

William Burgess Parent Council

By-Laws

Version Dated: November 7, 2010

1.0 Introduction

The name of this Council is “William Burgess School Council” (the “Council”).

The Council is a non-profit organization with no personal financial benefit accruing to members.

The Council is a body of parents, teachers, students, the principal, staff and community representative(s) associated with William Burgess Public School (the “school”).

Every member will uphold and comply with this bylaw.

2.0 Purposes of the Council

The purpose of the Council is, through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parent, and to seek to strengthen the connection between school, home and community.

This Council’s primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations to the principal and the Toronto District School Board (the “Board”) respecting matters relating to the school, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 612/00. In doing so, it will welcome the views of the broader school community.

The Council is a means for parents and community members to work together with the school to support and enhance student learning.

The Council provides the venue for parents to reflect the wishes of the broader community for the education of its students and to actively participate in giving advice and support to the principal in the operations of the school.

The Council will conduct its business in a manner that is unbiased and non-discriminatory in respect of race, religion, gender, politics, sexual orientation and physical or mental ability.

The Council will also work:

1. To encourage parent involvement in the school, and to support programs that promote parent involvement
2. To promote the interests of public education and in particular the interests of the school
3. To provide leadership in the school community

4. To contribute to a sense of community within the school and among the school, pupils' homes and the surrounding neighbourhood
5. To provide parent education and a forum for discussion of educational issues
6. To assist the principal and staff in ensuring that the highest safety standards are maintained in the school and neighbourhood
7. To organize and support activities for students and parents
8. To provide financial support for the goals of the school and Council
9. To consult with the principal so s/he can ensure students have opportunities to meet Ministry standards, and that the community's expectations are taken into consideration during school-based planning.
10. To share information and ideas with the school community, other school councils and provincial organizations
11. To set policies that relate to school Council functions

3.0 Membership/ Election Process

All parents and guardians (hereafter, "parents") of students registered at William Burgess Public School are qualified to stand for election as a parent member of the Council, unless employed at the school.

The Council shall be composed of:

- Parent members, the number of which shall accord with the number of nominations received by the deadline, such that all parent members will be elected by acclamation, unless that number exceeds 40 in which case an election will be held in accordance with the processes set out in the bylaw.
- The principal of the school.
- One teacher who is employed at the school, other than the principal or a vice-principal.
- One person who is employed at the school, other than the principal, vice-principal or a teacher.
- One or more community representative appointed by the other members of the Council no later than the first meeting of each school year.

A parent member who fails to attend 3 meetings in a row during a school year shall be deemed to have resigned his or her membership.

Elections shall occur within the first 30 days of the start of each school year on a date fixed by the Chair or Co-Chair after consultation with the principal.

The principal of the school shall, at least 14 days before the date of the election of parent members, 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. The notice shall be given by the parent's child for delivery to his or her parent, e.g. within the child's "Friday Folder"; and posting the notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parents. The notice given to the child for delivery shall enclose a nomination form by which the parent may nominate himself or herself for election to the Council, and the deadline by which a completed nomination form must be received in the school office.

Any parent seeking election as a parent member who is employed by the Toronto District School Board must declare that he or she is employed by the Board on the nomination form.

If all parent members of Council are elected by acclamation, their names will be announced to the parents of pupils enrolled in the school by being given to the pupil for delivery to the parent, e.g. within the child's "Friday folder", the week after nominations close.

It is not anticipated that a contested election of parent members will generally be required. If, for unforeseen reasons, a contested election of parent members takes place, it will follow the procedures required by Ontario Regulation 612/00, and, in particular, will be by secret ballot.

A parent of a student enrolled at William Burgess Public School is entitled to vote in the election of parent members.

Council will be provided with a profile from all candidates or ensure candidates have the opportunity to introduce themselves and state their abilities and qualifications to Council prior to a vote. Council members will be given the opportunity to ask questions of candidates prior to the vote.

Election shall be by secret ballot. Ballots from an election will be destroyed immediately after said election.

Ballots shall be counted by the principal in the presence of at least two parents who are not election candidates

Winning candidates will be announced once ballots have been counted.

Only the names of successful candidates shall be made public. A list of all candidates and results shall be kept on file by the Council for use in the event that a vacancy on the Council occurs.

The Chair, Co-Chairs and/or Communications Officer may, in June of each school year, consult with the principal to plan elections to occur in the following year.

If a parent member vacancy arises during the school year, the principal shall give notice to parents of pupils enrolled in the school, by giving it to pupils for delivery to their parents, that an opportunity has arisen to participate on the Council, and shall set a deadline for receipt of expressions of interest. If one or more parents express interest by the deadline so set, the Council shall vote on and shall appoint a parent member to fill the vacancy.

With respect to the teacher member and staff member positions, elections shall be held during the first 30 days of each school year.

If no one is nominated for the teacher member position the principal shall appoint a teacher to attend one or more meetings in order to fill the vacancy on a temporary basis until the next annual election.

If no one is nominated for the staff member position it becomes a vacancy and may be filled at the next annual election.

4.0 Council Meetings

Council meetings will be conducted with fairness to all members

Council meetings will be held not less than 4 times during the school year

Council members will not discuss or disclose confidential information regarding members of the school community at Council meetings

Notice of the date, time and location of meetings will be given by the principal to every parent of a pupil registered at the school at least 14 days before a scheduled meeting by giving such notice to the pupil for delivery to the parent, e.g. via the pupil's Friday folder, and notice will also be posted in a location accessible to the public.

Meetings will be open to the public and held at a location accessible to the public.

A meeting of Council cannot be held unless a majority of the current members of the Council are present at the meeting and a majority of the members of the Council who are present at the meeting are parent members.

If at any time during a meeting a quorum ceases to be present, business then in progress must be suspended until there is a quorum present or until the meeting is adjourned or terminated.

Except as provided elsewhere in this bylaw, all matters requiring a vote will be decided by a simple majority of the votes cast (50% plus 1).

In the case of a tie vote, the Chair does not have a second or casting vote and the motion is defeated. A second vote may be requested by two parent members for later during the same meeting if time permits or at the next Council meeting.

Members must vote in person on all matters. No voting by proxy is permitted.

All Council members are voting members, with the exception of the principal.

Except as provided elsewhere in this bylaw voting is by a show of hands. Voting by secret ballot can happen if at least two parent members request it.

At the start of each meeting, minutes from the previous meeting will be first and seconded by two parent members. Any discrepancies in minutes will be voiced and noted.

5.0 Executive

The Executive will manage the Council's affairs between Council meetings.

The Executive shall consist of Chairperson or two Co-Chairs, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Officer and any past president who has been elected to school Council and wishes to participate on the Executive. The Executive may also include a Meeting Facilitator, and/or such other positions as Council determines to be appropriate, on an annual basis.

Any voting member is eligible to serve on the Executive, except that: (i) employees or elected officials of the Toronto District School Board cannot serve in the Chair and/or Co-Chair position, and (ii) the Chair or Co-Chairs must be a parent member or parent members.

The Executive will be elected by the voting members of the Council at the first Council meeting of each school year.

The Executive will hold office from the later of the date they are elected or appointed and the date of the first meeting of Council until the date of the first meeting of the school Council after the elections held in the next school year.

No person may hold the same Executive position for more than 5 years in a row.

If an Executive member resigns or ceases to hold office for any other reason, the remaining Executive may appoint an eligible member of the Council to fill the vacancy until the first meeting of the next school year.

The members of the Council may, by a majority of not less than 75% of the votes cast, remove an Executive member before the expiration of his or her term of office, and may elect an eligible member to complete the term.

Written notice specifying the intention to make a motion to remove the Executive member must be given to all members of the Council not less than 14 days before the meeting via electronic mail or notice may also be posted in a location accessible to all members.

No Executive member may be remunerated for serving on the Executive, but may be reimbursed for expenses reasonably and necessarily incurred while engaged in the Council's affairs.

6.0 Conduct of School Council Members/Dispute Resolution/Conflict of Interest

At all times when acting in their capacity as members of the Council, Council members must act solely in the interests of the school and its students.

Any information received in confidence by a Council member from school personnel, a student, parent or other member of the school community shall be kept in confidence and must not be disclosed to others or discussed at a Council meeting without permission of the person giving the information.

Every 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 and 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 to resolve the conflict fail the Chair shall request intervention of a superintendent or other senior administrator to facilitate a resolution to the conflict. Council disputes will be mediated through processes established by the Toronto District School Board.

Conflict of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential. A conflict of interest arises in any situation in which the individual's private interests may be incompatible or in conflict with his or her Council responsibilities. Where a member, a member of a member's family or a business entity belonging to a member or a member of a member's family stands to benefit directly or indirectly through a decision of the Council.

Members of the Council shall declare a conflict of interest to the Chair or Co-Chair in matters where they, members of their families, or business entities in which they have an interest, stand to benefit either directly or indirectly by decisions of the Council

A member shall exclude him/ herself from discussions and not vote in respect of matters that arise in which:

- A conflict of interest is likely to result;
- The member's ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities as a member of the school Council may be jeopardized;
- The Council member, his or her relatives, or a business entity in which the member may have an interest, may gain or benefit either directly or indirectly as a result of 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.

A member shall not accept favours or economic benefits from any individuals, organizations, or entities known to be seeking business contracts with the school.

7.0 Duties of Executive and Parent Members

The Chair or Co-Chairs:

Will speak on behalf of the Council

Will consult with Council members

Will preside at Council meetings

Will ensure an agenda is prepared

Will issue and receive correspondence on behalf of the Council

Will appoint Committees where authorized by the membership or executive

Will ensure Council is represented in school activities

Shall be a signing officer

Will ensure preparation of an annual report to be submitted by the Council to the principal and the school board

Will ensure that minutes of the Council meetings are recorded and maintained

Will encourage consensus among School Council members & facilitate the resolution of conflict

Will maintain regular and ongoing communication with the school Principal on behalf of the Council

Will ensure there is regular communication with the school community, beyond those who attend meetings

Will strive to ensure the diversity of the school community is represented on school Council

Will promote teamwork between the school Council, principal and staff

Will ensure notice of upcoming Council meetings is given to the principal in a timely manner so that the principal can provide notice to parents of pupils as required

May undertake such other duties as the Council deems appropriate

The Meeting Facilitator:

May communicate on behalf of the Council

May consult with Council members

May facilitate Council meetings

May prepare the agenda for Council meetings

May facilitate communication between Council and its members and between the principal and members in between meetings

May undertake such other duties as the Council deems appropriate

The Secretary:

Will record and file minutes of all meetings

Shall be a signing officer

Will make reasonable efforts to attend all meetings of Council, and, if he or she is unable to attend, will arrange for another member to record the minutes of that meeting

Will make note of any actions that arise from the Council meetings and identify the responsible individual(s) for each action

Will create an electronic file of the minutes

Will distribute the minutes to the Chair, Co-Chair, Meeting Facilitator and principal

May undertake such other duties as the Council deems appropriate

The Communications Officer:

Will keep an accurate copy of this bylaw and the applicable regulation governing school Councils and make copies available upon request

Will prepare and maintain other documentation as requested by membership or Executive

Will ensure safekeeping of all non-financial records of the Council

Will ensure William Burgess School Council Communications Protocol is adhered to

May undertake such other duties as the Council deems appropriate

The Treasurer:

Will be a signing officer

Will ensure all funds of the Council are properly accounted for

Will disburse funds as authorized by the membership or Executive

Will report on all receipts and disbursements at general meetings

Will ensure proper financial records and books of account are maintained

Will have financial records and books ready for inspection or audit annually

Will draft an annual budget

Will submit an annual financial statement at first Council meeting

Will ensure that another signing officer has access to financial records in the Treasurer's absence

Will follow standard reporting and accounting procedures as per Toronto District School Board guidelines

May undertake such other duties as the Council deems appropriate

A Parent Member May:

Serve in the capacity to be determined by the Council at the time of election and at other times as Council required

Vote on Council business where a vote is required/desired

Participate on committees established by the school Council

Solicit the views of other parents and members of the community to share with the school Council

8.0 Committees

The Council may appoint committees to make recommendations to the Council

The terms of reference of each committee will be specified by the Council at the time the committee is established, or by the committee at its first meeting as the Council decides

All committees will ensure accurate tracking of receipts and follow-up and reporting to the Council in a timely fashion

Every committee must include at least one parent member but may include persons who are not members of the Council

Meetings of committees shall be open to the public and held in a location accessible to the public

The principal shall give written notice of the date, time and location of each committee meeting to parents of pupils enrolled in the school, by giving it to the pupil for delivery to the parent, and posting it in a location at the school accessible to parents

9.0 Working Groups

Working groups may be appointed by Council to further the Council's purposes and may include but are not limited to, such activities as planning particular events, engaging in or coordinating fundraising activities, or engaging in school improvement projects.

Every working group must include at least one parent member but may include persons who are not members of the Council.

When a working group is established, written notice of meetings shall be provided in a forum accessible to all parents

10.0 Financial Matters

The Financial year of the Council will be August 1 to July 31

The Council may raise and spend money to further its purposes, which will be aligned with William Burgess School's best interests

All funds of the Council must be kept on deposit in the name of the Council in a bank or financial institution registered under the Bank Act

The Executive will name at least three signing officers for banking and legal documents. Two signatures will be required on all of these documents. One signing officer must be the principal

The Executive will prepare a budget and present it to the membership for approval before the current budget expires

A treasurer's report will be presented at each monthly meeting

Voting members, through a majority vote at a Council meeting, may appoint an auditor

Council shall keep records of all its financial transactions

11.0 Bylaw Amendments

A Council member may initiate amendments to these bylaws

Council members may, by a majority of not less than 75% of the votes cast, amend the Council's bylaws

Written notice via electronic mail specifying the proposed amendments must be given to the Council members not less than 14 days before the meeting. Written notice will also be posted in a location accessible to Council members and the public

Where there are omissions in the bylaws, in the absence of an amendment, Council will follow relevant regulations, policies and/or guidelines provided by the Ministry of Education and the Toronto District School Board

12.0 Property in Documents

All documents, records, minutes, correspondence, or other papers prepared on behalf of the Council shall be deemed to be property of the Council and shall be turned over to the Chair when the member, executive member, representative, or committee member ceases to perform the task to which the papers relate

Minutes of all school meetings and financial records of all school Council transactions shall be kept securely and available at the school for examination without charge by any person for no less than 7 years. Thereafter, they may be disposed of in a safe manner, i.e. shredded

13.0 Dissolution

In the event of winding up or dissolution of the Council and after payment of all debts and costs of winding up or dissolution the assets and remaining funds of the Council shall be distributed to Wm. Burgess Public School

In the event of winding up or dissolution, all records of the Council shall be given to the principal of Wm. Burgess Public School

Adopted by William Burgess School Council at Toronto, Ontario on _____
mm/dd/yy

Signature of Chair and one other Executive member.

Chair

Executive Member