a timely manner.
* Act as a liaison for the financial aspects of all fund-raising activities.
* Ensure that all financial accounting is properly documented, tracked, reported and ready for audit at all times.

**Secretary:**

* Prepare and maintain accurate minutes of all Council meetings and ensure required distribution and availability (may use electronic means of distribution).
* Coordinate with school Principal to obtain necessary permits for use of the school for meetings and events.
* Ensure constitution and bylaws are reviewed annually and participate in any committee created to update/change these documents.
* Maintain any archives of the School Council.
* May be asked to share financial responsibility for School Council and act as a signatory for financial activities.
* May take on other duties as delegated by Chair.

**Communications Chair:**

* Coordinate all notices, bulletins and other documentation for distribution on behalf of NASC.
* In consultation with School Council prepare and distribute regular updates to the school community (this may be through electronic means).

**Event Coordinator:**

* Act as chair for or coordinate event chairs for special events (this may include Fundraisers, philanthropies, school spirit events, themes events).
* Liaise with Event Chairs and communicate, on their behalf, with Council as needed (event chairs may communicate directly with Council, but do not hold a vote at School Council Meetings)
* Coordinate with school staff and the School Program & Classroom Liaison Chair to provide refreshments or other necessary items for special events or theme days organized by school staff (i.e. refreshments for Grade 6 Farewell Events, cool drinks for Track and Field Day).

**School Program & Classroom Liaison Chair:**

* Liaise with program specific school staff to create necessary committees and secure volunteers (i.e. a Music Committee to support events and specific fundraising, HPE Committee)
* Act as Caring and Safe Schools/Mental Health Committee Representative for the school committee (or secure volunteer who will report back to Council).
* Coordinate Class Parent Communication structure with school staff and ensure staff is aware of the role of these volunteers (classes with active webpages may opt out of this structure).

**Teaching Staff Representative:**

* Act as a spokesperson for the school teaching staff.
* Act as a communication link between teaching staff and School Council.
* Represent the needs of students and staff to School Council.
* Support School Program & Classroom Liaison Chair.

**Non-Teaching Staff Representative:**

* Act as a spokesperson for the school non-teaching staff.
* Act as a communication link between non-teaching staff and School Council.
* Represent the needs of students and staff to School Council.
* Support School Program & Classroom Liaison Chair.

**Community Representative:**

* Is appointed by the elected School Council
* Has a sincere interest in the operations of the School Council as they provide for the best interests of its students.
* Act as resource to council.
* Liaise with community groups and organizations as needed.

**School Principal / Designate:**

* Act as a resource to School Council in accordance with O. Reg. 612/00.