



# James MacDonald Elementary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

200 Chester Avenue  
Hamilton, Ontario L9C 2X1  
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PRINCIPAL: Ms. Susete Bloom  
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## **James MacDonald School Council Constitution**

School Councils are intended to be advisory bodies made up of parents and community members with their essential purpose being to provide ideas and opinions to assist the principals where appropriate. The Council exists to foster the [HWDSB Strategic Plan](#) for the students and community of James MacDonald School.

### **Goals and Objectives:**

- To act in an advisory capacity to school administration with consideration first to student interests
- To foster good relations among students, parents, staff and local community
- to encourage parent involvement and assist in the promotion of the volunteer program to fundraise with the goal of offsetting operational costs or to fund additional supplies, equipment or events
- to share the responsibility of the education of the students and community in alignment with the HWDSB Strategic Plan

### **Membership:**

Shall be parents/guardians of students enrolled at James MacDonald Elementary School elected by their peers, with a minimum representation of 5 and a maximum representation of 15 parents/legal guardians.

- Chairperson
- Co-Chairperson (as needed/required)
- Secretary
- Treasurer

### **Non-elected positions:**

- Principal/Vice Principal
- Teacher representative (voting member)
- Community representative appointed by Council as needed (voting member)
- Non-Teaching staff member (voting member)

Each elected and appointed member of School Council shall hold the position for (1) year until the new council takes office in the new school year. Should a member leave mid-term, Council will appoint a replacement. Attendance at called meetings is expected. No member shall be paid.

If a voting member misses more than two consecutive meetings the Chair can request that the voting member resign from their role as a voting member on the School Council.



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## Meetings:

- A **minimum** of 5 meetings over the school year
- Dates and times will be established at the first meeting of the year and approved by Council
- Open to the public, and parents/guardians of students are encouraged to attend
- Goals, priorities and procedure will be established by Council and guided by the Principal
- The meetings will be run according to the outlined meeting norms and there will be no tolerance for negative reference to people in the school community
- Whenever possible voting on agenda items will take place in person at School Council meetings, but in the event a vote is required between meetings an electronic vote will take place of an in-person vote

## Location:

- Meetings will be held in person, with virtual options as indicated using MS Teams
- In person meeting will be held in the library, to the left of the main school entrance
- In the event that the school is inaccessible, meetings will be transitioned to virtual and details will be distributed by the Chairperson and/or the Principal

## Committee Selection Process:

In September of each year, a notice shall be sent out to all parents/guardians/caregivers of students to notify we are looking for volunteers for School Council, and for parents/guardians/caregivers interested in an official position. If more than one person expresses an interest in a position then an election will take place at the first council meeting of each school year.

Whenever possible individuals selected for elected positions must have been a member of the James MacDonald School Council for at least 1 school year.

## School Mandate:

The James MacDonald School Council acts on behalf of the entire school community. Advice is offered to the Principal, and to the Board on matters listed below:

- Code of student behavior
- Curriculum and program goals and priorities
- Assistance provided when necessary to achieve Provincial and Board assessment programs
- Identify strengths to look for in the selection of administrators and school leaders
- Be aware of and provide influence to school budget priorities
- School/community communication strategies



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- Encourage extra-curricular activities in the school
- Development and review of Board policies at the local level
- All media involvement to be approved of by the current Council

## **Role and Responsibilities:**

### **Chairperson:**

- To call School Council meetings
- To prepare the agenda for the meetings with the assistance of the Principal
- To chair School Council meetings, including a land acknowledgement and following meeting norms as outlined

### **Co-Chairperson (if one is elected):**

- Work and share responsibilities with the Chairperson
- Assist the Chairperson as second in command
- Be prepared to assume the official duties in place of the Chairperson

### **Secretary:**

- Records attendance of meetings
- Records minutes of meetings
- Collects reports for inclusion in meeting minutes
- Distributes minutes of meetings within two weeks of meeting completion

### **Treasurer:**

- Responsible for the money of School Council
- Liaises with School Administration on School Council account
- Prepares a Treasurer Report to be presented at each meeting

### **Council Members:**

- Act as a link between the School Council and the community
- Encourage parent and community participation
- Participate in council sponsored activities when available

### **Principal/Vice-Principal:**

- Facilitate the establishment of the School Council and assist in its operation
- Support and promote the Council's activities



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- Seek input from Council in areas for which advisory responsibilities have been assigned
- Act as a resource on Board policies, and collective agreements
- Obtain and provide information required by the Council to enable it to make informed decisions
- Communicate regularly with the Council Chair
- Ensure copies of the minutes are kept at the school
- Promote and encourage a Positive School Climate by encouraging participation of parents, and other group forms within the school community
- Maintain the authority and obligations of the principal as mandated under Board policy and the Education Act and Regulations of the Province of Ontario

## Meeting Norms

### In Person Meetings

- Attend scheduled meetings on time
- Request a MS Teams link to attend virtually at least 1 day prior to the scheduled meeting
- Communicate regrets to the Chairperson as early as possible
- Follow the outlined and agreed upon agenda
- Participate in discussions, share airtime, be inclusive to all participants
- Be prepared with details, reports or required documents
- Communicate respectfully: ask don't challenge, avoid interruptions, stay on topic, no side conversations
- Track, document and share meeting agendas, notes, reports and minutes

### Virtual Meetings

- Follow in person meeting principles and:
- Mute yourself when not speaking
- Ask questions by using MS Teams functionality (raising hands, etc.)