

Princess Margaret Junior School Parent Advisory Council By-Laws

ARTICLE I: NAME AND PARAMETERS

Princess Margaret Junior School Parent Advisory Council (hereafter known as PAC), will operate within the parameters of the Education Act and Regulations, Ontario Regulations 612/00 and 613/00, and within the parameters of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) policies, strategic plan and agreements (including collective agreements).

The PAC shall not be incorporated.

The activities of the PAC shall be consistent with the site based planning activities within the school. The Principal shall convey information regarding these parameters to the PAC.

The terms 'PAC', 'council' and 'parent council' shall be considered to be the same.

'Meeting' does not include a training session or other event where a parent council does not discuss or decide matters that it has the authority to decide.

'Parent' includes a guardian as defined in Section 1 of the Education Act.

'Parent member' means any PAC member who is a parent of a student at Princess Margaret Junior School (PMJS) and is not a staff member.

'Staff member' means either teaching or non-teaching PAC staff members.

'Regular PAC meetings' shall be open to the public and advertised to the school community in advance.

A 'Voting member' is Parent member who is elected or acclaimed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), the teacher representative and the non-teacher staff representative. Voting members are expected to attend all scheduled council meetings and participate in the decision making/voting process during meetings.

A 'Non-voting member' is a Parent member or member of the public who attends PAC meetings. The Principal is also a non-voting member of the PAC. Non-voting members may contribute ideas, participate in discussions and join committees, but do not participate in the decision making/voting process.

ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES

The PAC shall be guided by the following objectives:

1. To promote and maintain a positive school environment for all students, parents and staff.
2. To provide advice to the Principal and, where appropriate, to the school board on any matters of concern to the education of the students.
3. To develop strategies and solutions regarding objectives 1 and 2, which will involve a collaborative effort by staff, parents, students and the school board.
4. To promote and encourage communication within the school community, thus empowering parents and teachers with a shared responsibility for education.
5. To keep up to date on current trends in education.
6. To provide staff, parents and students with an accountable system through which they can voice their concerns, comments and suggestions for future consideration.
7. To create a welcoming, inclusive and diverse forum at PAC meetings for sharing information, providing resources and discussing issues affecting the school community.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

Membership on the PAC will be determined at the beginning of each school year and last until the end of that school year, except for Executive positions as described in Article VI (Officers).

Membership shall be determined in the following ways:

1. **Parents** (including guardians as defined in Section 1 of the Education Act)
 - a) Any parent of a student at PMJS is eligible to be a member of the PAC.
 - b) TDSB employees are eligible to be a member of the PAC as parent members if they are parents of a student enrolled in the school, provided they do not work at the school. Such employees must disclose their employment with the TDSB.
 - c) Parent members are eligible to be voting members or non-voting members of the PAC. Any non-voting parent members may attend and participate in PAC meetings but are not eligible to vote.
 - d) Up to fifteen (15) voting parent members shall be elected by parents at the AGM. At the time of the election, if more than fifteen (15) parent members wish to be voting members, a motion to increase the number of voting parent members may be raised and voted on by the parents present at the AGM.
 - e) Each school year, the maximum number of voting parent members will reset to fifteen (15).
2. **Teachers**

A teacher representative employed in the school shall be elected by the members of the teaching staff in September. If one teacher cannot attend all meetings, the teachers will

set up a rotation in order to ensure representation. The teacher representative shall be a voting member of the PAC.

3. Non-teaching Staff

A representative of the non-teaching staff shall be elected by the non-teaching staff in September. This can include a parent who is employed at PMJS. The non-teaching staff representative shall be a voting member of the PAC.

4. Principal

The Principal is a designated non-voting member. Responsibilities may be delegated by the Principal to a Vice-Principal.

ARTICLE IV: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

1. An **AGM** of the school community shall be called by the previous school year's Chair of the PAC in consultation with the Principal, within thirty (30) days of the beginning of each school year for the purpose of:
 - a) Presenting the annual report of the PAC;
 - b) Presenting the previous year's financial statements of the PAC;
 - c) Reviewing the PAC by-laws;
 - d) Dissolving the previous year's Executive; and
 - e) Electing the voting parent members and the Executive of the PAC.
2. **Quorum**
The minimum number of parents required to hold the AGM is eight (8).
3. **Special General Meetings**
A special general meeting of the school community may be called by the Chair of the council in consultation with the Principal.

ARTICLE V: ELECTIONS

1. Elections shall occur within the first thirty (30) days of the start of each school year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at the school.
2. Any parent wishing to serve on the PAC Executive or as a voting parent member must have a child registered at the school, complete a nomination or self-nomination form, declare if he or she is employed by the TDSB and be present at the AGM.
3. Nomination forms (see Appendix 1) may be delivered to the school office before the election date. However, any parent who does not submit a nomination form may attend the AGM and verbally self-nominate themselves prior to the election.

4. No campaign literature for elections may be distributed or posted on school property. However, prior to an election, candidates may speak briefly to describe their reasons for running and qualifications.

Step One: Election of Voting Parent Members

5. If the number of nominations for voting parent members is less than or equal to fifteen (15), the candidates shall be acclaimed.
6. If more than fifteen (15) parent members wish to be voting members, a motion to increase the number of voting parent members may be raised and voted on by the parents present at the AGM.
7. If the number of candidates for voting parent members exceeds 15 (or the increased number of voting parent members as voted on in Item 6), each parent shall be entitled to one vote for each voting parent member position. For example, if there are 15 voting parent member positions and 20 candidates, each parent is entitled to vote for 15 of the 20 candidates.
8. Only one parent from each household may be a voting member of the PAC in a given school year.

Step Two: Executive Role Election Process

9. Each voting member present at the AGM shall be entitled to one vote for each Executive role on the council.
10. If there is only one candidate for an Executive role, the candidate shall be acclaimed.

Election Process

11. Voters must be present at the AGM to vote.
12. In the event an election is required, an election committee shall be formed consisting of a minimum of 2 parent volunteers. No one standing for election, nor the spouse of anyone standing for election, shall be a member of the election committee.
13. The election committee shall:
 - Conduct the elections by secret ballot;
 - Count the ballots;
(Note: a ballot with more than the maximum number of votes permitted is a spoiled ballot and will not be counted.)
 - Announce the names of the elected candidates; and
 - Destroy the ballots;
 - In the event of a tie, a runoff election between the tied candidates will be held. If the runoff election does not result in a decision (or there were only 2 candidates) the election will be resolved by coin-toss (as is done in some jurisdictions for ties in political elections).
14. Only the names of the successful candidates shall be announced.

15. The PAC shall help the Principal ensure that the names of its Executive and voting parent members are shared with the school community within thirty (30) days of the election.

ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS

1. **Executive**

The Executive of the PAC shall consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary (or Co-Secretaries), Treasurer and Fundraising Chair. No person shall hold more than one office at a time, in any given school year.

The voting members of the PAC shall elect the Executive from among themselves at the AGM.

TDSB employees are not eligible to be Chair or Vice-Chair of the PAC.

In order to be on the Executive, candidates must have been a voting parent member for at least one (1) school year. Only in circumstances where a candidate who has not previously been a voting member of PAC may become a member of the Executive is when they are the only candidate for that executive position.

The Executive is empowered to make decisions on behalf of the PAC in extraordinary situations (e.g. time constraints). Such decisions shall be communicated to the PAC at the next regular council meeting.

2. **Duties of the Executive**

a) Chair

The Chair shall:

- Act as the official spokesperson of the PAC;
- Participate in ward council meetings and information sessions;
- Provide the necessary leadership in the effective operation of a vital council; and
- Chair PAC meetings.

In consultation with the Principal, the Chair shall:

- Call council meetings;
- Set the date for the PAC meetings;
- Prepare the agenda for the PAC meetings;
- Prepare an annual report on the activities of the PAC by the end of the school year and chair the AGM of the following school year;
- Ensure that minutes of meetings are recorded and maintained;
- Regularly communicate with the school Principal;
- Ensure that there is regular communication with the members of the school community;

- Consult with senior TDSB staff and trustees as required; and
- Be an ex-officio member of all standing committees of the council.

In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair, meetings may be chaired by another member of the Executive.

b) Vice-Chair

During the absence or inability of the Chair, the duties of the Chair shall be exercised by the Vice-Chair and shall assist the Chair at all times in the discharge of his/her duties.

The Vice-Chair will also serve as the By-law officer and shall:

- Ensure the Executive are familiar with the by-laws;
- Ensure the PAC is adhering to the by-laws; and
- Provide a copy of the by-laws upon request by a member of the PAC or school community.

c) Secretary

The Secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of the PAC meetings and AGM, attend to all official correspondence and communications, postnotices and file records as directed by the council, and perform such other duties as may, from time-to-time, be determined by the council.

d) Treasurer

The Treasurer shall keep full and accurate accounts of all receipts and disbursements of the council in proper books of account and shall be guided by TDSB policy in regard to banking and funds disbursements.

The Treasurer will prepare the proposed annual budget for discussion and approval at the second regular PAC meeting following the AGM.

The Treasurer shall provide, at regular meetings of the council or whenever required, an account of all transactions of the council and of the financial position of the same, shall prepare a full financial statement for submission to the AGM.

The Treasurer shall bring to the council for approval any requests for funds that exceed the approved budget and shall perform such other duties as may, from time-to-time, be determined by the council.

e) Fundraising Chair (optional)

The Fundraising Chair shall ensure that all PAC events are run in accordance with the Ministry of Education regulations and Toronto District School Board policies. The Fundraising Chair can assign parent/guardian volunteers to oversee and run individual fundraising events as they see fit.

If the Fundraising Chair role is not filled, the responsibilities may be delegated to another member of the PAC.

3. **Members at large of the PAC**

The members at large of the council shall chair committees established by the PAC and:

- Participate in council meetings;
- Participate in ward council meetings and information sessions as deemed necessary by the council;
- Act as a link between the council and the school community;
- Encourage the participation of parents within the school community; and
- Perform such other duties as may, from time-to-time, be determined by the council.

ARTICLE VII: THE PRINCIPAL

The Principal shall:

- Attend all PAC meetings (may be delegated to the Vice-Principal)
- Assist in the operation of the council
- Support and promote the activities of the council
- Seek input from the PAC in areas for which it has been assigned advisory responsibility and provide responses to the recommendations
- Act as a resource on laws and regulations, board policies and collective agreements
- Provide information required by the PAC to enable it to make informed decisions
- Maintain regular communication with the Chair
- Assist the PAC in communication with the community
- Encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community
- Ensure that copies of minutes are kept at the school
- Approve all printed materials from the PAC distributed through the school
- Forward a copy of the annual report to the TDSB
- Give written notice (in a manner determined by the PAC) at least fourteen (14) days before the election date for parent members, of the date, time and location of the election, to every parent of a student enrolled in school
- Give written notice of any proposed amendments to the by-laws in the same fashion as outlined in the previously item

ARTICLE VIII: MEETINGS

1. **Frequency**

The PAC shall hold its first meeting within the first thirty-five (35) days of the school year, after the elections held under Article V. Typically the first meeting is held immediately after the AGM is concluded. Thereafter, the council shall conduct its business at public

meetings held at such places and such times as it may decide. The PAC shall meet at least six (6) times a year. If possible, dates for regularly scheduled meetings will be determined at the first meeting.

PAC meetings may be called by:

1. The Chair in consultation with the Principal;
2. The Principal;
3. The Secretary of the council on direction, in writing, of any five (5) members of the council.

2. **Quorum**

A meeting of the PAC cannot be held unless

- a) 50% or more of the voting members of the council are present at the meeting; and
- b) A majority of the members of the council who are present at the meeting are parent members; and
- c) The Principal is present.

3. **Agendas**

The Chair, in consultation with the Principal and the council members, shall prepare and distribute the agenda for all meetings prior to the meeting. Should a school parent or interested party wish to add an item to the agenda, it should be communicated to the Chair at least one (1) week in advance of the meeting.

4. **Conduct**

Robert's Rule of Order will serve as a guide for conducting PAC meetings.

<https://robertsrules.org/>

5. **Decision Making/Voting**

Approval of decisions at meetings shall, if possible, be decided by consensus (reaching agreement by all). If consensus cannot be reached, the council may wish to seek input from the school community or establish a committee to conduct more detailed work before deciding by majority vote. If appropriate, the council may proceed directly to a majority vote.

Voting via proxy, phone or email is not permissible.

ARTICLE IX: RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **Advisory Function**

The PAC is an advisory body. The council may provide advice to the Principal and the school board on any matter. Some of the following items may be priorities for advice:

- School code of student behaviour
- Curriculum and program goals and priorities
- The responses of the school and or school board to achievement in provincial and board assessment programs
- Preparation of the school profile
- Principal and Vice-Principal profiles
- School budget priorities, including local capital-improvement plans
- School budget reviews
- School-community communications strategy
- Methods of reporting to parents and community
- Extracurricular activities in the school
- School-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational and nutritional programs
- Implementation of programs to enhance the school image
- Strategies to evaluate/review school program and to achieve student excellence in all areas
- Community use of school facilities
- Local coordination of services for children and youth
- Development, implementation, and review of board policies at the local level
- Local school safety procedures
- School reviews

2. The PAC recognizes that the ultimate responsibility for the administration and management of the day-to-day operation of the school rests with the Principal

3. Focus

The PAC shall:

- Promote the best interests of the school community
- Maintain a school-wide focus on all issues
- Respect the personal and professional rights and responsibilities of individuals
- Consult with parents of students enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by the council

ARTICLE X: FUNDS

1. Funds raised by the PAC shall be used for school related activities and to pay for the general expenses of carrying out the business of the council. The council should make every effort to spend funds raised each school year during that school year for the benefit of the students/families from which the funds were received.
2. All cheques, bills of exchange or other orders for payment of money, notes or their evidence of indebtedness issued in the name of the council, shall be signed by the

Treasurer and Chair. In the event the Treasurer and Chair are members of the same household, the Chair shall delegate their signatory role to the Vice-Chair.

3. The securities of the council shall be deposited for safekeeping with one or more banks, trust companies or other financial institutions to be selected by the council.
4. Unless otherwise approved by the council, the fiscal year of the council shall be from October 1 to September 30.
5. In the event the PAC is dissolved by legislation or for any other reason, any remaining funds belonging to the PAC shall be held for the benefit and interest of the children at Princess Margaret Junior School.

ARTICLE XI: REMUNERATION

The members of the PAC and of its committees shall not accept any payment or benefit financially for their involvement in the PAC. However, members will be reimbursed for purchases made for PAC activities.

ARTICLE XII: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Any time the PAC does business with the potential for monetary gain/loss with any person, agency or company, and a member of the council has a vested interest in any way with that particular person, agency or company, that member shall declare a conflict of interest and shall not discuss or vote on any resolution relating to that matter.

ARTICLE XIII: CONFLICT RESOLUTION

PAC members are elected to serve the school community and will demonstrate respect for their colleagues on council at all times.

If conflict arises:

- If a council member or members become disruptive during a meeting, the Chair shall ask for order.
- If all efforts to restore order fail or the unbecoming behaviour continues, the Chair 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 member from participating in future meetings of council.
- The incident shall be recorded and submitted to the Superintendent of Schools within one (1) week of the meeting.

- When the Chair has requested the removal of a member or members from a meeting, the Chair can 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 council.
- The Chair 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 board official or another individual mutually agreed upon by the parties involved in the dispute.
- Any resolution reached at the special meeting to resolve the conflict shall be signed and respected in full by all parties in the agreement.

ARTICLE XIV: COMMITTEES

The council may appoint standing committees and ad hoc committees as required. There must be at least one PAC member on each committee.

1. Terms of Reference

Each committee shall establish specific terms of reference, which are subject to the approval of the council. Terms of reference may include purpose, objectives, membership, term of office, frequency of meetings, minutes and responsibilities of the committee.

2. Committee Chair

A PAC member shall assume the responsibility of committee Chair. The committee Chair or designate shall preside at all committee meetings and shall report regularly to the PAC summarizing the activities of the committee.

The committee Chair shall:

- Provide orientation to new members of the committee;
- Carry out the specific tasks outlined in the mandate for each committee;
- Deal with any matters referred by the council;
- Set the time, date and agenda for meetings; and
- Report recommendations to the council

ARTICLE XV: REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

To remove an officer (i.e. Executive) of the PAC, the officer shall be sent by registered mail a notice informing them there will be a motion to remove them from the PAC at the next meeting.

An officer may be removed under the following conditions:

1. The Principal may not be removed.
2. An officer convicted of a criminal act may be removed by a simple majority.
3. An officer whose conduct is detrimental to the purpose of the PAC may be removed by a two-thirds majority.
4. An officer deemed to have committed a breach of trust or whose conduct is deemed inappropriate, may be removed by a two-thirds majority.

A voting parent member who has missed two (2) consecutive meetings, will be contacted by the Chair to determine the reasons for the missed meetings and may be subject to losing their voting rights. If the Chair deems the reasons cited to be appropriate and acceptable, the member may maintain their voting rights, provided that subsequent meetings are attended.

ARTICLE XVI: VACANCIES

1. Vacancies occur:
 - a) When positions on the PAC have not been filled after election and appointments (voting parent members or Executive roles); or
 - b) When a member resigns; or
 - c) When a member is unable or unwilling to fulfill the roles and responsibilities; or
 - d) When a member has been removed from office
2. In the event of a vacancy in an Executive role or the number of voting parent members, the PAC may appoint a member to fill the vacancy or hold an election if more than one member is interested in filling the vacant position.

ARTICLE XVII: AMENDMENTS

The by-laws of the PAC may be amended as necessary. Proposed amendments may be placed on the agenda of a council meeting, provided notice in writing of the proposed amendment(s) shall have reached the Secretary or the Chair of the council at least thirty (30) days before the meeting. Amendments must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the PAC members present.

Copies of all proposed amendments shall be distributed to the members of the school community at least fourteen (14) days prior to the PAC meeting.

The by-laws of the PAC shall be reviewed at least once every 3 years and amendments raised as necessary. If no amendments are necessary, the by-laws should be updated to document the review has taken place.