



## Parent Involvement Committee TERMS OF REFERENCE

Updated: October, 2016

Supporting Ontario Regulation 612 – School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees.

### DEFINITIONS

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The term “parent” is intended to be inclusive and represent parent, guardian, family and caregiver.

The term “School Council” is intended to be inclusive and represent school councils, Home & School Association and other recognized parent groups.

### 1.0 PURPOSE

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The purpose of Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board’s (HWDSB) Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) is to:

- support, encourage and enhance parent engagement at the board level in order to improve student achievement and well-being;
- provide information and advice to the Board on parent engagement;
- communicate with and support school councils and home and school associations;
- undertake activities to help parents support their children’s learning at home and at school.

### 2.0 MANDATE

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Members of the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) are welcomed and valued partners of the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board. Their advice, from their perspective, is much needed, and appreciated. The PIC will connect with each other in order to champion and demonstrate a commitment to parent engagement, contribute to productive meetings, participate in sub-committee work, represent the broad parent interest with respect to all PIC work and deliberations and provide input/feedback and raise issues as a representative of a Board Committee. The mandate is as follows:

In keeping with **Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) Norms and Values**, PIC will

- 2.1 Develop strategies and initiatives that the board and the board’s director could use to communicate effectively with parents and to engage parents in support of their children’s learning at home and at school, and to advise on the use of these strategies;
- 2.2 Communicate information from the ministry to school councils and parents via the Communications Subcommittee;
- 2.3 Work with school councils:
  - to share effective practices to help engage parents in their children’s learning, identify and reduce barriers to parent engagement, and help ensure schools are welcoming to parents;
  - to support initiatives that help build knowledge and skills that will assist the PIC and school councils of the board with their work.
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- 2.4 Determine, in consultation with the board’s director of education and in keeping with the Board’s policies, how funding, if any, provided under the *Education Act* for parent involvement (i.e. annual PIC funding) is to be used as described in the Purpose (Section 1.0) and Subsection 2.1 to 2.3.

- 2.5 Provide advice to the board regarding all matters related to the establishment, development, and delivery of parent engagement strategies.
- 2.6 Raise common parental issues of concern with the Board of Trustees through formal and informal mechanisms including, but not limited to, written reports to Board and to HWDSB staff.
- 2.7 Provide a link between parents and senior staff/trustees, in order to provide parent advice and to support parent engagement.
- 2.8 Be actively involved in supporting positive parent engagement.
- 2.9 Provide support to schools and the Board on ways in which to engage parents at the board/school/classroom/home level.  
  
This would include supporting the work of School Councils, supporting the sharing of best practices across the district, and providing support for effective, research-based engagement.
- 2.10 Liaise with PICs from other school boards as well as the Provincial Parent Board to ensure it is informed about local and provincial issues related to parent engagement, to include best practices allowing for local adjustment thus ensuring ongoing effectiveness.
- 2.11 Provide a formal link (see Membership, Section 3) to all mandated and organizational committees in the Board with parental representation, including Special Education Advisory Committee, Rural and French As a Second Language Advisory Committees, First Nations, Métis and Inuit Advisory Committee and the Hamilton-Wentworth Council for Home and School Associations.
- 2.12 Provide assistance and support to parents as they navigate the various areas of the Board.

### **3.0 MEMBERSHIP**

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- 3.1 PIC members will provide a parental perspective on items for which advice is being sought. They are to be mindful of the opinions of others and agree to disagree respectfully. They are not expected to represent the voice of all parents. At a minimum the HWDSB Public Consultation process will be followed for acquiring a broader perspective.

Every effort will be made to ensure membership is representative of the broader Hamilton-Wentworth community. The objective is to create a balanced membership. The Membership Selection Sub-Committee (See Section 12), through recruitment and applications, will attempt to achieve membership from each cluster, geographic area, elementary/secondary balance and reflective of the diversity of the student population.

- 3.2 PIC Voting Membership  
The PIC will consist of a maximum of **38 voting members**. Membership is open to all parents who have applied through an application process.

Article I – Voting Member Composition of PIC

	Minimum	Maximum
Parents/Guardians/Caregivers (excluding PIC chair & past chair)	14	30
Community Representatives	1	3
Parent Advisory Committee Representatives	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>
Total Voting PIC Members	16	38

- 3.3 A person is qualified to apply to be a voting member of the PIC if he or she is a parent of a child enrolled in an HWDSB school/program.
- 3.4 A person employed by the board and who is parent of a child enrolled in an HWDSB school/program, is qualified to apply to be a voting member of the PIC (subject to Subsection 3.5).
- 3.5 A parent member referred to in subsection (3.4) shall, at his or her first committee meeting, inform the committee of his or her employment with the board.
- 3.6 All HWDSB advisory committees and any additional committees formed where parents consist of a large part of the membership will be asked to provide a liaison who will be a voting member of PIC and who will bring input/feedback/issues from their representative group.
  - a. Special Education Advisory Committee
  - b. French As a Second Language Advisory Committee
  - c. Hamilton-Wentworth Council of Home and School Associations
  - d. Rural Schools Advisory Committee
  - e. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Advisory Committee
  - f. Any other committee where parents consist of a majority part of membership
- 3.7 PIC will elect or appoint up to a maximum of three community representatives who are voting members and who are current partners of HWDSB.
- 3.8 PIC Non-Voting Membership  
 The Board shall appoint the following people to the committee:
  - a. the Director of Education or Executive Council designate
  - b. minimum of one and a maximum of three Trustees
  - c. one elementary Vice Principal or Principal
  - d. one Secondary Vice Principal or Principal
  - e. one representative from the Leadership and Learning Department
  - f. additional support staff as determined

The PIC Chair and Past-Chair are also non-voting members of PIC.

### 3.9 Member Attendance

The expectation is that PIC members will endeavor to attend monthly meetings. When absent, regrets should be made to the Chair. After two consecutive missed meetings, the Chair or designate will contact the member and inquire about their ability to fulfill his/her commitment. If membership ceases at that time the position will be filled (See Section 8 Vacancies).

After three consecutive missed meetings, without cause, an individual's voting membership on PIC will cease. The Chair or designate will inform the member and invite him/her to continue to attend as an observing guest. His/her voting seat will be replaced. (see Section 8 Vacancies)

## 4.0 TERM OF OFFICE

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4.1 The term of office of parent members is two years.

4.2 A member may re-apply to serve more than one term.

## 5.0 OFFICERS

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5.1 The Chair must be a parent member of the committee who has participated on PIC for a minimum of 1 year prior to election. He/she shall be elected for a two-year term by the voting members of PIC at the May meeting in each school year that there is a vacancy in the office of Chair. An individual can serve for two consecutive terms as chair.

The Chair is responsible for:

- a. championing and demonstrating a commitment to parent engagement
- b. setting the agenda aiming for a balance of weighted and lighter items
- c. facilitating productive meetings and setting the proper tone
- d. acting as the spokesperson for the committee
- e. representing broad parent interest with respect to all PIC work and deliberations
- f. being aware of diverse parent perspectives across the district
- g. attending the first meeting of sub-committee to facilitate the selection of sub-committee chair/co-chair

The Chair is a non-voting member. In the event of a tie, the motion is defeated.

5.2 The Vice Chair must be a parent member of PIC and is elected in May of each year by the PIC membership.

The Vice Chair is a voting member unless they are acting in the role of Chair.

The Vice Chair is responsible for:

- a. championing and demonstrating a commitment to parent engagement
- b. facilitating productive meetings in the absence of the Chair
- c. attending the first meeting of sub-committees to facilitate the selection of sub-committee chair/co-chair
- d. supporting the work of the PIC Chair

- 5.3 In the case of multiple nominees for the position of Chair or Vice Chair:
- a. an allotted time of five minutes shall be given to each nominee to present his/her reasons for seeking this position
  - b. voting shall be by secret written ballot and all present voting members of PIC may vote
  - c. a clear majority, being one vote more than one-half of members present and voting, shall be required to win. If no nominee receives this on the first ballot, the nominee receiving the lowest number of votes shall be dropped and a further ballot or ballots taken until a clear majority is received by one nominee who shall be declared the winner.
- 5.4 The Past Chair is responsible for:
- a. Championing and demonstrating a commitment to parent engagement
  - b. Providing advice and counsel to the Chair
  - c. Assisting the Chair

The Past-Chair assumes this role directly upon completion of the Chair's term of office.

## **6.0 MEETINGS**

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- 6.1 At the September meeting a meeting schedule for the upcoming year will be approved and shared with the community via the Board's website and "buddies" will be assigned for new members.
- 6.2 Meetings will be held monthly, except for July and August and networking opportunities will proceed each meeting.
- 6.3 PIC meetings are open to the public.
- 6.4 PIC agendas and minutes will be posted on the Board's website.
- 6.5 Minutes of the meetings will be circulated to members prior to approval.
- 6.6 Meeting agendas shall be provided a minimum of two working days prior to the meeting.
- 6.7 Meetings will be held outside of school hours.
- 6.8 Extra meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chair.
- 6.9 The Director and Trustee, or their designates, must be present at all meetings.**

## **7.0 VOTING BETWEEN MEETINGS**

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- 7.1 Email communication may be used when PIC consultation is sought between meetings. Topics will be presented electronically or by hard-copy to members. Members shall respond in accordance with the terms of the communication. A formal record of all electronic consultations will be presented at the next PIC meeting and will be reflected in the minutes.

## **8.0 VACANCIES**

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If any vacancies occur in the committee, the Membership Selection Sub-Committee (see Section 12) may fill the vacancy using the established protocol. Any vacant positions identified after April will be filled for the following school year.

## **9.0 QUORUM**

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Half plus one of the minimum amount of voting members shall constitute a quorum (see Article I).

## **10.0 CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS**

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Members of the PIC have a duty to make decisions consistent with Ministry and Board policy and procedures and in the best interest of students.

- 10.1 Members will not act in order to gain financial or other material benefit personally. There may be times when members will be required to treat discussions, documents or other information relating to the work of the PIC in a confidential manner.
- 10.2 In the event of a conflict between members the Chair or designate will make every effort to positively resolve the dispute in the following manner:
  - a. Every PIC member will be given an opportunity to express his or her concern and/or opinion about the issue at dispute and how the dispute has affected him or her.
  - b. Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.
  - c. Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption at the discretion of the Chair.
  - d. The Chair's responsibility is to clarify the statements made by the speakers, to identify common ground among the points of view raised and to set out the joint interests of all members.
  - e. If no common ground can be identified, the Chair will seek to clarify preferences among all members before proceeding further.
  - f. If all attempts at resolving the conflict have been exhausted without success, the Chair shall request the intervention of the Superintendent. If the conflict involves the Superintendent, the PIC member can request the involvement of other senior administrator to facilitate a resolution to the conflict.
  - g. If the conflict is with the Chair, the Superintendent will facilitate the Conflict Resolution process.
  - h. If a PIC member or members become disruptive during a meeting, the Chair shall ask for order. If all efforts to restore order fail or the unbecoming behaviour continues, the Chair shall ask for the individual PIC member(s) to leave the meeting, citing the reasons for the request

## **11.0 SUB-COMMITTEES**

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Sub-committees will be established as required at the October meeting of each new school year. Additional committees may be established as required.

- 11.1 Each sub-committee will elect a parent member as Chair. The Chair responsibilities include coordinating and leading meetings, and reporting back to PIC as required.
- 11.2 Each sub-committee will have at least one staff representative. The staff liaison will be the identified point of contact to the Superintendent's office.
- 11.3 The majority of sub-committee members must be parents.
- 11.2 Each sub-committee will create a workplan (i.e. dates, tasks, etc.) that will be presented to PIC for input and approval. Once approved, the sub-committee will make decisions related to the activities outlined in the plan. Major changes to the workplan must be reviewed by PIC.
- 11.3 Sub-committee requests for support, documentation and/or information must come through the sub-committee Chair to the staff liaison.

## 12.0 MEMBERSHIP SELECTION

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A Membership Selection Sub-Committee will be formed annually in April.

- 12.1 Membership may include the PIC Chair, Vice Chair, a minimum of four and maximum of six voting members of PIC (elected by the voting PIC members if required), one Trustee, one Corporate Communications Representative and the Director or Superintendent designate.
- 12.2 This Sub-Committee will annually (from March to July) process the recruitment, application and selection process for members of the PIC. The Sub-Committee will also be responsible for recruiting members where there are gaps, following the application process.
- 12.3 For succession planning and to maintain the continuity of PIC, a maximum (goal) of 40% of the membership should change annually.
- 12.4 Membership Selection Process
- a. Present members entering their second year are automatically renewed for the second year of their two year term.
  - b. Present members ending their two year term, must reapply through the application process.
  - c. New applicants to PIC are reviewed by the Membership Selection Sub-committee based upon the following criteria
    - i. Public school supporter
    - ii. Experience working with a parent organization
  - d. In order to create a balanced membership, the Membership Selection Sub-committee will use the filters of:
    - i. Geographic location/cluster/ward
    - ii. Elementary/secondary affiliation
    - iii. Diversity
  - e. New applicants will be selected by consensus (to a maximum of 40%).
  - f. Remaining vacant positions are filled by members who have re-applied after completing their term, based upon the “balance” filter above. Members will be selected by a lottery process.

All applicants that meet the required criteria for membership that are not chosen to become members of PIC will be placed in a pool of prospective members. If a vacancy needs to be filled, a member will be chosen from the pool provided that the selection filters are still met. (i.e. geographical coverage). Members will be selected by a lottery process.

If a suitable member cannot be found within the pool a request for applicants will be made Board wide.

Any vacancies created after April 1<sup>st</sup> will remain vacant for the duration of the school year and will be filled through the normal recruitment process (note: vacancies will be filled at any time during the year if the vacancy causes PIC membership to fall below the minimum voting membership as outlined in subsection 3.2.)

### **13.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE REVIEW**

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A PIC Terms of Reference (TOR) Sub-Committee will be formed every two years.

- 13.1 Any revisions to the TOR will be brought forward to PIC as part of the review process.
- 13.2 Notice of the vote must be provided to members at least five days prior to the review meeting.
- 13.3 Two-thirds of the voting membership is required to change the Terms of Reference.

### **14.0 REQUESTS FOR PIC POSITION OR OPINION**

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A request may be made to PIC for their position or opinion from the media or member of the public. These requests often require a timely response.

- 14.1 All PIC members are free to offer their own thoughts on any questions but must be very clear in stating that “this is their own opinion and does not reflect the opinion of PIC”.
- 14.2 All official requests for comment will be answered by the PIC Chair or designate in written form only. The statement released by the Chair will only be made after consultation with PIC members and a formal agreement reached. Agreement may take the form of a motion either by email or within the regular proceedings of a scheduled PIC meeting.
- 14.3 PIC must take into consideration HWDSB policy and Ministry guidelines when taking a formal position on a topic of interest.
- 14.4 If PIC is misquoted, a formal request will be made for correction.



Passed this day of: \_\_\_\_\_, 2016

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Chair of Parent Involvement Committee)

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Vice-Chair of the Parent Involvement Committee)

Parent Involvement Committee Voting Member's Signatures