

**ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL
CONSTITUTION
AND
BY-LAWS
Effective: 15 April 2015**

1. Definition of School Council:

- The School Council for Rockland Public School is constituted under the Education Act, 1990 and specifically the Ontario Regulation 612/00, dated December 03, 2000.
- Definition: The School Council is a voluntary group, consisting of members of the school community; parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, support staff and, if possible, community representatives.
- As this is a Primary School, no student representatives will sit on the council.

2. Mandate:

- **To serve as a liaison** between; Rockland Public School, the Upper Canada District School Board, parents, students, and the community.
- **To liaise with the principal** on all areas of school policy.
- **To propose** initiatives aimed at maximizing educational opportunities, enhancing school life, and enhancing the accountability of the school system to parents.
- **To encourage and to support** the efforts of the school's volunteers.
- **To establish, to coordinate, and to support** committees of RKPS engaged in activities related to fulfilling this mandate.
- **The council does not have the mandate with respect to:**

a) School governance

b) Employment issues

c) School management

d) Work on policies that deviate from school board policy

e) Take on the role of the teacher, principal or school board, each of which has professional and legal responsibilities within the school system

f) Discuss performance or conduct of individual students, teachers, other employees, parents or community members during activities related to school council

- g) Comment on terms and conditions of individual employment contracts for school staff
- h) Discuss matters clearly designated to another person or group through legislation.

3. Membership:

- RKPS will elect a School Council, that has at a minimum, the following members;

- a) Parents or guardians of students enrolled in the school, with a **minimum of five (5)** if no student representative

- b) The school principal or delegate

- c) A member of the teaching staff of the school other than the principal or vice-principal

- d) Other members may be a representative of the support staff and the general public

- While all members of Council are equal partners, **parents shall form a majority**. The size of the School Council, unless vacancies exist, **shall not be less than seven (7)**.

- If less than seven (7), parents are willing and able to stand for election, the School Council will maintain vacant positions as it begins its work, and continue to seek involvement of parents through outreach strategies.

- Council will have a maximum of 10 parent members.

4. Terms of Office:

- A person elected or appointed as a member of School Council holds office for one year from the latter of :

- a) The date he or she is elected or appointed; or

- b) The date of the first meeting of the School Council after the elections in the school year, until after the elections of the School Council on the date of the first meeting of the School Council in the next school year

- A member of a School Council may be re-elected or reappointed, unless otherwise prohibited by the by-laws of the School Council.

5. Election of Parent Members:

- The term of office for elected and appointed positions on the School Council shall be one (1) year. (September to September)
- A person is qualified to be a parent or guardian member of School Council if he or she is a parent/guardian of a pupil who is enrolled in the school. However, the person may not be employed by the school or by the School Board. Casual employees included.

- A person is qualified to vote in an election of parent members of the School Council if he or she is a parent of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.
- An election of parent members of the School Council shall be held during the first 30 days of each school year or when there is a vacancy.
- The principal of the school shall, at least 14 days before the date of the election of parent members, on behalf of the 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.

- The voting of the parent members shall be made by secret ballot or show of hands (as agreed upon prior to election commencement). All Voters must be present when the vote is held. No Voting by Proxy.
- All members in an appointed position on school council are voting members.
- Elections for executive positions can be made either by self or parent nomination forms.

6. Executive:

- Shall include the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- **All members of the Executive shall be parent members.**
- In all communication, the officers of the School Council have a responsibility to ensure that when they speak on behalf of the School Council, that they are expressing the wishes of the School Council.

7. The Position of Chair:

- The School Council will have a Chair.
- A Chair of the School Council must be a **parent member** of the School Council, and shall be elected by the members of the School Council.
- A person who is employed by the Board cannot be the Chair.
- The Chair shall:

- Arrange for meetings;
- Prepare the agenda for School Council meetings in consultation with the principal, to be completed 1 week prior to holding a school council meeting;
- Ensure that the agenda is posted on the web and on the parent bulletin board;
- Chair the council meetings;
- Ensure that minutes of the council meetings are recorded and maintained;
- Participate as ex-officio member** of committees established by the School Council;
- Communicate with the school principal on behalf of the council;
- Consult, on behalf of the School Council, with Senior Board Staff and Trustees as needed, and arrange for the School Council to be represented at relation functions and meetings;
- Provide for regular communication, approved by the School Council, amongst the Council, the parents, the community, and existing organizations within the school, as well as with other School Councils.
- The Chair can expend without council vote up to \$50.00 dollars for misc items, but must provide receipts to the treasurer prior the next available council meeting.

k) Will inform council of their resignation from their position on council! If they miss 3 consecutive meetings via phone call then a follow up email to the member of council!

8. The position of Vice-Chair:

- The School Council will have a Vice-Chair.
- The Vice-Chair must be a parent member of the School Council and shall be elected by the members of the School Council.
- A person who is employed by the Board cannot be the Vice-Chair.
- The Vice-Chair shall:
 - a) Work with the Chair to fulfill duties;
 - b) Assume duties of the Chair when needed;
 - c) Assume further duties as directed by the Board and/or Executive Committee.

9. The position of Secretary:

- The School Council will have a secretary.

- The Secretary shall keep and distribute appropriately all minutes and correspondence of the Council.

- Will keep meeting attendance records and inform the Chair accordingly.
- Will inform council members after two consecutive absences without just cause, and will inquire as to their interest to continue in their position on council.
- Will inform council members of their resignation from their position on council if they miss three consecutive meetings.

10. The position of Treasurer:

- The School Council will have a Treasurer.
- The Treasurer shall work with the Executive Committee to establish such financial procedures as are required.

- The Treasurer will provide an **oral report**/and/or written report on the financial status of the Council at each Council meeting.

11. Role of the Principal:

- The school Principal is a member of the School Council who acts as a link between the council and the school.

- The School Principal is **NOT** a voting member of the School Council.

- The Principal of the school may delegate any of his or her powers as a member of the School Council, to his designated representative.

- In addition to his or her duties under this procedure, the Principal of the school, shall perform the duties related to School Councils that are imposed on the Principal by Regulation 298 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (Operations of Schools-General) and amended by Regulation 613 as follows:

- a) The Principal of the school shall provide for the prompt distribution to each member of the School Council any materials received from the Ministry that are identified by the Ministry as being for distribution to the members of the School Council;
- b) The principal **shall post** any materials distributed to members of the School Council in the school in a location that is accessible to parents;
- c) The Principal or delegate shall attend every meeting of the School Council, and shall assist the Council in obtaining information relation to relevant legislation, regulations, and policies;

- d) The Principal of the school shall act as a resource person to the School Council and shall assist the Council in obtaining information relation to relevant legislation, regulations, and policies;

- e) The Principal **shall consider** each recommendation made by the School Council and **shall advise** the Council of the action taken in response to the recommendation;

- f) The principal shall solicit the views of the School Council with respect to the following matters, as required:
 - (i) the school code of conduct, established under subsection 303(1) or (2) of the Act governing the behavior of all persons in the school, and
 - (ii) school rules or guidelines related to policies and guidelines established by the Board under subsection 302(5) of the Act

respecting appropriate dress for pupils in schools within the Board's jurisdiction

12. Parent Representatives:

- Parent Representatives are voting members who:

Participate on any committees established by the School Council;

a) Contribute to the discussions of the School Council;

b) Solicit the views of other parents and members of the community to share with the School Council;

c) Observe the Council's code of ethics and established by-laws;

e) In all communication, the officers of the School Council have the responsibility to ensure that when they speak on behalf of the School Council, that they are expressing the wishes of the School Council;

f) Will inform the Secretary of their attendance prior to each council meeting in order to ensure quorum is met.

13. School Staff Representatives:

- (i) School Staff Representatives are **voting members** of the Council who;

a) Contribute to the discussions of the School Council;

b) Solicit views from their staff groups to share with the School Council;

c) May participate on any committees;

d) Communicate information back to their staff groups;

e) Observe the Council's code of ethics and established by-laws.

BY-LAWS

1. Election Procedure Bylaw:

- i. Elections shall occur within the first thirty (30) days of the start of each school year.
- ii. Each parent/guardian seeking election must be nominated or self-nominated in writing, must have a child registered at the school, and will not be employed by the School Board.
- iii. Each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent/guardian position on the Council and must be present at the election meeting.
- iv. Candidates for election should be prepared to summarize their reasons for running for the School Council in writing at the first School Council meeting if requested by the principal.
- v. The Election Day shall be publicized by the Principal at least 14 days prior to the election.
- vi. The Election Day proceedings shall be supervised by the Principal and outgoing Chair of the Council.
- vii. Elections for School Council shall be conducted by secret ballot or by show of hands as agreed by all present at the election meeting.
- viii. If there is a tie for the final position for a representative on the School Council, the winner shall be determined by lot.
- ix. Any person assigned to the teaching staff at the school may be a candidate for teaching staff representative.

2. Vacancies in School Council:

- i. If any School Council position becomes vacant because of resignation, inability of a member to fulfill his or her roles and responsibilities, or other cause, the remaining members shall constitute the School Council, unless the parent/guardian majority is not maintained.
- ii. If a majority of parents on the Council is not maintained, the School Council shall send home nomination forms for the vacant position(s) for parents on the Council and hold an election for the purpose of filling the vacancy.

- iii. Vacant positions, other than for parent representatives, may be filled by appointment of the Council for the remaining term of office, from among members of the school community who meet the requirements set for the vacant positions.
- iv. If any member of the School Council misses two (2) consecutive meetings without just cause*, the Secretary will contact the person with regards to their interest to continue in their position.
- v. If a third consecutive meeting is missed without just cause*, then the Council member in question will be asked to resign from council and their voting status will be revoked. A new member will be voted in their position.
*Just Cause Constitutes the following: Family Emergency, or illness

3. Conflict of Interest:

- i. A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential.
- ii. Members of the Council shall declare a conflict of interest in matters that they, members of their families, or business entities in which they may have an interest, stand to benefit financially either directly or indirectly by decisions of the Council.
- iii. A member shall exclude him or herself from discussions in which:
 - a. the member's ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities as a member of the School Council may be jeopardized.
 - b. The Council member, his or her relatives or a business entity in which the member has an interest, may gain or benefit either directly or indirectly as a result of the actions that may be taken by the Principal or Board in response to advice that the Council provides to the Principal or to the Board
- vi. A member shall not accept favors or economic benefits from any individuals, organizations, or entities known to be seeking business contracts with the school.

4. Meetings:

- i. A School Council shall meet at least four (4) times during the school year.
- ii. A School council shall meet within the first 30 days of the school year, after the elections, on a date fixed by the Principal of the school.
- iii. A meeting of a School Council cannot be held unless:

- a) A majority of the current members of the Council are present at the meeting are parent members
- b) All meetings of the School Council shall be open to the public
- c) A School Council is entitled to hold its meetings at the school
- d) All meetings of a School Council shall be held at a location that is accessible to the public

Note: minutes of the meetings are to be recorded and distributed to all members whether they attended or not.

5. Quorum:

- i. The quorum is 50 percent of the elected Council members with parents being the majority.

6. Decision-Making Process:

- i. All meetings will follow Robert's Rules of Order. Members of School Council will attempt to make decisions by consensus.
- ii. If a consensus is not possible, voting using a show of hands or by ballot, with a majority win, will make the decision
- iii. Motions requiring a mover and a seconder shall be required for:
 - a) All financial matters;
 - b) All recommendations to Administration or the Board;
 - c) Any amendments to the Bylaws (simple majority) or the Constitution (two-thirds majority)
 - d) Any issue which Council deems to be contentious
- v. There will be no vote by proxy at Council meetings.

7. Conflict Resolution:

- i. Every School Council member will be given an opportunity to express his or her concerns or opinion about the issue at dispute, and how the dispute has affected him or her.
- ii. Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.
- iii. Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption.
- iv. The Chair's responsibility is to clarify the statements made by all speakers, to identify common ground amongst the points of view raised, and to set out the joint interests of all members.
- v. If no common ground can be identified, the Chair will seek to clarify preferences amongst all members before proceeding further.
- vi. 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.

- vii. Council has the right to bring a meeting to close should members in attendance attempt to move outside of the boundaries under which Council must operate dictated by the Board and/or Ministry.

8. Sub-Committees:

- i. Council may establish sub- committees in order to address a task or issue as the need arises.
- ii. Each committee must have a member of school Council on it.
- iii. The duties and responsibilities of the committee should be clearly specified by Council.
- iv. The committee will make recommendations to the Council at the conclusion of deliberations in writing.
- v. All meetings of the Sub-Committee shall be held at a location that is accessible to the public
- vi. Must seek council approval prior to taking any action