

Mary Hopkins  
School Council  
Constitution

2014

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# CONSTITUTION

## ARTICLE I – NAME

The organization shall be known as “Mary Hopkins 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 – MISSION

The mission of the Mary Hopkins School Council is to improve student learning through a collaborative partnership among students, parents, teachers and community (The Mary Hopkins School Community).

## ARTICLE IV – OBJECTIVES

To facilitate active engagement and open communication within the Mary Hopkins School Community.

To promote the best interest of the School and it’s Students in the greater community.

## 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	5	24
Principal	1	1
Teacher Representative	1	3
Non-teaching Representative	1	1
Community Representative	1	1
Senior Student Representative	0	0
Total Council	9	30

## ARTICLE VI – DUTIES AND SCOPE OF COUNCIL

School council may make recommendations to the principal or the HWDSB on any matter (Reg. 330/10).

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

- a) establishment or amendment of board policies and guidelines that relate to: student achievement, conduct of persons in schools, appropriate dress for students, 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
- b) development and implementation plans for new education initiatives
- 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. 330/10)

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

- a) establishment or amendment of school policies and guidelines that relate to student achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents, including, a local code of conduct and appropriate dress for students in schools (Reg. 330/10)
- b) development of implementation plans for new education initiatives (Reg. 330/10)
- c) school improvement plans, based on the EQAO's reports and other data provided by the Board, and the communication of those plans to the public (Reg. 330/10)
- d) Preparation of the Principal profile and other board required reports.
- e) school budget priorities, including local capital improvement plans/fundraising goals
- f) school, community and parent communications strategies
- g) extra-curricular activities in the school, and the use of these facilities by the public
- h) school fundraising programs
- i) school based services and community partnerships related to business, social, health, recreation and nutrition programs
- j) 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, short term and long term goals and commitment to parent engagement
- b) maintain confidentiality

- c) conduct oneself in an ethical manner
- d) encourage a positive atmosphere where individual contributions are encouraged and valued
- e) limit discussions at school council to matters of concern to the school community as a whole
- f) declare a conflict of interest
- g) promote positive attitudes towards public education

## **MARY HOPKINS 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 their child(ren) must reside within the boundaries of the school or have board permission to attend the school
- 1.2 Parents/guardians who are employed by HWDSB can be members of the school council provided their child(ren) reside within the boundaries of the school or have board permission to attend the school, and disclose their employment to the School Council at the first meeting. Parents who are employed within the school cannot be a voting member of council. (Reg 330/10)
- 1.3 Council membership has been set at a maximum of 30 members, 9 member minimum.
- 1.4 Principal (or designate) of the school.
- 1.5 At least one teacher elected by fellow teachers.
- 1.6 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 vice-chair after consulting with the principal.(Reg. 330/10)
- 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. 330/10)
- 2.3 A person is qualified to be a parent member of school council if he or she is a parent/guardian of a student who is enrolled in the school.(Reg. 330/10)
- 2.4 A person is not qualified to be a parent member if he or she is employed at the school. (Reg.330/10)
- 2.5 A person who is employed elsewhere by the HWDSB, can be a voting member if he or she takes reasonable steps to inform people qualified to vote in the election of parent members of that employment. (Reg. 330/10)
- 2.6 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 student 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. 330/10)

- 2.7 The school will forward the nomination forms to the chair and vice-chair.
- 2.8 Self-nominations are welcome and encouraged.
- 2.9 The chair(s) will contact the nominees to confirm eligibility and interest in participating.
- 2.10A formal election will be necessary if the number of nominations exceeds the council's membership maximum, otherwise all members are acclaimed.
- 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. 330/10) and a minimum of 4 representatives shall count the ballots, **Principal and staff member plus 2 others not nominated.**
- 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. 330/10)
- 3.2 A member of school council may be re-elected or re-appointed. (Reg. 330/10)
- 3.3 A council member is required to have served a minimum of one year on council before holding an executive position, unless the council has been newly established or the position remains vacant.
- 3.4 The executive council members of chair and vice-chair are not allowed to 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 Names of the council chair and vice-chair will be forwarded to the appropriate board official within 30 days of the election results.
- 3.7 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 office of chair or vice-chair, secretary and treasurer shall be filled by election from its current members.
- 4.2 Member attendance is important and valued and members are expected to attend regularly. The chair will contact the member after 3 consecutive meetings missed.
- 4.3 Members who miss more than 3 consecutive meetings without notification to the council chair will lose their position as a voting member of council.
- 4.4 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-chairs must be a parent member of the school council and shall be elected by the members of council. (Reg. 330/10)
- 5.2 A person who is employed by the HWDSB cannot be the chair or vice-chair of council (Reg. 330/10)
- 5.3 The chair's primary role is to be the group's facilitator and community contact person for community related issues. Media releases are to be in written form and will only be released after voted on and approved by council.
- 5.4 The chair(s) shall make every effort to encourage widespread participation of every council member.
- 5.5 Participate in orientation of new members.
- 5.6 The chair(s) is the mechanism for distributing and disseminating information.
- 5.7 Call and chair the council meetings that are open to the public and are held at the school.
- 5.8 Prepare the agenda, in consultation with the principal, based on the members' submitted topics, requests and information received and the principal's report.
- 5.9 Have the agenda and all relevant topic materials available at the school and e-mailed to all council members prior to the next scheduled meeting 5 days prior to facilitate proactive discussion and decision making.
- 5.10 Email minutes to council members at least 5 days prior to the next schedule meeting.
- 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 executive council members, staff 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 or any Board sponsored school council training.
- 5.16 Communicate regularly with the school principals and school community.
- 5.17 Ensure the school council information binder is updated and maintained at the school
- 5.18 On behalf of the council, prepare and provide an annual report (including a financial report) to every parent of students enrolled before the end of the school year (June).
- 5.19 The Council Chair is a voting member of council.

### **SECRETARY**

5.18 Record the minutes of the meetings. Send/E-mail minutes of meetings to council chair and principal at least 10 business days prior to the next meeting. Council Chair or Principal will send/email minutes to council members 5 days prior to next meeting.

5.19 Council chair will maintain and post the minutes of the meeting on-line and in the school, after they have been approved by the council.

5.20 Record and audit attendance at meetings.

## **TREASURER**

5.21 To maintain financial records as required by the regulations.

5.22 To provide reports as required to school council and help in the preparation of the annual school council report.

5.23 The treasurer will be provided monthly financial summary from PAC to assist in tracking financial records for year-end reporting. Pac will provide the last week of each month.

## **COUNCIL MEMBERS**

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

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

5.26 Bring new community and school related items to the meetings.

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

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

5.29 Members can refer to Duties and Scope of Council of Ontario Reg. 330/10 which confirms the advisory role of a school council. Their purpose is to improve student achievement and enhance accountability of the education system to parents. This regulation also establishes council's right to express their views on any Council related issues that are important to them.

## **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 student who is enrolled in the school (Reg. 330/10)

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 student who is enrolled in the school (Reg. 330/10)

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. 330/10)

5.33 Support and promote the council's activities.

5.34 Seek input from the council in areas that 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 the council, post or give a copy of the annual report to every parent of a student enrolled in the school.

## BY-LAW 6 – COMMITTEES

- 6.1 The following standing committee shall be established each year: (Parent Activity Committee). Other committees will be established as needed. All sub committees make recommendations to Council and cannot make decisions without the approval of Council.
- 6.2 Every committee of school council must include at least one (1) parent member of council (Reg. 330/10)
- 6.3 A committee may include persons who are not members of council (Reg. 330/10)
- 6.4 Each committee will provide a monthly report and inform and update council of current and upcoming initiatives.
- 6.5 Each committee will participate in the year end report for the Mary Hopkins School Council

## By-Law 7 – Voting

- 7.1 Each parent/guardian member of school council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by council (Reg. 330/10)
- 7.2 Each parent/guardian 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. 330/10)
- 7.4 Any HWDSB staff members not attending the meeting as a parent/guardian member of school council are not entitled to vote in votes taken by school council.
- 7.5 Email communication may be used when school consultation is sought. Topics will be presented electronically or hard-copies to members. Members shall vote in accordance with the terms of the communication.
- 7.6 All votes will be done by written ballot. Approval of minutes does not require a written vote.
- 7.7 In the event of a tie:

- a. A re-vote shall take place at the following month's meeting allowing council members not present an opportunity to participate. This will also allow council members to seek input from the school community.
- b. If the vote remains tied, the motion shall be defeated. The motion can be raised again in 60 days.

## **BY-LAW 8 - DELEGATIONS**

- 8.1 Individuals may approach the chair(s) or the principal to have an issue placed on the agenda. This request must be received at least 10 days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- 8.2 Delegations will be limited to 10 minutes unless otherwise approved by council members.
- 8.3 Whenever possible delegations and guest presenters will be scheduled to present after the approval of minutes (at the beginning of the agenda).

## **BY-LAW 9 – QUORUM**

- 9.1 A quorum for a general meeting shall consist of the Principal (or designate) and 50% plus one of voting members.
- 9.2 No council business shall be transacted without a quorum.

## **BY-LAW 10 – CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

- 10.1 Every School Council member will be given an opportunity to express his or her opinion/concern about a topic without interruption.
- 10.2 Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.
- 10.3 If a Council member or members become disruptive during a meeting the chair shall ask for order.
- 10.4 If all efforts to restore order fail or the unbecoming behavior continues, the chair shall defer to the principal.
- 10.5 When a member of council has a complaint regarding the actions of one or more members of council, or the Bylaws and procedures, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the chair(s) in writing.
- 10.6 The chair(s) shall allow the complainant to voice their concerns at the next meeting of council. Prior to the meeting, the chair should provide the council with a copy of the complaint.
- 10.7 After the complainant has voiced his or her concerns and all other representations have been heard, council shall vote to resolve the matter

## **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 excuse themselves from discussion and voting on any issue that the conflict involves.
- 11.2 Council must first agree that a conflict exists prior to vote.

11.3 Every declaration of conflict and the nature thereof shall be recorded in the minutes.

## BY-LAW 12 – MEETING PROCEDURES

- 12.1 Council shall preferably meet monthly during the school year, September to June. A minimum of four (4) meeting will be held per year. (Reg. 330/10)
- 12.2 Meetings are open to all members of the school community.
- 12.3 Meetings will commence on time and not last more than 1.5 hours, unless council agrees to a longer meeting.
- 12.4 Council meetings shall not proceed unless there is a quorum (By-Law 9).
- 12.5 Agenda items are to be submitted to the chair(s), 10 days prior to the scheduled meeting.
- 12.6 The agenda, last meeting minutes and relevant topic materials, are to be distributed to members via their children and/or e-mail at least 5 days prior to the next scheduled meeting.
- 12.7 The agenda shall have the following: a) item number; b) topic; c) person responsible; d) action (decision/discussion/information).
- 12.8 Previous minutes shall be reviewed and adopted first, advertised agenda issues second and then any new business items shall be discussed last. Meeting minutes must be approved prior to public posting.
- 12.9 If there is a disagreement concerning procedures used during meetings then Roberts Rules of Order will apply.
- 12.10 In the event of a failure to agree and voting becomes necessary, a simple majority will be sufficient for a vote on any issue.
- 12.11 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.
- 12.12 Council members can call an emergency council meeting at the request of three 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. Amendments to the by-laws will be considered during the April council meeting only.
- 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. 330/10)
- 14.2 If the council engages in fundraising activities, the annual report shall include a report on those activities (Reg. 330/10)
- 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. 330/10)

Passed this day of: \_\_\_\_\_ 2014

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(Chair of the Mary Hopkins School Council)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

(Vice-chair of the Mary Hopkins School Council)