



**GATEWAY PUBLIC SCHOOL
SCHOOL COUNCIL
BY-LAWS**

APRIL 11, 2019

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ARTICLE 1

NAME OF ORGANIZATION

SECTION 1.1

Gateway PS School Council

1.1.1

The name of the school council at Gateway Public School is the Gateway PS School Council and herein referred to as School Council.

ARTICLE 2

PURPOSE

SECTION 2.1

Ministry Mandate

2.1.1

The mandate of the School Council is prescribed by the Education Act, Ontario Regulation 612/00 School Councils.

SECTION 2.2

Objective

2.2.1

In addition to the mandate of School Councils as defined by the Education Act, and in accordance with Ontario Regulation 612/00 regarding school councils, the objectives of the School Council shall be to:

- (a) Contribute to the improvement of student achievement and school performance and enhance accountability of the education system to parents.
- (b) Provide a meaningful forum for discussion of topics of interest to all parents and teachers, and promote mutual understanding between the home and the school.
- (c) Engage/outreach to all parents to create a strong school community.

ARTICLE 3

MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 3.1

Members

3.1.1

Parent members shall constitute a majority of the members of the School Council.

3.1.2

The School Council shall be composed of the following members:

- (a) Twelve parents/guardians of children in the school who are elected to the School Council.
- (b) One teacher who is employed at the school, to be elected by the teaching staff of the school.
- (c) One person who is employed at the school, other than the principal or vice-principal or any other teacher.
- (d) One community representative appointed by the elected School Council.

- (e) The Principal or his/her designate.

SECTION 3.2

Election Process

- (a) Elections shall occur within the first 30 (school) days of the school year in accordance with Ontario Regulation 612/00.
- (b) The Principal on behalf of the School 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.
- (c) Each parent/guardian seeking election must be a parent/guardian of student in 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 be accepted from the floor.
- (d) Nomination forms supplied by the School Council shall be filed by all parent/guardian candidates to the school (principal or designate).
- (e) 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.
- (f) If the number of declared candidates is less than or equal to the number of positions, the candidates will be acclaimed at the first School Council meeting of the academic year.
- (g) If the number of declared candidates is higher than the number of positions, then an election will be called.
- (h) Elections for School Council shall be supervised by the Principal (or designate) and parents/parent member(s) of School Council who are not seeking election.
- (i) The Principal shall conduct a lottery of candidate names to determine randomly selected ballot positions for each candidate.
- (j) Voting shall be by secret ballot and neither proxy nor absentee voting is permitted.
- (k) Only parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent/guardian position on the School Council.
- (l) Names of the successful candidates shall be made public (ie, in the school's newsletter, website, social media).
- (m) Elections for teaching and non-teaching staff representative on School Council will be held during the first 30 days of each school year.

SECTION 3.3

Vacancies

A vacancy in the parent membership of the School Council shall be filled by election using the process outlined in Section 3.2.

SECTION 3.4

Terms of Office

- 3.4.1 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.
- 3.4.2 A person elected or appointed to School Council will hold office until the first meeting of the School Council after elections.

SECTION 3.5

Executive Officers

3.5.1 Composition of Executive Officers

The following officer positions are elected by the School Council at the first meeting:

- (a) A Chair or if determined by the School Council, two Co-Chairs (must be a parent member)
- (b) A Secretary (recommended to be a parent member)
- (c) A Treasurer (recommended to be a parent member)

3.5.2 Election of Executive Officers

- (a) Voting shall be by secret ballot and neither proxy nor absentee voting is permitted.
- (b) The members of the School Council (i.e., 12 elected parent/guardian representatives, 1 teaching staff member, 1 non-teaching staff member, and 1 community member) will have one vote each for the elected office positions.
- (c) The Principal of the school does not vote in the election.

3.5.3 Vacancies of Executive Officers

Vacancies in the position of any officer shall be filled by election of another member of School Council.

SECTION 3.6

Roles and Responsibilities

3.6.1

Chair/Co-Chairs

- (a) Arrange for School Council meetings;
- (b) Prepare agendas for School Council meetings;
- (c) Chair School Council meetings;
- (d) Ensure that minutes of School Council meetings are recorded and maintained;
- (e) Facilitate conflict resolution;
- (f) Communicate with the Principal on behalf of the School Council;
- (g) Consult with senior board staff and trustees as required on behalf of the School Council;
- (h) Act as Joint Signing Officer;
- (i) Chair, or their representative, shall sit on school committees, not limited to but including: School Budget Committee; School Improvement Plan Committee; School Staffing Committee; and School Safety Committee.

3.6.2

Secretary

- (a) Complete records of all meetings in a timely manner;
- (b) Assist the Chair in the distribution of minutes to all School Council members, posts minutes, (once approved) on the School Council bulletin board, and have them available to the parent body;
- (c) Responsible for upkeep of all School Council social media and communications to the parent body; (e.g. blog, twitter, email, newsletters etc.);
- (d) Act as a Joint Signing Officer.

3.6.3

Treasurer

- (a) Act as custodian of the funds of the School Council;
- (b) Handle receipt and disbursement of School Council monies;
- (c) Keep proper records of all financial transactions;
- (d) Arrange for verification of the School Council's financial records in June of each year;
- (e) Act as a Joint Signing Officer;

- (f) Prepare annual Public School Accounting Board (PSAB) report.

3.6.3

Principal

- (a) Provide guidance to the School Council;
- (b) Facilitate and support its operation;
- (c) Provide such information and advice as would enable members to function effectively in their respective roles.

3.6.4

Elected School Council Members

- (a) All elected members of School Council represent the views and opinions of the parent community and are encouraged to attend and participate in all meetings;
- (b) All elected members are encouraged to participate in sub-committees;
- (c) All elected members are encouraged to participate and facilitate any events that the School Council holds during the school year.

ARTICLE 4

MEETINGS

SECTION 4.1

General Meetings

4.1.1

The School Council shall hold a minimum of four (4) meetings each school year.

4.1.2

The School Council should meet within the first 40 days of the school year.

4.1.3

All meetings of the School Council shall be open to the public and be held at a location that is accessible to the public.

4.1.4

The Chair of the School Council shall preside over each meeting. If two Co-Chairs are present, then one of the Co-Chairs shall preside over the meeting. The Co-Chair not leading the meeting shall preside whenever the Co-Chair leading the meeting wishes to participate in a discussion during a meeting.

SECTION 4.2

Executive Officer Meetings

The Chair, Co-Chair(s), and Executive Officers shall meet with the Principal prior to each general meeting to set the agenda for the upcoming meeting.

SECTION 4.3

Annual Meetings

The School Council shall hold an Annual Meeting prior to the end of the school year.

SECTION 4.4 Meeting Agendas and Schedules

4.4.1 The agenda for a general meeting shall be ordered by the Chair/Co-Chairs and set by the Executive Committee, and may include items from individual School Council members.

4.4.2 Review of the agenda shall be the first order of business in the School Council meeting.

SECTION 4.5 Quorum

4.5.1 A meeting of the School Council cannot be held unless:

- (a) A majority of the members (50% + 1) of the School Council who are present in the meeting are elected parent/guardian members.
- (b) A majority (50% + 1) of the current elected members of the School Council is present at the meeting; and
- (c) The Principal or his/her designate is present.

SECTION 4.6 Meeting Attendance

4.6.1 All School Council members are required to attend a majority of the School Council meetings.

4.6.2 A member of the School Council who participates in a meeting through electronic means shall be deemed to be present at the meeting.

4.6.3 It is the responsibility of all School Council members who will be absent from a meeting, to notify the Principal and Chair/Co-Chairs in a timely fashion prior to the start of the meeting.

4.6.4 If a School Council member has been absent for three consecutive meetings, written notification will be given by the Chair/Co-Chairs to the absentee School Council member and to the Principal concerning the absence.

4.6.5 School Council members who are absent for three consecutive meetings, without regrets, shall be declared to have vacated their position.

ARTICLE 5 MAKING DECISIONS

SECTION 5.1 Consensus

5.1.1 The School Council will strive for consensus in its decision-making.

SECTION 5.2

Voting

- 5.2.1 When consensus cannot be reached, the School Council will follow the procedures for voting as prescribed by Robert's Rules of Order.
- (a) In votes taken by the School Council, each elected member of the School Council is entitled to one vote.
 - (b) In votes taken at the committee/sub-committee level, each elected School Council committee/sub-committee member is entitled to one vote.
 - (c) The Principal of the school is not entitled to vote in votes taken by the School Council or by a committee of the School Council.
- 5.2.2 A motion shall be considered to have passed when approved by a simple majority of voting members present.
- 5.2.3 A voting member of the School Council who is present and who fails to vote on a motion shall be deemed to have abstained. An abstention is neither counted for nor against a motion.

ARTICLE 6

COMMITTEES

SECTION 6.1

Committees

- 6.1.1 The School Council may establish committees as required to make recommendations to the School Council and to carry out projects of the School Council on an as need basis.
- 6.1.2 All committees must be chaired by an elected member of the School Council and are open to parent/guardians of the school.
- 6.1.3 All committee meetings must be open and accessible to the public.
- 6.1.4 All committees will meet as required throughout the year to carry out the strategic plans for School Council's objectives and will make recommendations to, and report to School Council, on its activities.

SECTION 6.2

Finance Committee

- 6.2.1 All expenditures of the School Council require prior approval.
- 6.2.2 All expenditures are to be reported in a financial statement to be made available at each School Council meeting.
- 6.2.3 The School Council will not borrow funds or enter into any financial commitment for which funds are not already in hand.

- 6.2.4 The School Council shall maintain a bank account to which Council funds shall be deposited and from which payments by the School Council shall be made. Cheques drawn on the bank account of the School Council shall require the signature of the Treasurer and Chair/Co-Chair.

SECTION 6.3 Communications Committee

- 6.3.1 School Council at its discretion will utilize social media (including Twitter; Facebook, Instagram, etc.) that will assist in fulfilling its purpose.

- 6.3.2 All social media and online communication will:

- (a) Be coordinated and managed by the Chair/Co-Chairs, Secretary and/or Communications Chair;
- (b) Adhere to all anti-spam legislation and TDSB online Code of Conduct;
- (c) Not compromise privacy of any parent/guardian of School Council or the school; and
- (d) Be shut down at the discretion of School Council.

ARTICLE 7 ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

SECTION 7.1 Annual Reports

- 7.1.1 The School Council shall annually submit a written report of its activities to the Principal of the school and the Toronto District School Board.

- 7.1.2 If the School Council engages in fundraising activities, the annual report shall include a report of those activities.

- 7.1.3 The Principal shall, on behalf of the School Council, give a copy of the report to every parent of a student who is enrolled in the school by:

- (a) giving the report to the student for delivery to their parent,
- (b) posting the report in the school in a place that is visible to the parents, and/or
- (c) sharing the report electronically with all parents.

SECTION 7.2 Remuneration

- 7.2.1 A person shall not receive any remuneration for serving as a member of the School Council.

7.2.2 Reimbursement to members for expenses incurred as members of the School Council shall be reimbursed pursuant to TDSB policies and School Council approved procedures.

SECTION 7.3 Incorporation

7.3.1 The School Council shall not be incorporated.

ARTICLE 8 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

SECTION 8.1 Rules Respecting Conflicts of Interest

8.1.1 School Council members 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 School Council.

8.1.2 A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived or potential.

8.1.3 A member shall exclude herself/himself from discussions which:

- (a) A conflict of interest is likely to result.
- (b) The School Council member's ability to carry out his/her duties and responsibilities may be jeopardized.
- (c) The School Council member, his/her relatives, or a business entity in which the School Council 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 School Council provides to the Principal or board.
- (d) A School Council member shall not accept favours or economic benefits from any individual organizations, or entities known to be seeking business contracts with the school.

ARTICLE 9 CONFLICT RESOLUTION

SECTION 9.1 General Principles

9.1.1 The intent of this section is to provide a process for resolving conflict between and among School Council members, Chairs/Co-Chairs, parents, and/or school administration, that affects the function and/or the physical or social environment of the School Council at Gateway PS.

9.1.2 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.

- 9.1.3 It is also the intent of this process to keep relations at the school and School Council constructive so that School Council members and parents can carry out its purpose.
- 9.1.4 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.

SECTION 9.2 Definitions

Administration: The principal or his/her designate.

Conflict: A strong disagreement or a dispute between and among School Council members, Chairs/Co-Chairs, parents, and/or school administration resulting from the following:

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

Mediation: A process where a neutral third party assists two conflicting people to come to agreement. This could involve the mediator speaking individually to the two people but ultimately must include the mediator facilitating a meeting between both of the conflicting people.

Resolution: An agreement by parties that solves the conflict.

School Council Chair/Co-Chair: Member of the School Council elected by membership as Chair/Co-Chairs of the School Council.

School Council Member: Any parent/guardian of the school who has been elected as a member of the School Council.

SECTION 9.3 Conflict Resolution Process

- 9.3.1 In accordance with O. Reg.330/10 S.43 (b) (viii), the following section of the School Council by-laws establishes a conflict resolution process, consistent with TDSB policy, for disputes between and among School Council members.
- 9.3.2 The School Council recognizes that conflict is not always negative. It is the School Council's intention to resolve disputes collaboratively, amicably and respectfully.
- 9.3.3 Successful dispute resolution relies upon:
- (a) the ability of the Chair/Co-Chair to objectively facilitate the discussion so that all School Council members have an opportunity to have their concerns addressed in a constructive manner, and the School Council members' readiness to participate to seek resolution to the issue.

- (b) Each School Council member shall be given an opportunity to express his or her concern or opinion regarding the issue in dispute and how the dispute has affected the member.
- (c) Speakers to an issue shall maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.
- (d) Speakers shall be allowed to speak without interruption and provide allowances for feedback.
- (e) The Chair/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.
- (f) If no common ground can be identified, the Chair/Co-Chair shall seek to clarify preferences among all members before proceeding further. Under the guidance of the Chair/Co-Chair, the School Council shall:
 - (i) acknowledge the issue or problem;
 - (ii) commit to finding a solution;
 - (iii) develop a strategy to resolve the conflict;
 - (iv) listen to each person's viewpoints without judgment;
 - (v) assail the problem and not the person – avoid labeling the individual
 - (vi) allow each School Council member to communicate his or her views;
 - (vii) consult others involved as to their needs and concerns;
 - (viii) use active listening strategies;
 - (ix) share needs and concerns with the entire group;
 - (x) invite others to suggest ways to resolve the conflict;
 - (xi) agree on a solution; and
 - (xii) follow-up to ensure the agreed-upon solution is implemented.

9.3.4

If all attempts at resolving the dispute have been exhausted without success, the Co-Chair may request the intervention of an independent third party, a superintendent, other senior administrator or TDSB official, or another neutral individual mutually agreed upon by the parties involved in the dispute, to facilitate and assist in achieving a resolution to the conflict or dispute.

ARTICLE 10 BY-LAWS REFORM

SECTION 10.1 Amendments

10.1.1 Amendments to these by-laws require a two-thirds majority vote of elected members present at a meeting of the School Council, with a minimum of one week notice.

ARTICLE 11 EFFECTIVE DATE AND REVISION HISTORY

SECTION 11.1 Effective Date

11.1.1 These By-laws are effective and come into force as of April 11, 2019, the Effective Date.

SECTION 11.2 Revision History

11.2.1 Approved April 11, 2019.

REFERENCES

Ontario Regulation 612/00

SCHOOL COUNCILS AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEES, under Education Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/000612>

School Councils: A Guide for Members, 2001 (Revised 2002)

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

PIAC By-laws (Revised June 20, 2017)

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/Community/Community%20Advisory%20committees/PIAC/TDSB%20-%20PIAC%20Bi-Laws%202011-09-29%20%28FINAL%29%20RF.pdf>