

## 2018/19 Dundas Public School Parent Council – By-laws

Ontario Regulation 612/00 (School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees), made by the Ontario government under the authority of the *Education Act* (the “Regulation”), sets out the mandate, roles, and responsibilities for school councils in the Province of Ontario. This Regulation therefore determines the basic rules that the Dundas Public School (“Dundas P.S.”) Parent Council must follow in making its own by-laws and generally in carrying out its mandate. The Dundas P.S. Parent Council By-laws are informed by, and seek to be reflective of, the Regulation. The Regulation shall supersede the Dundas P.S. Parent Council By-laws in the event of any omissions or material inconsistencies.

### 1. Description and Purpose of the Dundas P.S. Parent Council

The Dundas P.S. Parent Council (“Parent Council”) consists of Dundas P.S. parents/guardians who act as an advisory group to the Principal, teachers, and staff, on any matters related to Dundas P.S.

### 2. Goals of the Dundas P.S. Parent Council

The goals of the Dundas P.S. Parent Council are to:

- Increase parent engagement with the school by communicating updates regularly and creating a forum where parents/guardians of children enrolled at Dundas P.S. can raise and discuss questions/concerns about their child(ren)’s education.
- Advise Dundas P.S. teachers/staff and the Toronto District School Board (“TDSB”) on any matters related to the school, such as budget planning, safety, school policies, curriculum, extra-curricular activities, etc.
- Provide financial support through fundraising events to support school programming, such as purchasing of new sports and computer equipment, subsidizing school field trips, etc.
- Increase community involvement and parental participation through social events, educational workshops, and community projects.

### 3. Dundas P.S. Parent Council Governance Structure

The Parent Council is comprised of:

- a) 15 parents/guardians of children enrolled at Dundas P.S. elected in accordance with these by-laws.
- b) The Dundas P.S. Principal as an *ex officio* (non-voting) member.
- c) One teacher who is employed at Dundas P.S., other than the principal or vice-principal, elected in accordance with these by-laws.
- d) One non-teaching staff who is employed at Dundas P.S. elected in accordance with these by-laws.
- e) One community representative appointed by the other members of the Dundas P.S. Parent Council in accordance with these by-laws.

The membership category of parents/guardians of children at Dundas P.S. is made up of active parents/guardians who have one or more children enrolled at Dundas P.S. and who have been elected as parent members of the Parent Council. The following cannot be elected as parent members of the Parent Council:

- Parents/guardians of children at Dundas P.S. who are employed at Dundas P.S.;
- Parents/guardians of children at Dundas P.S. who are not employed at Dundas P.S. but are employed elsewhere by the TDSB, unless the parent/guardian takes reasonable steps to inform the parents/guardians of children at Dundas P.S. of that employment.

#### **4. Roles of Parent Council Members**

##### **4.1 Parents/Guardians of children at Dundas P.S.**

The parents/guardians of children at Dundas P.S. represent the interests of all children and families in the community.

##### **4.2 Dundas P.S. Principal**

The Principal represents the Administration of Dundas P.S. As a member and leader of the School Community, the Principal provides the guidance and support necessary to help the Council achieve its goals and be an effective voice for parents. In the event the Principal cannot attend a council meeting, s/he may delegate this responsibility to the Vice-Principal.

##### **4.3 Dundas P.S. Teacher**

The teacher member represent the interests of all teachers at Dundas P.S.

##### **4.4 Dundas P.S. Non-Teaching Staff**

The non-teaching staff member represents the interests of all non-teaching staff at Dundas P.S.

##### **4.5 Community Representative**

The community representative represents the community's perspective, contributes to the discussions of the Parent Council, and helps build partnerships and links between the school and the community.

#### **5. Parent Council Executive Team**

The Parent Council will have a five-member Executive team, elected on a yearly basis from the parent members of Council and made up of the following:

- Two Co-Chairs;
- Two Co-Secretaries; and
- One Treasurer.

In addition to chairing Committees of the Parent Council and any other duties specifically assigned, all Executive team members have the following responsibilities:

- Participate in meetings of Parent Council and activities of Council.

- Act as a link between Parent Council and the school community.
- Encourage others within the school community to participate in the activities of Council and work towards removing barriers to the participation of all members of the school community.
- The specific responsibilities set out in sections 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 below, as applicable.

### **5.1 Co-Chairs**

The Co-Chairs shall:

- Call and chair Parent Council meetings.
- Prepare meeting agendas in consultation with the Principal and other Council members, and ensure that appropriate notice of meetings is given.
- Meet regularly with the Principal on matters relating to the business of Council.
- Ensure democratic procedures for decision making and conduct of the Council.
- Encourage maximum involvement of the Council members.

### **5.2 Co-Secretaries**

The Co-Secretaries shall:

- Keep minutes of Parent Council meetings or arranges for minutes to be kept, if unable to attend a meeting.
- Maintain a complete set of minutes of meetings, By-laws and any policies passed by the Parent Council.
- Communicate information from Council to the school community.
- Ensure that agendas and minutes are posted in the school and on-line in an area accessible to the school community.

### **5.3 Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall:

- Maintain the financial records of the Parent Council.
- Make regular reports to Parent Council regarding financial matters related to the business of the Parent Council.

#### **5.3.1 Signing Authority**

The signatures of any of the following are authorized to sign cheques from the Parent Council bank account(s):

- Treasurer
- Co-Chairs
- Co-Secretaries

## 6. Parent Council Meetings

- At the first Parent Council meeting of the school year, the Executive will propose meeting dates for the full school year in consultation with the Principal, and the Parent Council members will provide their feedback on the proposed schedule of meetings.
- The Parent Council will provide written notice of the dates, times and locations of the Parent Council meetings parents/guardians through as many communication channels as possible.
- Council meetings shall be chaired by one of the Co-Chairs.
- Quorum is required in order to hold a Parent Council meeting: a majority of the current members of the Parent Council must be present, and a majority of those members present must be parent members.
- Subject to quorum, a vacancy in the membership of the Parent Council does not prevent the Council from exercising its authority.
- Each member of Parent Council except the Principal shall have a vote at Parent Council meetings.
- Parent Council decisions shall be made by majority vote of voting members in attendance. No proxy voting is permitted.
- In exceptional circumstances the Executive team may choose to conduct an email vote, and in doing so it may choose a timeline that it deems appropriate.
- An agenda for the meeting shall be circulated prior to the meeting.
- Where feasible, Parent Council members will try to reach a consensus in decision making.
- All meetings of Parent Council are open to the community.
- A Parent Council member who is unable to attend a meeting should send their regrets to the Executive team in advance of the meeting.
- If a Parent Council member fails to attend three consecutive meetings, a Co-Chair may bring this matter to the attention of the member and discuss, in a collegial manner, the consequences of their continued absence on the Council's ability to carry out its mandate.

## 7. Parent Council Elections/Appointments

### 7.1. Election of Parent Council members

An election of Parent Council members will be conducted at a meeting held during the first 30 days of each school year, on a date set by the chair or co-chairs of the Council after consulting with the Principal. All the positions listed in section 3 above, with the exception of the Principal, will be elected at this meeting, in accordance with the following voting eligibility rules:

- Only parents/guardians of children enrolled at the school can vote in the election of the 17 parent member positions of Council.
- Only teachers at Dundas P.S., other than the principal or vice-principal, can vote in the election of the teacher position of Council.
- Only non-teaching staff at Dundas P.S., other than the principal, vice-principal and teachers, can vote in the election of the non-teaching staff position of Council.

## **7.2. Election of Executive team**

The five members of the Executive team will be elected at the same meeting held during the first 30 days of each school year, immediately after the Parent Council members have been elected.

Only elected parent members of Council can run for the five Executive team positions.

As with any other decision of the Parent Council, only the (newly-elected) Parent Council members can vote for the five Executive team positions.

## **7.3. Election rules**

The following rules will be followed with respect to any election:

- The Principal, on behalf of the Parent Council, will give written notice of an election of members to the Parent Council at least 14 days before the date of the election. Notice will be given to all members of the school community.
- If more than one individual is running for any of the above mentioned positions, a secret ballot is used to conduct the election.
- An individual may be nominated for subsequent positions if they are not successfully elected for one position.
- If a position is not contested, the position is won by acclamation.
- Proxy voting and email voting are not accepted for elections.
- The election is chaired by a member of the Dundas community who is not standing for election. S/he will count the votes and deliver the results.
- A Parent Council member may be re-elected.

## **7.4. Appointment of community representative**

The elected members of the Dundas P.S. Parent Council will appoint the community representative of Council on a yearly basis, as soon as practicable in the school year, in accordance with the following rules:

- An employee of the TDSB can only be appointed as a community representative if they meet the following two conditions:
  - s/he is not employed at Dundas P.S.; and
  - s/he informs the Parent Council of their employment with the TDSB before the appointment.
- A trustee of the TDSB cannot be appointed as a community representative.

A community representative may be reappointed.

## **7.5. Vacancies on the Parent Council**

If a position on Parent Council becomes vacant, the Parent Council must immediately advertise the vacancy to the school community requesting that nominations be made for the position. Any vacant position(s) will be filled in accordance with the rules set out in section 7.

## 8. Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential. Members of the Parent 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 Parent Council.

Parent Council member shall declare a conflict and exclude him- or herself from discussions in which:

- A conflict of interest is likely to result;
- The Council member's ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities as a member of the school council may be jeopardized;
- 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 the TDSB in response to advice that the council provides to the Principal or to the TDSB.

A member shall not accept favours, or economic benefits, from any individuals, organizations, or entities known to be seeking business contracts with the school.

## 9. Conflict Resolution

- Every Parent 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.
- Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.
- Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption.
- The Co-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.
- If no common ground can be identified, the Co-Chair(s) will seek to clarify preferences among all members before proceeding further.
- If all attempts at resolving the conflict have been exhausted without success, the Co-Chair(s) shall request the intervention of a superintendent or other senior administrator to facilitate a resolution to the conflict
- Parent Council members are elected to serve the school community and will demonstrate respect for their colleagues on Council at all times.
- If a Parent Council member, or members, becomes disruptive during a meeting, the Co-Chair(s) shall ask for order.
- If all efforts to restore order fail, or the unbecoming behaviour continues, the Co-Chair(s) with the approval of the Executive team, may direct the individual Council member(s) to leave the meeting, citing the reasons for the request.
- The removal of a member for one meeting does not prevent the Parent Council member from participating in future meetings of Council.

- The incident shall be recorded and submitted to the Superintendent of Schools within one week of the meeting.
- When the Co-Chair(s) has requested the removal of a member or members from a meeting, the Co-Chair(s) shall request that the disputing members of Council 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 Parent Council. This special meeting shall be held before the next Parent Council meeting.
- The Co-Chair(s) may request the intervention of an independent third party to assist in achieving a resolution to the dispute.
- An independent third party may be a TDSB official or another individual mutually agreed on by the parties involved in the dispute.
- Any resolution reached at the meeting to resolve the conflict shall be signed and respected in full by all parties to the agreement.

## **10. Budget Planning and Finance**

### **10.1 Budget Submissions Process**

The Co-Chair(s) of the Parent Council will request items for purchase from the Dundas P.S. staff and Principal at the beginning of the school year.

### **10.2 Budget Planning**

The Executive Team will review the list of requests with the Principal and determine how the funding will be spent for the school year. The annual budget shall contain provisions for allocated items (based on needs, proposals, commitments and parent feed-back) and a further discretionary budget to be allocated, as Parent Council decides, during the following school year.

## **11. Code of Ethics**

All Parent Council members shall abide by the following:

- A member shall consider the best interests of all students.
- A member shall be guided by the school's and the school board's mission statements.
- 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.
- A member shall become familiar with the school's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.
- A member shall maintain the highest standards of integrity.
- A member shall recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.
- A member shall treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.

- A member shall encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
- A member shall acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the Council.
- A member shall respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the Parent Council.
- A member shall not disclose confidential information.
- A member shall limit discussions at Parent Council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.
- A member shall use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise.
- A member shall promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community.
- A member shall declare any conflict of interest.
- A member shall not accept any payment or benefit financially through Parent Council involvement.

## **12. Amendments to these By-laws**

The Dundas P.S. Parent Council may add or change these by-laws through a motion submitted by a member and duly seconded at a Parent Council meeting.

In order to add or change a by-law, a motion must be approved by council during two consecutive school council meetings. The motion will detail the proposed rationale for the change, and require majority approval in both meetings.

The motion and any supporting documents will be posted in the school in an area accessible to the school community and made available electronically no fewer than four business days before both school council meetings (barring no IT issues).

Motions may be amended at the second meeting without requiring further approval at the subsequent meeting.

These by-laws must be reviewed every two years.