

# Parliament Oak School Council

## Bylaws & Standing Orders

While these by-laws were created and approved by the Parliament Oak School Council, they are subject to policy and regulations established by the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, which is the constituting authority of the Council.

### OUR OBJECTIVES

The Parliament Oak School Council believes successful education requires co-operative partnership between the school, the home and surrounding community.

The Council believes that effective relationships between the education system and the school community are promoted through consultation, collaboration and strong communication programmes.

The Council believes that relationships between Parliament Oak School and its school community will be strengthened through the establishment and effective operation of this Council, serving to improve student learning and school effectiveness.

## BYLAWS

### CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

1. Membership in the Council shall be open to persons interested in furthering the objectives of the Council and who meet the criteria for Council membership as outlined in the bylaws.
2. Any member may withdraw from the Council by written resignation, delivered to the Chair of the Council or to the school principal.
3. Should Council members determine that a parent or community member of the Council is no longer active in, or working to further the objectives of the Council, the Council may, by a vote of three-quarters (3/4) of the members of the Council in attendance, withdraw such person's membership, effective as of a date determined by the Council. Any such member shall be granted an opportunity to be heard at the Council meeting at which such decision is to be made.
4. Should Council members determine that a teacher or support staff member is no longer active in, or working to further the objectives of the Council, the Council may, by a vote of three-quarters (3/4) of the members of the Council in attendance request that the electing body, and within a reasonable time, rescind the appointment of the member through a special vote of

membership. Any such member shall be granted an opportunity to be heard at the Council meeting at which such decision is to be made.

## **COMPOSITION OF COUNCIL**

5. Council shall consist of at least twelve (12) Council members, to a maximum of twenty (20). The size of the Council shall from time to time be fixed by special resolution of the Council.
6. Members of the school Council shall include, but not be limited to:
  - Nine (9) parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school;
  - One (1) member of the community;
  - the school principal;
  - a teacher;
  - a support staff member (when possible).
7. Parents and guardians shall form the majority of the Council.
8. With the exception of the principal and community representative, members shall be elected by, and from among, the group they represent. The Officers are parents elected by the Council. The community representative will be appointed by the Council.

## **ELECTIONS**

9. The term for members of the Council shall expire at the elections at the beginning of each school year. Parent Council members are encouraged to serve at least two (2) terms, however no member may hold the same position for more than three (3) terms in succession. At the final meeting of each school year (June) the Council shall set the date of election for the following school year.
10. Nomination forms shall be distributed to all parents of children in the school within two weeks of the commencement of classes. If more than the required number of parent nominations are received, Council may decide to acclaim all nominees, or to hold elections. Elections, if required, shall be held by the end of September.
11. Vacancies on the Council shall be filled by an election within the electing body, to be held within a reasonable time. If, by a three-quarters (3/4) majority of the members present at a Council meeting, the Council determines there is not sufficient time left in the Council term to elect a parent replacement, the vacancy shall go unfilled. In the case of a teacher, support staff or student member, the electing body will be requested to appoint a replacement within a reasonable time.

## **CORRESPONDING ADDRESS**

12. The Corresponding address of the Council shall be at Parliament Oak School, P.O. Box 405, 325 King St., Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0. A mail box for incoming correspondence will be maintained in the school office.

## **MEETINGS**

13. All meetings of the Council and its Committees shall be held at Parliament Oak School. Meetings may be held at a location other than Parliament Oak School, as determined by Council, except that any alternative location must allow for the same level of participation and representation as possible at the school.
14. All meetings are open to the public.
15. There shall be at least six (6) meetings per year of the Council, although one (1) per each month of the school year will be considered the normal schedule. The September meeting shall be held within the first two weeks of classes, to permit nominations and elections to be completed by the end of September. The first meeting of the new Council shall be held by October 15.
16. A quorum is constituted when five (5) Council members are in attendance, the majority are parents, and at least one (1) is an Officer of Council.
17. Each member is authorised to exercise one (1) vote, with the exception of the Principal, who may not vote.
18. An agenda for each regular meeting shall be communicated to all Council members one (1) week in advance of the meeting date.
19. The Council members shall not receive remuneration to serve on the Council or its committees.
20. The Council may appoint such agents as it shall deem necessary from time to time, and such persons shall have such authority and shall perform such duties as shall be prescribed by the Council at the time of such appointment.

## **NOTICE**

21. The schedule of general Council meeting dates for each school year shall be determined at the last Council meeting of each school year, and ratified at the first meeting of the new Council. Upon ratification, the list of meeting dates shall be communicated to each member of the Council and to the school community.

22. Forty-eight (48) hours written notice of general and committee meetings shall be given, to each member of the Council and to the school community.
23. Two (2) weeks notice of elections shall be given, to each member of the Council and to the school community.
24. Proper notice for all of the above shall be:
  - for members of the Council, written;
  - for the school community, by posting on the Council bulletin board;
  - additionally, in the monthly school newsletter or such other direct-to-home communication as the Council may direct.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

25. A member of the Council is deemed to be in a conflict of interest when:
  - a proposal under discussion would provide direct or indirect financial benefit to that individual, or to that individual's family;
  - they or a member of their family, or the employer of either, has any business relationship with the School, or with Council, related to the topic under discussion;
  - a proposal under discussion would provide educational benefit or loss to the child of that individual, at a level beyond that which it would provide to all other children within the scope of the proposal.
26. Members of Council who find themselves in a conflict of interest shall declare same prior to the commencement of discussion on the matter in question. At the discretion of the Chair, the member may be asked to withdraw from the discussion, or from the meeting, for the duration of the discussion on the matter for which a conflict has been declared.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

27. Where, in the course of Council's business, a conflict arises which cannot be resolved through further discussion or a vote, or through application of other provisions of these Bylaws, the following steps will be taken:
  - the Chair shall call a special meeting for the sole purpose of dealing with the conflict, this meeting to be held within fourteen days;
  - the Principal and Chair shall jointly decide on another member of Council who will Chair the special meeting;

- the Principal and Chair shall jointly decide on the composition of the meeting, except that at least 50% plus one of those in attendance shall be parent members of Council.

28. If a way around the conflict can be determined at the special meeting, then the matter will be taken up at the next regular meeting. If no resolution is found, then the Chair and the Principal will jointly write to the School Superintendent, requesting assistance in resolving the conflict, and take such advice as the Superintendent may provide.

## **POWERS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

29. The Council shall have power to authorise expenditures on behalf of the Council from time to time.

## **OFFICERS**

30. The Officers of the Council shall be a Chair (or Co-chairs), Secretary and Treasurer. A Vice-chair shall be elected where only a single person is elected to Chair the Council. Any such other Officers as the Council may by by-law determine, may also be elected. The position of Secretary and Treasurer may be held by the same individual.

31. Officers of the Council shall be appointed by resolution of the Council at the first meeting of the Council following the election of Council members.

32. The Officers of the Council shall hold office for one (1) year from the date of appointment or election or until their successors are elected or appointed in their stead. Officers shall be subject to removal by three-quarter (3/4) majority resolution of Council members in attendance at any time.

## **DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

33. The Chair (or Co-chairs) shall (or shall jointly):

- have overall responsibility for the affairs of the Council;
- preside at all meetings of the Council;
- see that all orders and resolutions of the Council are carried into effect;
- call the Council meetings;
- prepare the agenda in consultation with the Council and the Principal;
- ensure minutes of Council meetings are recorded;
- communicate with the school principal;

- ensure there is regular communication with the school community;
- consult with senior board staff and trustees, as required;
- chair the By-laws Committee of the Council.

34. The Vice-chair (when elected) shall, in the absence or disability of the Chair, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Chair and shall perform such other duties as shall from time to time be imposed upon him/her by the Council.

35. The Treasurer shall be responsible for:

- keeping full and accurate accounts of all assets, liabilities, receipts and disbursements of the Council in the books belonging to the Council;
- ensuring that all monies are deposited on behalf of the Council in the name and to the credit of the Council in the bank accounts which the Council will maintain for this purpose;
- making available for audit by the school board all accounts, ledgers and other records maintained by the Treasurer for the Council.

The Treasurer shall direct the disbursement of the funds of the Council as may be directed by proper authority, taking proper vouchers for such disbursements, and shall present to the Chair and the Council members at the regular meeting of the Council, or whenever they may require it, an accounting of all transactions and a statement of the financial position of the Council. The treasurer shall also perform such other similar duties as may be directed by the Council.

36. The Secretary shall attend all meetings and act as clerk thereof and be responsible for recording all votes and minutes of all proceedings in the books to be kept for that purpose. The Secretary shall give or cause to be given notice of all meetings of the members of the Council, and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Council.

37. The duties of all other Officers of the Council shall be such as the terms of their engagement call for or the Council requires of them.

## **DUTIES OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

38. The members of the Council are accountable to the constituents they serve and shall:

- maintain a school-wide perspective on issues;
- regularly participate in Council meetings;
- participate in information and training programs;

- act as a link between the Council and the community;
- encourage the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the school community.

## **EXECUTION OF DOCUMENTS**

39. Documents or any instruments in writing requiring the signature of the Council shall be signed by any two Officers, and all documents and instruments in writing so signed shall be binding upon the Council without any further authorisation or formality. Council members may by resolution appoint an Officer or Officers on behalf of the Council to sign specific documents and instruments in writing.

## **MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES**

40. The minutes of the Council and its committees shall be made available to the school community, for inspection on the bulletin board of the Council and in the archived documents of the Council, and shall be provided to the Council members, each of whom shall receive a copy of such minutes within a reasonable time following each Council meeting.

## **VOTING OF MEMBERS**

41. At all meetings of members of the Council, every question for which a vote is requested, shall be determined by a majority of votes unless otherwise specifically provided by provincial Ministry of Education or District School Board of Niagara policy, or by these by-laws.

## **FINANCIAL YEAR**

42. Unless otherwise directed by the Council the fiscal year-end of the Council shall be June 30.

## **COMMITTEES**

43. The Council may appoint committees for such purposes as they decide, whose members will hold their offices at the will of the Council.

## **AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS**

44. The by-laws of the Council may be repealed or amended by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the members at a meeting duly called for the purpose of considering the said by-law, provided that notification and details of the pending by-law change and of the

special Council meeting to consider the by-law are communicated in advance to the school community.

## AUDITORS

45. Council shall appoint an auditor to review the accounts of the Council and give Auditor's Opinion, by way of a Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements, to the Council and school community at the Council's final meeting. The remuneration, if any, of the auditor shall be fixed by the Council. The auditor must be arms-length from Council members and the operation of the Council, but may be a parent in the school.

## BOOKS AND RECORDS

46. The Council shall see that all necessary books and records of the Council required by the by-laws of the Council or by any applicable provincial Ministry of Education or District School Board of Niagara policy are regularly and properly kept.

## RULES AND REGULATIONS

47. The Council may prescribe such rules and regulations consistent with these by-laws relating to the management and operation of the Council as they deem expedient.  
Current rules are: Fundraising Guidelines

## IMPLEMENTATION

48. PASSED by the School Council the 8th day of October, 2002

Signed: B. MCCAUGHEY Chair  
(name) (position)

B. McCaughey  
(signature)

Signed: ALLAN TREIMAN Chair  
(name) (position)

Allan Treiman  
(signature)

Signed: Lorne Bretsinger Principal  
(name) (position)

Lorne Bretsinger  
(signature)