



# School Council Bylaws

## *Albert Campbell Collegiate Institute*

### Preamble

In accordance with O. Reg. 612/00 of the Education Act, every school shall establish a school council that shall be recognized as the official school community organization representing the interests of the parents and students of the school, and that shall be provided with the information and support necessary for fulfilling its role (PR.558 SCS).

- 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. (Reg. 612/2.1)
- A school council may make recommendations to the principal of the school or to the Board on any matter. (Reg. 612/ 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. (Reg. 612/3.8)

### Bylaws

#### *Membership:*

1. Council shall consist of at least **three** and may consist of as many as **fifteen** members. Where the Principal is automatically appointed as guide and counsel with voting power, other members may be Parent members, Board employees and trustees, Community representative(s), and Student representative(s) (*School Councils: A Guide for Members*, 3.2).  
According to Ontario Regulation 612/00, elections for Council Positions must take place at the same time each year – within the first thirty days of each school year (*A Guide for Members*, 7.2).
  - 1.1. Membership is voluntary, but represents a year-long commitment.
  - 1.2. Should volunteers exceed **fifteen**, elections shall be held using the “Sample School Council Election Ballot” (*Guide for Members*, 7.7). Elections, should they be necessary, are to be done by secret ballot.
  - 1.3. Should a post become vacant because of resignation, inability of a member to fulfil his or her roles and responsibilities, or other causes, the remaining members shall constitute the school council, unless the parent/guardian majority is not maintained,” (*Guide for Members*, 7.11).
  - 1.4. Should it become necessary to fill a vacancy to maintain parent/guardian majority, the vacancy may be filled by appointment by the Principal in consultation with the Chair.
2. There will be a Chair, selected by the council from among the parent members on the council, who will chair meetings, establish a schedule, link with the principal and speak on behalf of the council. The council can also choose to elect a co-chair, vice-chair, secretary and/or treasurer. The chair must create an agenda in consultation with the co-chair and Principal; keep to the agenda during the meeting; summarize and conclude discussions to help the secretary with the recording and ensure everyone understands the direction of the group (TDSB, “FACT SHEET –School Councils,” 1-2). The Chair and other potential positions will be established by the conclusion of the first meeting *after* council is formed.  
Further duties of the Chair (TDSB Summary of School Council Regulations # 612, # 613 (2001)):

- 2.1. 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 (Reg. 612/16).
- 2.2. 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 (Reg. 612/16).

*Communication:*

3. Five one-hour bi-monthly meetings will be scheduled for the year by the Principal and included in the School Calendar found in the Student Agenda.
  - 3.1. Should a meeting need to be cancelled (e.g. due to inclement weather), it will be done in consultation with the Chair and the Principal and council members will be informed by email.
  - 3.2. In accordance with Ontario Regulation 612/00 requiring a minimum of four meetings, no more than one meeting may be cancelled without being rescheduled.
4. 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.

*Conflict Resolution:*

5. At all times the Council should attempt to reach consensus on decisions. Items for discussion must be present on the Agenda at the beginning of the meeting. If time remains at the end of the meeting, the chair may open the floor to new business at which point members may request points for discussion to be included in the Agenda of the next meeting.

The Chair mediates the decision process and is encouraged to review *A Guide for Members*, 8.8 to 8.11.
6. Where consensus cannot be reached, quorum shall be sought. Quorum shall be established as 50% of members present at a meeting wherein a parent/guardian majority of membership is maintained in attendance.
  - 6.1. A parent/guardian majority of membership in attendance at a meeting shall mean 50%+1 of the total attendees.
  - 6.2. Once it is established that a parent/guardian majority of membership is maintained in attendance, quorum may be sought.
  - 6.3. Quorum need not represent 50% of parent members so long as a parent/guardian majority of membership is maintained in attendance at the meeting.
7. Before quorum may be sought, every school council member will be given an opportunity to express his or her concern or opinion about the issue at dispute and how the dispute has affected him or her (*Guide for Members*, 7.16).
  - 7.1. Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.
  - 7.2. Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption.
  - 7.3. The chair's responsibility 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.
  - 7.4. If no common ground can be identified, the chair will seek to clarify preferences among all members before proceeding further.
  - 7.5. If all attempts at resolving the conflict have been exhausted without success, the chair shall request the intervention of a superintendent or other senior administrator to facilitate a resolution to the conflict.

*\*Decisions that are null and void: Any decisions that contradict provincial laws and regulations, local policy, or school council bylaws are out of order and invalid.*

### *Conflict of Interest:*

8. A conflict of interest for a school council representative is any situation in which the individual's private interests may be incompatible or in conflict with his or her school council responsibilities.

*Here is an example of a conflict of interest situation: The school council is discussing the construction of a new playground and possible contractors. The brother of a parent member of the school council is a building contractor, who intends to bid on the contract. The council member could, therefore, find him- or herself in a potential conflict of interest situation.*

School council members have a duty to declare to the chair/co-chairs that they are in a conflict of interest situation when any of the above situations occur or may potentially occur (*Guide for Members*, 7.12-7.13).

- 8.1. A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential.
- 8.2. Members of the council shall declare a 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 the council.
- 8.3. A member shall exclude him- or herself from discussions in which:
  - 8.3.1. a conflict of interest is likely to result;
  - 8.3.2. the member's ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities as a member of the school council may be jeopardized;
  - 8.3.3. the council member, his or 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 to the board.
- 8.4. A member shall not accept favours or economic benefits from any individuals, organizations, or entities known to be seeking business contracts with the school.

### *Finances:*

9. Regarding finances, should 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 [see below] 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).