

# Sir Winston Churchill Public School Council Constitution

*APPROVED: 2019-04-09*

## Article 1. Name

1.1 The organization shall be known as Sir Winston Churchill Public School Council. Hereafter, it will be referred to as the Council.

## Article 2. Purpose and Scope of Council

### 2.1 Purpose of the Council

The Council's role includes:

- 1) Helping to improve pupil achievement and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents;
- 2) Reviewing the school's learning plan for improvement and contributing to the plan by offering advice;
- 3) Providing advice to the principal on issues, including, but not limited to, the following:
  - school and learning environment;
  - curriculum and program;
  - communication and promotion of school activities;
  - school code of conduct;
  - school improvement plan;
  - school dress code;
  - fundraising activities;
  - school leadership;
  - school-community communication strategies;
  - extra-curricular activities;
  - school-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational and nutritional programs;
  - community use of school facilities;
  - coordination of local services for children and youth; and
  - Board policies.
- 4) Facilitating effective, two-way communication between the Principal and the parent community;
- 5) Sharing information with parents and the community members, and seeking their ideas and views about matters under consideration by Council;
- 6) Conducting fundraising initiatives to support the objectives of the school; and

- 7) Promoting parental involvement in the school's success in as many areas as possible to enrich the school's environment for its students.

## 2.2 Limitations

Council will maintain a school-wide focus on all issues. Council meetings are not forums for discussion about individual parents, teachers, staff, trustees, or Council members. Individual members of the school community shall deal directly with staff members and the Principal to resolve specific concerns; Council will not act as a vehicle for this purpose.

## Article 3. Membership

3.1 Members of the School Council shall include:

- parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school;
- the principal and/or vice-principal;
- community representatives (*if available*); and
- one or more teachers (ideally one for each grade division, up to a maximum of 3).

3.2 Parents and guardians shall form the majority of the Council. Council will strive to include parents/guardians from each grade, or at a minimum, each grade division (kinder, primary and junior).

3.3 The Council should be composed of a 9-25 voting members. If these numbers are not possible, Council may continue to function so long as parents form the majority of the membership.

3.4 All parents/guardians are welcome to attend the meetings and participate in discussions as *non-voting members*.

## Article 4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The **Principal and/or Vice Principal** shall:

- attend all meetings unless unable to do so by reason of illness or other cause;
- assist in the establishment and operation of School Council;
- support and promote School Council activities;
- attend all Council supported activities held at the school (or send a designate);
- distribute and post information from the school, the Board and the Ministry of Education;
- seek input from Council on school policies and guidelines, new initiatives, improvement plans and communication;
- consider recommendations made by Council and advise Council of actions taken;
- act as a resource and provide, where reasonable, information requested by Council; and
- maintain ongoing communication with the Chairperson.

**4.2 The Teaching Staff representative shall:**

- ensure a two-way dialogue exists between the School Council and teaching staff; and
- raise any issues that the teaching staff may have to the Council on any area that the Council has an advisory capacity.

**4.3 The Chairperson shall:**

- call School Council meetings;
- prepare the agenda for meetings in collaboration with the Principal;
- chair School Council meetings;
- ensure that minutes and financial records are recorded and maintained;
- be a signing office on the Council's bank account.
- maintain ongoing communication with the Principal;
- facilitate communication with parents and community; and
- attempt to provide representation at Regional School Council meetings.

**4.4 The Vice-Chairperson shall:**

- assist the chairperson;
- fulfil duties of the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson; and
- be a signing office on the Council's bank account.

**4.5 The Secretary shall:**

- record and report, without prejudice, the proceedings of the Council;
- distribute the minutes and agenda to Council members prior to the meetings; and
- prepare correspondence on behalf of the Council.

**4.6 The Treasurer shall:**

- deposit monies owed to, and raised by, the Council;
- keep full and accurate accounts of monies received/disbursed on behalf of the Council;
- present a completed financial statement at the final School Council meeting of a school year; and
- act in accordance with the Guidelines For School Generated Funds document.

**4.7 The Social Media Coordinator shall**

- regularly update the School Council website; and
- post events and reminders on the Facebook Page.

**4.8 The Fundraising Committee Chair shall:**

- Present fundraising plans to Council for discussion and approval;
- Ensure the principal has approved fundraising initiatives;
- Oversee the implementation of all fundraising activities;

- For each activity, ensure that all expenses and money raised are tracked, using the Council template (to be developed in consultation with council);
- Ensure Council adheres to the Board's policies and guidelines for fundraising activities;
- Report on fundraising activities.

**4.9 All voting members shall:**

- attend and participate in Council meetings;
- notify the council chair, if unable to attend a council meeting. If more than 2 consecutive meetings are missed without notice, the member will lose voting privileges (to help ensure quorum for voting purposes);
- act as a link between the Council and the community;
- welcome the participation of parents/guardians from all groups and of other people in the community;
- follow Board policies and procedures and comply with applicable legislation; and
- act in good faith.

**4.10** Members of the School Council shall be protected by the Board's liability insurance policy while they are acting within the scope of their duties on behalf of the Board, as sanctioned by the Principal.

## **Article 5. Election Procedures**

**5.1** Elections shall occur during the October meeting of the school year.

**5.2** Each parent/guardian seeking election must be nominated or self-nominated, must have a child registered at the school, and must declare if he or she is employed by the school board. OCDSB employees may not serve as chair or co-chair of council. Nominations by candidates may be made in person or in writing, including email, to the school council chair.

**5.3** Each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school, who are present at the October meeting, shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent/guardian membership position on the Council.

**5.4** The previous year's chair, or their designate, shall ensure that the school community is notified of election procedures and election date, location and time at least fourteen days in advance of the election.

**5.5** The Council shall help the Principal ensure that the names of new members are publicized to the school community within thirty days of the election.

**5.6** If there is only one candidate for any given position, that candidate will be appointed, with a motion.

**5.7** A parent/guardian may request to become a voting member after the October elections are held provided that: there are vacancies up to the cap of 25 voting members, the parent/guardian

demonstrates commitment to attending council meetings by attending two consecutive meetings, and a majority of council vote to add the parent/guardian.

## **Article 6. Filling Vacancies**

**6.1** Should an elected parent/guardian Council position become vacant before the next election, the Council shall fill the vacancy by appointment from the non-elected candidates from the previous election.

**6.2** If none of the previous candidates remain interested in becoming a Council member, or if there were no other candidates, the Council may request that interested parents/guardians from the school community submit their names for consideration. The Council shall then appoint one of those who indicate an interest.

**6.3** When a vacant spot on Council is filled, the new member's term shall expire at the time of the next election.

## **Article 7. Conflict of Interest**

**7.1** 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 a vested interest, stand to benefit either directly or indirectly from decisions of the Council.

**7.2** A member shall exclude him or herself from discussions and resolutions in which:

- a conflict of interest is likely to result;
- the member's ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities as a member of the Council may be jeopardized; and
- the Council member, his or her relatives, or a business entity in which the member may have an interest, may gain or benefit 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.

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

## **Article 8. Conflict Resolution**

**8.1** Every Council member will be given an opportunity to express his or her concern or opinion about the issue at dispute.

**8.2** Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.

**8.3** Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption. However, the chair may respectfully ask speakers to conclude in the interest of time.

**8.4** 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.

**8.5** If all attempts at resolving the conflict have been exhausted without success, the Chair shall request the intervention of a superintendent or other Board administrator to facilitate a resolution to the conflict.

## **Article 9. Quorum**

**9.1** A quorum shall consist of 50 percent of the voting members plus one.

**9.2** In the absence of a quorum, any business requiring decisions either by consensus or vote must be deferred to the next meeting, or be conducted by email.

## **Article 10. Governance**

**10.1** The Council shall act in a transparent manner.

**10.2** The Council will always endeavour to consider the needs and best interests of students before making decisions.

## **Article 11. Decision Making**

**11.1** The preferred model for making decisions is through consensus.

**11.2** If a consensus is impossible, [Roberts Rules of Order](#) will be used for decisions requiring a vote. All voting members or their designates<sup>1</sup> present at the meeting will be eligible to vote (with the exception of the principal, vice-principal and teaching staff). A simple majority of 50% + 1 will carry the vote.

## **Article 12. Communications**

**12.1** Within 60 days of election of a new Council, the new Council will aim to create and follow a short communications plan to raise awareness of Council activities and increase parental involvement.

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<sup>1</sup> Designates must be communicated to the Chairperson in advance of the meeting in writing (e.g., by email).

## **Article 13. Financial Accountability**

**13.1** The Council shall become familiar with and act in a manner consistent with the Ontario Association of School Business Officials Finance Committee Guidelines for School Generated Funds document.

**13.2** The Council shall develop, vote upon and implement a spending plan for each school year.

## **Article 14. Council Meetings**

**14.1** At the first meeting of the new School Council at the beginning of the year, the Council shall set dates, time and locations for its meetings throughout the year.

## **Article 15. Making Amendments**

**15.1** From time to time, amendments may be necessary to the Council's constitution. Any amendments to this Council's constitution must have a minimum of two-thirds (2/3) of the Council in favour of the amendment. Notice of the intent to amend the constitution along with specific details of the amendment must be provided at least one meeting prior to any vote.

## 2018-2019 council officers and members

Chair	Margaret Sambol
Co-Vice-Chair	Fiona Warren
Co-Vice-Chair / OCASC Rep	Carolyn Berezowsky
Treasurer	Cara Baas
Secretary	Amanda Lancaster
Social Media Coordinator	Pam Woolridge
Co-Fundraising Chair	Jenn O'Reilly
Co-Fundraising Chair	Naomi Elias
Voting Member	Harinder Batth
Voting Member	Melissa Forrest
Voting Member	Rebecca Johnston
Voting Member	Philip Mansfield
Voting Member	Wendy Mansfield
Voting Member	Jillian Ade-Sibbitt
Voting Member	Katherine Percival
Voting Member	Olga Blais
Voting Member	Jason Hinek
Voting Member	Leila Chinaei
Voting Member	Susan Johnson
Voting Member	Jeyanthi Sivasambu
Voting Member	Eman Mohammedsaaid
Voting Member	T-C D'Agostino