

# Greenville School Council Constitution

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# **Greensville School Council Constitution**

## **Article I – Name**

The organization shall be known as “Greensville School Council” and will be referred to as the School Council on all correspondence.

## **Article II – Non-profit Organization**

The School Council will operate without financial gain for its members.

## **Article III – Purpose**

The Greensville School Council’s purpose is, through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. We will achieve our purpose by making recommendations in accordance with Regulation 612 to the principals of the school and the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board. (Reg.612)

## **Article IV – HWDSB Vision and Mission Statements**

### **Vision**

A future in which all students can achieve their full potential.

### **Mission**

Educating students to become lifelong learners and contributing citizens in a challenging, changing, multi-cultural world.

## **Article V – Composition of Council**

	Minimum	Maximum
Parents/Guardians	7	11
Principal	1	1
Teacher Representative	1	1
Non-teaching Representative	0	1
Community Representative	0	1
Home & School Representative	1	1
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Total Council	10	16
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## **Article VI – Duties and Scope of Council**

1. School council may make recommendations to the principal or the HWDSB on any matter.(Reg.612) Matters to the HWDSB may include but are not limited to:
  - a) establishment or amendment of board policies and guidelines that relate to: pupil achievement, conduct of persons in schools, appropriate dress for pupils, allocation of funding by the board to school councils, fundraising activities of council, conflict resolution processes for internal school disputes and reimbursement by the board of expenses incurred by members and officers of council.(Reg.612)
  - b) development and implementation plans for new education initiatives for a).(Reg.612)
  - c) the process and criteria applicable to the selection and placement of principals and vice-principals
  - d) board action plans for improvement, based on the Education Quality and Accountability Office's (E.Q.A.O.)reports on the results of tests of pupils, and the communication of those plans to the public(Reg.612)

Matters to the principal may include but are not limited to:

- aa) establishment or amendment of school policies and guidelines that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents, including, a local code of conduct and appropriate dress for pupils in schools(Reg.613)
- bb) development of implementation plans for new education initiatives for aa)(Reg.613)
- cc) school action plans for improvement, based on the EQAO's reports on the results of tests of pupils, and the communication of those plans to the public (Reg.613)
- dd) preparation of the school profile
- ee) school budget priorities, including local capital improvement plans/fundraising goals
- ff) school, community and parent communications strategies
- gg) extra-curricular activities in the school, and the use of these facilities by the public
- hh) school fundraising programs
- ii) school based services and community partnerships related to business, social, health, recreation and nutrition programs
- jj) development, implementation and review of board policies at the local level

In addition to the above, the council is responsible to ensure the election and appointment of new members to council as outlined in the council by-laws.

## **Article VII – Code of Ethics**

All members will:

- a) be guided by our purpose, goals and objectives

- b) respect the school's guiding principles
- c) consider the best interests of all students
- d) protect the rights and interests of all individuals and of the school community
- e) maintain confidentiality
- f) promote high standards of ethical practice
- g) encourage a positive atmosphere where individual contributions are encouraged and valued
- h) exercise democratic values
- i) accept accountability for decisions
- j) limit discussions at school council to matters of concern to the school community as a whole
- k) use appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise
- l) declare a conflict of interest
- m) not accept honorariums
- n) promote positive attitudes towards public education
- o) respect the rights of students and board employees

## **Greenville School Council Operating and Procedural By-laws**

### **By-law 1– Membership**

It is expected that membership will reflect the diversity of the school community and council shall be comprised of:

- 1.1 Parents/guardians shall form the simple majority and must reside within the boundaries of the school or have board permission to attend the school.
- 1.2 Council membership has been set at a maximum of 16 members, 10 member minimum.
- 1.3 There shall be no more than one member on Council from any one household.
- 1.4 Principal of the school.
- 1.5 At least one teacher elected by fellow teachers.
- 1.6 One non-teaching staff member elected by their peers, if desired.
- 1.7 One person elected by an association that is a member of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Association.(Reg. 612)
- 1.8 A member of the HWDSB cannot be a member of a school council. (Reg. 612)  
Members include trustees, superintendent and the director of education.
- 1.9 The council may include other members, as deemed appropriate, to reflect the school's community.

## **By-Law 2 – Nomination and Election Procedures**

- 2.1 An election of parent members of council shall be held during the first 30 days of each school year, on a date that is fixed by the chair or co-chair after consulting with the principal.(Reg.612)
- 2.2 The principal shall, at least 14 days before the date of the election of parent members, on behalf of the council, give written notice of the date, time and location of the election to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school.(Reg.612)
- 2.3 A person is qualified to be a parent member of school council if he or she is a parent/guardian of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.(Reg.612)
- 2.4 A person is not qualified to be a parent member if he or she is employed at the school or employed elsewhere by the HWDSB, unless he or she takes reasonable steps to inform people qualified to vote in the election of parent members of that employment. (Reg.612)
- 2.5 A person is qualified to vote in an election of parent members of school council if he or she is a parent/guardian of a pupil who is enrolled in the school or if he or she is a teacher or non-teaching staff member, other than the principal or vice-principal, who is employed at the school.(Reg.612)
- 2.6 The schools will forward the nomination forms to the chair and co-chair.
- 2.7 Self-nominations are welcome and encouraged.
- 2.8 The chair(s) will contact the nominees to confirm eligibility and interest in participating.
- 2.9 A formal election will only be necessary if the number of nominations exceeds the council's membership maximum, otherwise all members are acclaimed.
- 2.10 The principal shall conduct a lottery to determine the ballot position for each candidate, if required.
- 2.11 No individual campaign literature may be distributed or posted in the school. A fact sheet listing qualifications and goals may be distributed to households and/or at the candidates' forum.
- 2.12 The election of parent members shall be by secret ballot.(Reg. 612) and a minimum of 4 representatives shall count the ballots.
- 2.13 After the elections are held, the school council shall meet within the first 35 days of the school year.

### **By-Law 3 – Term of Office**

- 3.1 A person elected or appointed as a member of school council holds office from the date he or she is elected or appointed until the date of the first meeting of the school council after the elections held in the next school year. (Reg.612)
- 3.2 A member of school council may be re-elected or re-appointed. (Reg. 612)
- 3.3 A council member must have served a minimum of one year on council before holding an executive position, unless the council has been newly established.
- 3.4 The executive council members (chair, co-chair, secretary) shall not serve more than 2 (two) consecutive terms in the same capacity and shall be elected annually.
- 3.5 Teachers shall be elected annually by their peers as their representative on school council.
- 3.6 Members of council will not receive an honorarium.
- 3.7 Names of the council chair and co-chair will be forwarded to the appropriate board official within 30 days of the election results.
- 3.8 Names of council members will be published to the school community in the first newsletter after the election and the ‘how to contact us’ in every issue thereafter.

### **By-Law 4 – Vacancies**

- 4.1 A vacancy in the membership shall be filled (Reg.612) by lottery, from the waiting list, and the appointee shall sit on council for the duration of the school year.
- 4.2 A vacancy in the office of chair or co-chair shall be filled by election from its current members.
- 4.3 A vacancy in the membership does not prevent council from exercising its authority.(Reg.612)
- 4.4 If a vacancy occurs and this vacancy unbalances the simple majority of parent members, the position must be filled.
- 4.5 In the best interest of council, member resignations or 3 consecutive meetings missed, without regrets or just cause, by any member shall result in council appointing his or her replacement for the duration of the school year. The chair will contact the member after 2 consecutive meetings missed to determine future participation on council.
- 4.6 If a teacher or non-teaching representative vacancy occurs, the principal shall arrange for a replacement, where possible.

## **By-Law 5 – Officers/Members Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Chair and Vice-chair**

- 5.1 The chair or vice-chair must be a parent member of the school council, and shall be elected by the members of council.(Reg.612)
- 5.2 A person who is employed by the HWDSB cannot be the chair or vice-chair of council.(Reg. 612)
- 5.3 The vice-chair will chair the council meetings in the absence of the chair and will also assume the duties of the secretary in their absence.
- 5.4 The chair's primary role is to be the group's facilitator and community contact person for community related issues.
- 5.5 The chair(s) shall make every effort to encourage widespread participation of every council member.
- 5.6 Participate in orientation of new members.
- 5.7 The chair(s) are the mechanism for distributing and disseminating information.
- 5.8 Call and chair the council meetings, which are open to the public and are held at the school.
- 5.9 Prepare the agenda, in consultation with the principal, based on the members' submitted topics, requests and information received, and the principal's report.
- 5.10 Have the agenda, and all relevant topic materials, available at the school prior to the next scheduled meeting to facilitate proactive discussion and decision making.
- 5.11 Ensure the appropriate facilities and equipment are ready for the start of the meeting.
- 5.12 The chair(s) must be diligent in ensuring that any views presented in the capacity of chairperson represent the position of the council.
- 5.13 Consult with senior staff members of the school board and trustees, as requested.
- 5.14 Report back to council on any and all relevant information gained from meetings attended in the capacity of council chair(s).
- 5.15 Attend, or send a delegate to, the board workshop on Effective Meeting Procedures.
- 5.16 Communicate regularly with the school principals and community.

5.17 Ensure the school council information binder is updated and maintained at the school.

### **Information Liaison**

5.18 Executive member who will be responsible for keeping the record of a) agendas b) school council minutes (recording of minutes is a shared responsibility of all council members) c) contact information for school board personnel d) contact information for ministry personnel

5.19 Monitoring the following web sites and communication avenues for relevant information and resources a) School Board b) Ministry of Education c) OPC (Ontario Parent Council) d) Media

5.20 Share any and all resources that will assist the school council in supporting its mandate.

5.21 Assume the role and responsibilities of the chair and co-chair in their absence.

### **Secretary**

5.22 Record the minutes of the meetings.

5.23 Maintain and post the minutes of the meeting, after they have been accepted by council..

5.24 Take and audit attendance at meetings.

### **Council Members**

5.25 Act as representatives of the entire school community by consulting with parents of pupils enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by council.

5.26 Encourage parents, and others within the school community, to participate in education in the school.

5.27 Bring any new community and school related items to the meetings.

5.28 Act as a link/liaison between the school and the community.

5.29 Notify the chair(s) if unable to attend a scheduled meeting.

## **Principal**

- 5.30 On behalf of school council, give written notice of the date, time and location of the election to every parent of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.(Reg. 612)
- 5.31 On behalf of the council, give written notice of the dates, times and locations of the meetings of council to every parent of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.(Reg.612)
- 5.32 The principal may delegate any of his or her powers or duties as a member of school council to the vice-principal of the school.(Reg.612)
- 5.33 Support and promote the council's activities.
- 5.34 Seek input from the council in all areas which affect its purpose and objectives and the school community at large.
- 5.35 Act as a resource on laws, regulations, board policies and collective agreements.
- 5.36 Obtain and provide information required by the council to enable it to make informed decisions.
- 5.37 Communicate with the chair(s) of the council, as required.
- 5.38 Ensure that copies of the meeting minutes are kept at the school.
- 5.39 Assist the council in encouraging participation of all groups within the school community.
- 5.40 Co-operatively help plan the agenda with the council chair(s).
- 5.41 On behalf of council, post or give a copy of the annual report to every parent of a pupil enrolled in the school.

## **By-Law 6 – Committees**

- 6.1 Committees will be established, as needed, to make recommendations to council.(Reg.612)
- 6.2 Every committee of school council must include one parent member of council.(Reg.612)
- 6.3 A committee may include persons who are not members of council.(Reg.612)

## **By-Law 7 – Voting**

- 7.1 Each member of school council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by council.(Reg.612)
- 7.2 Each member of school council is entitled to one written proxy vote in votes taken by council.
- 7.3 Each member of a committee (By-Law 6) of school council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the committee.(Reg.612)
- 7.4 The principal is not entitled to vote in votes taken by school council or by a committee of school council.(Reg.612)

## **By-Law 8 - Delegations**

- 8.1 Individuals may approach the chair(s) or the principal to have their issue placed on the agenda. This request must be received at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting. The chair(s), in consultation with the principal, may approve or reject such requests.
- 8.2 Delegations will be limited to 15 minutes, unless otherwise approved by council members.
- 8.3 Following a presentation, council will decide whether to amend the agenda at that point, refer it to a future meeting or take no action.

## **By-Law 9 – Quorum**

- 9.1 A quorum for a general meeting shall consist of :
- a) one school administrator or delegate; and
  - b) 51% of the council membership, provided parent members are in the majority.
- 9.2 No council business shall be transacted without a quorum.

## **By-Law 10 – Conflict Resolution**

- 10.1 When a member of council has a legitimate complaint regarding the actions of one or more members of council, or the Bylaws and procedures, they shall bring the matter to the attention of the chair(s) in writing.
- 10.2 The chair(s) will call an executive meeting and the executive will make a recommendation to council as a whole on the matter.

- 10.3 If the matter involves the executive, the chair will, by agreement of all involved, establish a group of council members to make recommendations as a whole on the matter.
- 10.4 If the matter involves the chair, the remaining executive will make recommendations as a whole on the matter.
- 10.5 If agreement cannot be reached, the matter will be referred to members of the regional council for a recommendation, if agreeable.
- 10.6 The provisions of the Conflict Resolution procedure are subject to Board Policy.
- 10.7 A special meeting of council may be called to deal with any matter at the discretion of the executive to resolve internal disputes.

### **By-Law 11 – Conflict of Interest**

- 11.1 Should a council member, including the executive, find that he or she has a conflict with regards to council business, that member shall declare such conflict at the beginning of the meeting and absent themselves from discussion and voting.
- 11.2 Every declaration of conflict and the nature thereof shall be recorded in the minutes.

### **By-Law 12 – Meeting Procedures**

- 12.1 At the first Council meeting of the school year, after the election, the members will receive an information package.
- 12.2 Council shall meet a minimum of 4 times per school year. (Reg. 612) It is preferable there be monthly scheduled meetings that are advertised, in advance, in newsletters and posted in the school office.
- 12.3 Meetings are open to all members of the school community.
- 12.4 Meetings will commence with round-table introductions.
- 12.5 Council members are to wear nametags.
- 12.6 Meetings will commence on time and not last more than 2 hours, unless the council agrees to a longer meeting.
- 12.7 Council meetings shall not proceed unless there is a quorum (By-Law 9) in attendance.

- 12.8 Only written proxy votes will be permitted.
- 12.9 Agenda items are to be submitted to the chair(s), preferably a few days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- 12.10 The agenda, and relevant topic materials, are to be distributed to members through their children's knapsacks and/or e-mail prior to the next scheduled meeting.
- 12.11 The agenda shall have the following components: a) item number b) topic c) person responsible d) time allotted e) action (decision, discussion or information).
- 12.12 Previous minutes shall be reviewed and adopted first, advertised agenda issues second, and then any new business items shall be discussed last.
- 12.13 If there is a disagreement concerning procedures used during meetings then Roberts Rules of Order will apply.
- 12.14 Every attempt should be made to reach a consensus. Consensus is a form of group decision making based on the willingness to consent and support. Consensus is reached when Council members support an idea or concept as the best choice for the entire school community, keeping in mind that the students' needs come first.
- 12.15 In the event of a failure to agree and voting becomes necessary, a simple majority will be sufficient for a vote on any issue.
- 12.16 Council will establish committees, on an as needed basis, to carry out specific functions and will seek widespread participation in these activities.
- 12.17 Accepted minutes of the meetings are to be recorded, maintained and posted at the school site and made available to the community members upon request.
- 12.18 Council members can call an emergency council meeting at the request of four members.

### **By-Law 13 - Amendments**

- 13.1 Any proposed change or addition to the constitution or by-laws must be submitted in writing to the chair prior to the next scheduled meeting and be placed on the agenda. The change must be presented in motion form and passed by a 2/3 rd majority at a general meeting with a minimum of ½ the membership in attendance.

13.2 The constitution and its by-laws shall be reviewed annually and or when the Ministry of Education or the HWDSB necessitate a change.

## **By-Law 14 – Annual Report**

14.1 Every school council shall annually submit a written report on its activities to the principal of the school and the HWDSB.(Reg.612)

14.2 If the council engages in fundraising activities, the annual report shall include a report on those activities.(Reg.612)

14.3 The principal shall, on behalf of school council, give a copy of the report to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the copy is given, is enrolled in the school.(Reg.612)

<p><b>Passed this day of:_____ 2003</b></p> <p><b>Amended this day of _____, 2003</b> <i>(Revised 5.17 and 12.8 and added 7.2 and 5.18 to 5.21, removed 5.21)</i></p> <p><b>Reviewed this day of _September 18th_, 2007</b></p> <p><b>Signed: _____</b> <b>(Chair of the School Council)</b></p> <p><b>Signed: _____</b> <b>(Co-chair of the School Council)</b></p>
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