

NAME: ARTICLE 1

1.1 The name of this organization shall be the School Council.

DEFINITIONS: ARTICLE 2

2.1 For the purpose of this constitution, the terms below are defined.

A REGULATION means Ontario Regulation 612/00 School Council Regulation and any successive amendments.

B BOARD means the elected trustees of the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and their appointed administrators.

C COUNCIL MEMBERS shall refer to the members of School Council.

OBJECTIVES: ARTICLE 3

3.1 Under Ontario Regulation 612/00 and Hamilton Wentworth District School Board Revised Policy No. 7.11, the primary focus of School Council shall be to promote and improve student learning and enhance system accountability.

3.2 The School Council will endeavor to encourage parents, students, staff and the community to work together to share information, increase community and parental involvement in the school, and enhance student learning.

3.3 The School Council will be consulted, advise in decision making for school policy and make recommendations on any matter to the school principal and where appropriate to the Board of Education and provincial officials.

3.4 The School Council will carry on without purpose of financial gain for its members. There will be no honorarium paid to members of the Council.

3.5 In addition to its advisory responsibilities, the School Council may:

- organize information sessions to enable members of the Council to develop their skills as council members.

- communicate with parents and other members of the community to seek their views and to report on the activities of the School Council.

- conduct fund-raising activities in accordance with board policies and guidelines.

3.6 The School Council shall annually submit a written report on its activities to the principal of the school and to the board that established the council.

3.7 Accountability: At the end of its term, School Council must prepare and submit a written report to the school and to the board, outlining the council's goals, activities and

achievements, including any fundraising activities. The Principal, on behalf of School Council, must ensure that a copy of this Annual Report is provided to every parent who has a child enrolled in the school.

MEMBERSHIP: ARTICLE 4

4.1 Members of the School Council shall include:

- 8-20 Parents of students enrolled in the school, which forms a majority of the school council.
- 1 Community Representative
- 1 School Principal or Vice-Principal designate
- 1 Teacher
- 1 Non-teaching employee
- 1 Student between grades 6-8 if decided by council
- 1 Person appointed by an association that is a member of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, if the association is represented at the school.

ORGANIZATION: ARTICLE 5

5.1 The Executive of the School Council shall consist of:

- 1 Chairperson
- 1 Vice Chairperson (or co-chair)
- 1 Secretary
- 1 Treasurer
- 1 Principal

The secretary and treasurer may be the same person and the chair/vice-chair may be a co-chair.

5.2 Upon the request of the principal, The School Council may appoint a representative to various groups, committees as may be required from time to time.

5.3 Each parent and appointed position shall be held for a term of one year or until the new council takes office. Vacated positions shall be filled by the School Council at the next applicable meeting to complete the term of the member who has resigned.

5.4 The roles and responsibilities of the council Executive and members shall be as specified in Ontario Regulation 612/00, School Council Regulation.

5.5 In addition to the above, School Council members shall:

- Endeavor to attend every meeting of council, and be prepared to resign if three consecutive meetings are missed without prior notification, at the discretion of the Executive;
- Be guided by the objectives of the Council and policies of the Board;

- Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise
- Not disclose confidential information.
- Not deal with personnel matters or matters dealt with under collective agreements.

5.6 The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board extends liability insurance coverage to members of School Councils while acting within the scope of their duties, as outlined by the Ministry of Education and Training, on behalf of the Board.

MEETINGS: ARTICLE 6

6.1 A minimum of four meetings shall be held during the school year. The School Council shall establish a list of meeting dates for the year at its inaugural meeting in September of each school year.

6.2 The election of Council members shall be held during the first 30 days of the school year. The inaugural meeting of the School Council shall take place after the election.

6.3 All meetings of the School Council including sub-committees may be attended by members of the Public to observe the proceedings. Only council members have voting rights on matters of council business.

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

6.5 The School Council shall keep minutes of all of its meetings and records of all its financial transactions.

6.6 Meetings will typically be kept to a limit of 2 hours per session and any outstanding agenda items will be carried forward to the next meeting.

6.7 Quorum for a regular meeting shall consist of:

- a) 1 School employee or delegate; and
- b) 50% + 1 of the council membership, provided parent members are in the majority.

No School Council business shall be transacted without a quorum.

PROCEDURES: ARTICLE 7

7.1 A motion shall be carried by a simple majority of those members present and voting.

ELECTIONS: ARTICLE 8

8.1 Election of Parent Representatives:

- Parents shall be elected by parents of students enrolled in the school
- Community representative shall be appointed by the School Council
- The student representative shall be elected by students of the school
- The non-teaching representative shall be elected by members of the non-teaching staff of the school
- The school principal shall be a designated member
- The teacher representative shall be elected by the teaching staff

8.2 Election:

- The principal shall conduct the election
- A person is qualified to be a parent member of the School Council if he or she is a parent of a pupil who is enrolled in the school
- A person is not qualified to be a parent member of the School Council if,
 - He or she is employed at the school
 - He or she is not employed at the school but is employed elsewhere by the board that established the council, unless he or she takes reasonable steps to inform people qualified to vote in the election of parent members of that employment.
- A person is qualified to vote in an election of parent members of a school council if he or she is a parent of a pupil who is enrolled in the school
- No school resources or personnel may be used to support particular candidates or group of candidates. No campaign literature may be distributed or posted on school property
- If all elected positions have not been filled at the end of the election process, the newly constituted Council shall be elected by the members of the council
- A person who is employed by the board that established the council cannot be the chair or co-chair of the council
- The secretary-treasurer position will be appointed or elected at the discretion of the council
- There is no restriction on the number of terms a School Council member may be elected

VACANCIES ON SCHOOL COUNCIL: ARTICLE 9

9.1 Any council member may be removed from office at a meeting of the members of school council and a replacement may be appointed as an acting member until the next election, under the following conditions:

- If the member resigns
- If the member is absent from three consecutive meetings without prior notification, at the discretion of the Executive.
- If a vacancy is created through loss of membership qualifications

RULES OF ORDER (MEETING AND VOTING PROCEDURES): ARTICLE 10

10.1 The chair person may conduct meetings in keeping with a friendly open manner and may refer to “ROBERT RULES OF ORDER” if necessary to establish order or for the purpose of carrying out the business of School Council in the normal course, including voting procedures.

10.2 Voting: Each member of School Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by council. Each member of a committee of School Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the committee. The Principal is not entitled to vote in votes taken by School Council or by a committee of School Council.
Voting can be performed in person (through a show of hands) at meetings, by electronic mail or by written proxy only.

AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION: ARTICLE 11

11.1 By-Law amendments require 3/4 vote of the voting members of the School Council to succeed.

The By-Laws should be reviewed every 2 years.

Any proposed amendments must be submitted at least one month in advance of the meeting at which they will be considered.

In all cases the Education Act will take precedent over the By-Laws should a dispute arise.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION: ARTICLE 12

12.1 Every school council member will be given an opportunity to express his or her concern or opinion about the issue at dispute and how the dispute has affected him or her.

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

Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption.

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.

If no common ground can be identified, the chair will seek to clarify preferences among all members before proceeding further.

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