



The Africentric Alternative



School Council By-Laws

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School Website: <https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/africentricschool/>

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- The purpose of a school council is, through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. O. Reg. 612/00, s. 2 (1).
- A school council may make recommendations to the principal of the school or to the Board on any matter. O. Reg. 612/00, s. 20.
- The school council is an advisory body which consists of elected parents, teacher(s), principal/vice principal, support staff, community representative(s), secondary school students, (elementary where appropriate) and a representative from the Ontario Home and School Association, if such a group exists in the school. O. Reg. 612/00, s. 3 (8)

[O. Reg. 612/00: SCHOOL COUNCILS AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEES \(ontario.ca\)](http://www.ontario.ca)

Who does What (Roles and Responsibilities)

The first School Council meeting in September or October, parents have the opportunity to run for positions on their School Council and to vote. Any parent is welcome to attend and to run. No experience is necessary but lots of skills can be gained by joining the council. Anyone who runs for office must be a parent and commit to attending the monthly School Council meetings. Communication between meetings will occur primarily by email. It is asked that each member provide their email address to the elected Chair before the conclusion of the first meeting

- Chair / Co-Chair

The chair (or co-chair if this role is shared) acts as the primary representative of the School Council and leads the School Council meetings.

The chair/co-chair will:

❖ arrange for meetings; ❖ prepare agendas; ❖ chair council meetings; ❖ ensure that minutes of council meetings are recorded and maintained; ❖ encourage consensus among School Council members & facilitate the resolution of conflict; ❖ establish sub-committees when deemed advisable; ❖ communicate with the school principal on behalf of the council.

(Skills you can gain: presentation, public speaking, mediation, leadership, confidence, organizational, and empowerment/mentoring skills)

Secretary

The secretary records and distributes meeting minutes.

The secretary will:

❖ record the meetings and type up the minutes ❖ make note of actions promised and planned ❖ distribute the minutes to the chair, co-chair, and principal ❖ post the minutes, once approved in a public place for the parents and staff to read

(Skills you can gain: listening, speed writing, organizational, and accountability skills)

Treasurer

The treasurer keeps proper records of all monies that are collected and spent by the school council.

The treasurer will:

❖ record all financial transactions, ❖ present quarterly and year-end financial statements to the council ❖ follow standard reporting and accounting procedures

(Skills you can gain: record keeping & accounting, presentation, organizational, and accountability skills)

Sub-Committee

the School Council forms sub-committees to address specific issues such as fund-raising, parent communications, etc.

Each sub-committee has members from the school council.

The sub-committee will:

❖ co-ordinate the activities of their sub-committees ❖ report on their sub-committees at School Council meetings

(Skills you can gain: presentation, leadership, confidence, organizational, and mentoring skills)

Parent Representative

The parent representatives are voting members who:

❖ participate on any committees established by the school council; ❖ contribute to the discussions of the school council; ❖ solicit the views of other parents and members of the community to share with the school council;

To learn more about School Councils and the roles of elected members, please look online at the Ontario Ministry of Education's School Council handbook:

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

[School Council Resources \(tdsb.on.ca\)](http://www.tdsb.on.ca)

Conflict of Interest

1. A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential.
2. Members of the council shall declare a conflict of interest in matters that they, the members of their families, or business entities in which they may have an interest, stand to benefit either directly or indirectly by decisions of the council.
3. In the event that a member has a conflict of interest with respect to a matter under consideration at a meeting of the School Council, the member shall:
 - a. declares the conflict of interest at the beginning of the meeting and before the matter is discussed.
 - b. refrain from participating in the discussion of the matter.
 - c. refrain from voting on the matter; and d. refrain from attempting to influence another member of the School Council before, during or after the consideration of the matter.
4. The declaration of the conflict of interest shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

5. A council member shall not accept favours or economic benefits from any individuals, organizations, or entities known to be seeking new or continued business contracts with the School Council, the School, or the TDSB.

[School Council Resources \(tdsb.on.ca\)](http://tdsb.on.ca)

Code of Ethics

Africentric School Council members will conduct themselves in accordance with the following code of ethics:

1. A member shall consider the best interests of all students enrolled at the Africentric School.
2. A member shall remember that they are representing the school population and not individual wants and desires.
3. A member shall be guided by the school's and the school board's mission statements.
4. A member shall act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of a school council, as identified by the school's operating guidelines, the school board, and the Ontario Ministry of Education
5. A member shall make themselves familiar with the school's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.
6. A member shall maintain the highest standards of integrity.
7. A member shall recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.
8. A member shall treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.
9. A member shall encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
10. A member shall acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the school community.
11. A member shall respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the school year.
12. A member shall not disclose confidential information.
13. A member shall use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise.
14. A member shall promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community.
15. A member shall declare any conflict of interest in accordance with the Conflict of Interest Bylaw.
16. A member shall not accept any payment or benefit (monetary or in goods) as part of their School Council involvement.
17. Social Media –Africentric School Council Members shall refrain from the following:
 - a. Using any form of social media to speak negatively about any member of the school council, the school council as a whole, school council initiatives, Africentric School,
 - b. Using any form of social media to represent the Africentric School

Council in any manner other than those sanctioned by the School Council or the Principal.

- c. Using the Africentric School Council or its brand to promote their personal initiatives.

[School Council Resources \(tdsb.on.ca\)](https://www.tdsb.on.ca)

Council Membership

Council shall consist of at least **three** and may consist of as many as **fifteen or more** members.

1. The School Council of Africentric School shall be composed of the following members:

- Co-chair (2)
- Principal
- Treasurer (1)
- Secretary (1)
- Asst. Secretary (1)
- Fundraising Representative (1)
- Student Representatives
- Community Representative (1)
- Parent Representatives
- School Staff Representative (1 each from teaching & non-teaching staff)

- a. Any person who is a Parent or Guardian of a student enrolled at the Africentric School is eligible to be a **Parent Member** of the School Council.
 - b. Parent Members are elected in accordance with the Africentric School Council's Election Bylaw.
 - c. A parent or guardian of a student enrolled at the Africentric School who is employed by the TDSB is eligible to be a Parent Member provided
 - i. The person is not employed at the Africentric School.
 - ii. The person declares their employment before standing for election.
 - iii. TDSB employees may not serve in the position of Council Chair or Co-Chair.
2. The Principal or Principal's representative, as a non-voting member.
 3. One teacher representative, who is not the Principal or Vice-Principal, (elected as per Provincial Regulation or 612/00 the School Council's Election Bylaw) as a voting member.
 4. One school staff member, who is not a teacher, the Principal, or Vice-Principal 612/00 (elected as per Provincial Regulation or the School Council's Election Bylaw) as a voting member.
 5. The Council of Africentric School shall also include a Student Representative
 - a. *Optional for elementary schools - student designated by the Principal in agreement with the School Council*
 6. Council may add any other executive role (e.g. French Immersion Rep, Ward Rep, PIAC Rep etc.)
 - a. One or more Community Representatives of a Community Group or Agency associated with the school (e.g. Daycare operator, Community Centre Staff, Community support agency, etc.). Community Representatives are voting members of the Council.
 - b. One person appointed by an association that is a member of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, if the association is represented at the school. Associated Members are voting members of the Council
 7. Trustees of the TDSB are not eligible to be members of a School Council.
 8. Any parent or guardian of a student at the Africentric School may attend, and participate in all School Council meetings (*option: including subcommittee meetings*).
 9. School Council meetings are open to public attendance.

[School Council Resources \(tdsb.on.ca\)](https://www.tdsb.on.ca)

Election of Parent Members

1. Elections of Parent Members shall occur within the first thirty (30) days of the start of each school year. ON Reg 612/00, 4(4).
2. Any Parent or Guardian of a student enrolled at the Africentric School can run for election as a Parent Member of the School Council. O. Reg. 612/00, s. 4 (1)
3. Each parent/guardian seeking election must be nominated or self-nominated in writing, must have a child enrolled at the school, and must declare if he or she is employed by the Toronto District School Board.
4. Each parent or guardian of a student enrolled at the Africentric School shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant Parent Member position on the council. O. Reg. 612/00, s. 4 (3)
5. The election of Parent Members is done by secret ballot.
6. The school council shall convene an **Election Committee** in Spring (May or June) of each year. No one standing for election or reelection, or the spouse of anyone standing for election or reelection, shall be a member of the election committee. The Election Committee may be comprised of parents or guardians of students at the Africentric School.

The Election Committee shall:

- a. Select the date for election of Parent Members, in consultation with the Principal and the School Council Chair.
- b. Provide the principal with promotional information on the election proceedings.
- c. Provide nomination forms for Elected Members.
- d. Collect the nominations and information about the candidates.
- e. Help the Principal notify all candidates of the results. All individuals standing for election shall be notified of the results before the results are released to the school community.
- f. Keep all results and related information confidential.
- g. Only publish or publicly post the names of the successful candidates.
- h. Maintain a list of candidates and the vote results on file in the event that a vacancy on the council occurs.
- i. If needed assist the Principal with organizing the elections listed under Section B: Election of Other Members.

7. The Principal Role:

- a. The principal shall, at least fourteen (14) days before the election, give written notice of the date, time, and location of the election to every parent or guardian of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school. ON Reg 612/00, 4(6).
 - b. Provide information about candidates to the school community at least one week before the election. If needed assist the Principal with organizing the elections listed under Section B: Election of Other Members.
 - c. The Principal, with the election committee, shall conduct a lottery to determine the ballot position for each candidate.
 - d. The principal shall supervise the Election Day proceedings.
 - e. Ballots shall be counted by the Principal in the presence of at least two parents members of the election committee.
14. The school council shall help the Principal ensure that the names of new members are publicized to the school community within thirty days of the election.

Section B: Election of Other Members

15. The election of Teacher Representative shall be held during the first 30 days of each school year. A person is qualified to vote in an election of a Teacher Representative if he or she is a teacher, other than the principal or vice-principal, who is employed at the Africentric School.

16. The election of a Staff Representative shall be held in the first 30 days of each school year. A person is qualified to vote in an election of a Staff Representative if he or she is a person, other than the principal, vice-principal, or any other teacher, who is employed at the Africentric School.

Section C: Terms of Office

17. A person elected or appointed as a member of a school council holds office from the later of,

- a. the date he or she is elected or appointed;

- b. the date of the first meeting of the school council after the elections held under sections A and B in the school year,

- c. until the date of the first meeting of the school council after the elections held under sections A and B in the next school year. O. Reg. 612/00, s. 6 (1).

18. A member of a school council may be reelected.

Section D: Election of School Council Officers

19. School Council Officers are elected by the voting members of the Africentric School Council at the first meeting after the School Council is formed.

20. The Africentric School Council will have one Chair or two Co-Chairs.

- a. The Chair must be a Parent Member of the Council but may not be an employee of the TDSB.

21. Other Officer members may also include

- a. Treasurer

- b. A Secretary or co-secretaries

22. The Africentric School Council may also elect or appoint committee leads, including but not limited to, Communication Lead, Fundraising Lead, Equity Lead, Parent/Community Engagement Lead, Volunteer Coordinator, Events Leads, etc.

[School Council Resources \(tdsb.on.ca\)](https://www.tdsb.on.ca/school-council-resources)

Filling Vacancies

1. Vacancies of a School Council may occur if:

- a. The number of nominations does not meet the defined number of elected members,

- b. A member resigns,

- c. The member is unable to fulfill the roles and responsibilities of membership,

2. The remaining members shall constitute the school council, unless the Parent Member majority is not maintained. If a majority of Parent Members on the council is not maintained, the school council shall:

- a. Ask the Election Committee to contact any outstanding nominees from the previous election, or

- b. Ask the Election Committee to send home nomination forms for the vacant position(s) for Parent Members and to hold an election for the purpose of filling the vacancy. New elections will be conducted in accordance with Article III: Elections Procedures.

- c. Vacant positions, other than for Parent Members, may be filled by appointment of the council for the remaining term of office, from among members of the school community who meet the requirements set for the vacant positions.
3. The School Council may fill vacancies, using the above procedures, at any time during the school year after the general election. The term of office will be held until the general election in the first 30 days of the next school year. O.Reg. 612/00, s. 6 (1)

[Ontario Regulation 612/00 School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees \(tdsb.on.ca\)](http://tdsb.on.ca)

Meetings

1. A parent involvement committee shall meet at least four times in each school year.
2. A meeting of a parent involvement committee cannot be held unless,
 - (a) a majority of the members present at the meeting are parent members;
 - (b) the director of education, or the person designated under subsection 46 (1), is present; and
 - (c) the member of the board who sits on the committee, or the person designated under subsection 46 (2), is present.
3. The board shall make available to its parent involvement committee the facilities that the board considers necessary for the proper functioning of the committee, and shall make reasonable efforts to enable members to participate fully in meetings of the committee by electronic means.
4. A member of a parent involvement committee who participates in a meeting through electronic means shall be deemed to be present at the meeting.
5. All meetings of a parent involvement committee shall be open to the public and shall be held at a location that is accessible to the public.
6. The chair or co-chairs of a parent involvement committee shall ensure that notice of each meeting is provided to all members of the committee at least five days before the meeting by,
 - (a) delivering a notice to each member by e-mail or regular mail; and
 - (b) posting a notice on the board's website.
7. For the purposes of subsection (6), notice by regular mail is provided five days before the meeting if it is mailed five days before the meeting. O. Reg. 330/10, s. 6.

[Ontario Regulation 612/00 School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees \(tdsb.on.ca\)](http://tdsb.on.ca)

Minutes and Financial Records

- Keep minutes of each meeting or find a designate (e.g. secretary) to do so to be vetted by the Principal and held in digital record available through the school for a period of four years, for examination without charge by any person O. Reg. 612/00, s. 16
- The minutes of a parent involvement committee of a board shall be,
 - (a) posted on the website of the board that established the committee; and
 - (b) sent electronically to the chair or co-chairs of the school council of each school of the board that established the committee. O. Reg. 330/10, s. 6.
- The minutes of a committee's meetings and the records of its financial transactions shall be available for examination at the board's office by any person without charge for four years. O. Reg. 330/10, s. 6.

- Minutes posted on the website of the board shall remain on the website for four years. O. Reg. 330/10, s. 6.
- Keep records of any financial transactions undertaken by the committee or find a designate (e.g. treasurer) to do so to be vetted by the Principal and held in digital record available through the school for a period of four years, for examination without charge by any person O. Reg. 612/00, s. 16

[O. Reg. 612/00: SCHOOL COUNCILS AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEES \(ontario.ca\)](#)

Conflict Resolution

1. Every School Council Member will be given an opportunity to express concerns or opinions about any issue or item being considered by the School Council.
2. Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.
3. Speakers will be allowed to speak for a reasonable period of time without interruption.
4. The Chair's responsibility is to:
 - a. clarify the statements made by all speakers;
 - b. identify common ground among the points of view raised, if possible;
 - c. to set out the joint interests of all members;
 - d. option: where an additional topic area arises during the discussion, the Chair shall consider the applicability of that topic to the current discussion and either ask for the agenda to be revised, or alternatively, ask for the new topic to be tabled for discussion at the next meeting.
5. If no common ground can be identified or a consensus cannot be reached, the Chair will seek to clarify preferences among all members before proceeding further.
 - a. Option: The matter may be deferred to a future meeting while more information and feedback is collected.
 - b. The Council may request a formal vote on an issue. The topic at issue and results of the vote shall be documented in the School Council minutes. (Include procedures for voting e.g. open ballot, secret ballot, show of hands, etc.).
6. If all attempts at resolving a conflict have been exhausted and the conflict cannot be resolved by consensus or vote then the Chair may arrange consultation with a third party such as the School's superintendent, an appropriate school board representative, or a representative from the Parent and Community Engagement Office.
7. If a council member or meeting attendee becomes disruptive during a meeting, the chair shall
 - a. ask for order.
 - b. If all efforts to restore order fail, or the unbecoming behaviour continues, the chair may direct the individual(s) to leave the meeting, citing the reasons for the request.
 - c. If all calls to order are unsuccessful the Chair may adjourn the meeting.
 - d. These events will be recorded in the minutes.
8. When the Chair has requested the removal of a parent(s)/guardian(s) or Council Member(s) from a meeting, the Chair shall request that the individual(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.

9. The removal of a council member or parent for one meeting does not prevent that member or parent from participating in future meetings of council.

[School Council Resources \(tdsb.on.ca\)](https://www.tdsb.on.ca)

Fundraising

- 1) A school council may engage in fundraising activities.
- 2) A school council shall not engage in fundraising activities unless,
 - (a) the activities are conducted in accordance with any applicable policies established by the board; and
 - (b) the activities are to raise funds for a purpose approved by the board or authorized by any applicable policies established by the board.
- (3) A school council shall ensure that the funds raised by it are used in accordance with any applicable policies established by the board.

[O. Reg. 612/00: SCHOOL COUNCILS AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEES \(ontario.ca\)](https://www.ontario.ca)

Finances

If the Africentric School Council wish to engage in fundraising activities, a treasurer must be elected (by quorum) and all funds must be tracked and reported according to TDSB policy: “The procedures for school council funds document provides information about financial reporting for school councils. A PSAB template and Semi-Annual Report Template have also been created to assist school council members in reporting their finances.”

For more on School Councils funds, see Procedures for School Council Funds (TDSB, August 2013).

[School Council Resources \(tdsb.on.ca\)](https://www.tdsb.on.ca)