

RUNNYMEDE PUBLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

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FOREWORD

The purpose of developing a Constitution for the Runnymede Public School Council is to:

- a) Formally constitute the Council;
- b) Establish a statement of purpose for the Council;
- c) Create a structure to conduct the business of the Council in a democratic and equitable manner;
- d) Provide a method to amend the purpose and structure of the Constitution to reflect the natural evolution of the Council.

In essence this is a simple set of rules of conduct for use in the conducting of the business of the Council.

This Constitution provides a platform to:

- 1. Ensure that the Council has been constituted in compliance with and as mandated by the Ministry of Education, as per Regulations 612 and 613, and the Toronto District School Board.
- 2. Ensure that the decisions made by the Council fairly represent and show due regard for the position of its members and the community it serves.

This Constitution will be distributed annually to the parents/guardians of all new children at Runnymede Public School. This Constitution will also be available to staff and parents at all Council meetings.

ARTICLE 1 - NAME

The name of the elected body will be the Runnymede Public School Council.

ARTICLE 2A\ - PURPOSES

The organization will be carried on without purpose of gain for its members, and any profits or other gains to the organization will be used in promoting its objectives.

The purposes of the Council will be:

- a) To promote participation, co-operation, understanding and effective communication within the Runnymede Public School community;
- b) To contribute to the effective delivery of current Runnymede Public School programs and policies;
- c) To provide a forum for Parents/Guardians to recommend action on educational issues to the appropriate bodies and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents;
- d) To raise funds to assist in the delivery of the Council purpose.

ARTICLE 2B\ - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (AS PER Regulations 612 and 613)

School Councils are advisory bodies. The Council will provide advice to and make recommendations to the school principal and where appropriate to the school board on any matters listed below that the Council has identified as priorities:

- local school-year calendar
- school code of behaviour

- curriculum program goals and priorities
- The responses as a school or school board to achievement in provincial and board assessment programs
- Preparation of the school profile
- Selection of principals
- School budget priorities, including local capital improvement plans
- School-community communications strategies
- Methods of reporting to Parents/Guardians in the community
- Extracurricular activities in the school
- School-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational, and nutrition programs
- Community use of school facilities
- Local coordination of services for children and youth
- Development, implementation, and review of the board policies at the local level
- Opening and closing ceremonies including the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance

In addition to its advisory responsibilities, the Council will:

- establish its goals, priorities, and procedures;
- hold a minimum of four (4) general meetings per year open to all members of the school community;
- communicate regularly with members, staff, students and other members of the community to seek their views and preferences with regard to matters being addressed by the Council, and to report on the activities of the Council to the school community;
- promote the best interests of the school community.

ARTICLE 3 - MEMBERSHIP AND VOTING

MEMBERSHIP

Members of the Council will be;

- a) The Principal or designate
- b) At least Two (2) Teachers at the School; at the discretion of Council
- c) At least Seven (7) Parents/Guardians; at the discretion of Council
- d) One (1) Student
- e) One (1) Non-Teaching staff
- f) One (1) Community Representative (Preference but not obligatory-Non-Runnymede Parent)
- g) Past Chair of Council

Parent/Guardian members must always constitute a majority on Council.

MEMBERSHIP DETERMINATION

- Parents/Guardians will be elected by parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school.
- The Chair or Co-Chairs of the Council will be elected by the Council and must be Parent/Guardian members.
- The school principal will be a designated member.
- The teacher representative(s) will be elected by the members of the teaching staff
- The non-teaching staff member will be elected by the members of the non-teaching staff.
- Community representatives(s) will be appointed by Council
- The student representative will be elected by students
- The Past Chair is invited to council meetings as an ex-officio, non voting member.

COUNCIL VOTING

- a) All Council members will have a vote except the Principal (as per Reg. 613.) and the Past Chair

- b) Voting will be conducted as follows:
 - A show of hands or
 - A secret ballot if necessary at the discretion and determination of the Chair or Co-Chairs or by a voted motion of the Council.

ARTICLE 4 - ELECTIONS (as per REG. 612)

- a) A person is qualified to be a parent member of a school council if he or she is a parent/guardian of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.
- b) Despite the above, a person is not qualified to be a parent member of a school council if he or she is employed at the school or 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.
- c) 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.
- d) An election of parent members of a school council shall be held during the first 30 days of each school year, on a date that is fixed by the chair or co-chairs of the school council after consulting with the principal of the school.
- e) The principal of a school will, 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, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school.
- f) The notice of the election may be given by giving such notice to the parent's child for delivery to his or her parent and by posting the notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parents.
- g) The election of parent members will be by secret ballot.

Prior to the Annual General Meeting, the Council will appoint a nominating committee. The nominating committee will seek out candidates and prepare a list of the candidates who have consented to stand as parent/guardian members of Council and such list with appropriate candidate bios will be published with the notice of the Annual General Meeting. Further nominations may be made at the Annual General Meeting. Any and all printed candidate information will be provided at the same time to parents/guardians by the Council via the normal school distribution system.

The Council will appoint a person who is not running for office as the returning officer for the elections.

BY-ELECTIONS

Parent/Guardian by-election(s) may be called at the discretion of Council if a position becomes vacant. Teacher, staff and student representation is the responsibility of their respective constituencies.

TERM OF OFFICE

All council members will sit for one year only ending at the first council meeting following the Annual General Meeting.

ARTICLE 5 - CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Any Member with a financial interest or with the potential of personal benefit (non-monetary) either personally or through an immediate family member, in a matter under the Council's consideration shall declare a conflict of interest at the outset of the discussion. He/she shall neither speak to nor vote on any resolution respecting that matter.

ARTICLE 6 - OFFICERS

The officers of the Council will consist of the following:

- a) Chair or Co-Chair b) Co-Chair c) Secretary d) Treasurer e) Committee Liaison

No person will hold more than one office at the same time and no person will serve in the same office for more than two consecutive years.

ARTICLE 7 - DUTIES OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

The Chair or Co-Chair(s) will be responsible for conducting all Council meetings; will report annually to the school community; will be an ad hoc member of all Council committees; and will perform all other duties required of the office.

The Secretary will keep minutes of Council meetings; have charge of all correspondence of the Executive and the Council; and be responsible for notices of all Council meetings.

The Treasurer, will have overall responsibility for:

- a) Handling of the monies collected and held by or on behalf of the Council;
- b) Keeping of accurate records of all income and expenditures;
- c) Payment of all accounts as authorized or hereinafter set out;
- d) Investment of funds, not required for day-to-day operations, in recognized Canada Deposit Insurance Corporation insured instruments.
- e) Soliciting requests for expenditures from Council members and prepare a proposed list of annual expenditures for Council approval.
- f) Reporting an up-dated Treasurer's report at each general meeting.
- g) Preparation of annual financial report; and the preparation of the annual budget.

The Committee Liaison will facilitate and ensure communication between Committees of Council and the Council itself.

Council members will participate in all meetings and assist the executive in the undertaking of Council responsibilities.

The Principal will act in accordance with Regulation 613 to:

- support and promote the Council's activities;
- seek input from the Council in areas for which it has been assigned advisory responsibility;
- act as a resource on laws, regulations, board policies and collective agreements;
- obtain and provide information required by the Council to enable it to make informed decisions;
- communicate with Council Chair or Co-Chairs as required.

ARTICLE 8 - THE COUNCIL AND ITS OFFICERS

- a) Officers will be elected at the first Council meeting after the Annual General Meeting.
- b) Any Officer vacancy may be filled by another member of Council or by a new election to the Council
- c) A quorum of the Council will be seven of its members at least one of whom is a member of the executive
- d) Meetings of the Council will be called by the Chair or Co-Chair(s).
- e) Notice of all Council meetings requires five (5) days prior notification.

- f) Council members should attend meetings regularly. Absence for more than three consecutive meetings would enable the Council, at its discretion, to declare a position vacant and to provide for a by-election. (Article 3)
- g) The Committee Liaison will prepare and maintain a list of all the committees and chairpersons of such committees and their phone numbers.
- h) The Secretary will be responsible for posting minutes of meetings and on the Council bulletin board.

ARTICLE 9 - FINANCES

The Council may prescribe from time to time the method of receiving and expending monies of the Council save that:

- a) All expenditures will be approved by the Council. Expenditures may be approved in the following manner: Council's decision to hold a fundraiser conveys implicit approval to pay the related expenditures; once Council approves a budget; no further approval for budgeted items is required. Exceptions will be expenditures \$150.00 or less and will be approved by the Chair or Co-Chair and by the Treasurer.
- b) Signing officers for all bank accounts must be approved by Council;
- c) All cheques of the Council must be signed by at least two officers (one being the Treasurer) after examining any supporting invoices or other documentation; and
- d) All Council bank accounts will include monthly bank statements with appropriate cancelled cheques.
- e) Any Council member may, by appointment, review the books and other records in the possession of the Treasurer.

ARTICLE 10 - COUNCIL SPENDING OBJECTIVES

- a) To spend the greatest proportion of Council funds on projects which collectively, over the long term benefit the largest number of students.
- b) To only utilize funds when there are insufficient funds available from other sources, including the Principal and the School board.

ARTICLE 11 - MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

- a) Meetings of the Council will be held as needed and there will be a minimum of four (4) meetings annually.
- b) Meetings may be attended by any interested person. Only Council members will be permitted to vote on any matter.
- c) Written notice of meetings of the Council will be sent to the members at least five school days prior to the date of the meeting. At least ten days prior notice must be given of the Annual General meeting. All such notices will set out a comprehensive agenda, that will identify voting and discussion issues and time allocated for each item.
- d) A meeting of the Council must have a quorum of seven voting members present, at least one of whom is a member of the executive.
- e) The Annual General Meeting of the Council will be held 5 – 10 days before the election of new council members which must occur during the first 30 days of each school year as per Reg. 612. The agenda will include:
 - 1) the report of the Treasurer;
 - 2) the Chair or Co-Chairs' Annual Report;
 - 3) the report of the Committees of Council;
 - 4) nominations for new council members.
- f) At the first meeting of the new school Council the agenda will include:
 - 1) the election of the Officers of the Council;

- 2) an introduction to the committees of the previous year by past chairs or committee member;
- 3) striking of Council committees;
- 4) Financial Report.
- g) Any member of the school community can add an item to the next meeting's agenda, with regard to the time and interests of others who wish to raise topics, by informing the Council Executive of topic and time required.
- h) In the event that a member of the school community can not attend a meeting and wishes to provide input on a specific agenda item, a letter not exceeding two pages in length can be submitted to the Council Executive no later than 12:00 noon the day of the meeting and will be read at the appropriate time at that meeting.
- i) In the event that a specific subject matter is of great enough concern that its discussion can not be satisfactorily handled within normal meeting times, the Chair will invite deputations at a special meeting. All deputations will be heard but limited to a time of five (5) minutes only.
- j) Any member of the school community can raise any non-agenda issue during the 'other business' time at general meetings.
- k) The Council members can vote on any motion. The exception will be the Chair who will only vote in the event of a tie.
- l) In the event of a controversy, Robert's Rules will govern the proceedings at all meetings of the Council.

ARTICLE 12 - COUNCIL MEMBER COMMITMENT

The incoming Council Members will accept and honour this Constitution and its amendments as its governing mandate.

ARTICLE 13 - AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Amendments to the Constitution may be made at any full meeting of the Council provided the same are approved by at least two-thirds of the Parent/Guardian members of the Council.

Motions to amend can be introduced at any meeting with final vote at the next meeting. Notice of proposed amendments will be given with the notice of the meeting duly given in accordance with Article 11 (c).

ARTICLE 14 - RIGHTS OF COUNCIL & ADMINISTRATION

It is recognized and understood that the Constitution of the Runnymede Public School Council has been constituted for the purpose of providing an operational framework for the Council to conduct its business.

In the event that the Principal and the members of Council have a difference of opinion regarding Board policy, Ministry guidelines or governing rights, the Council will seek clarification by reference to Regulations 612 and 613 or to the Ministry of Education and Training, or the Toronto District School Board.

ARTICLE 15 - COMMITTEES

This Constitution defines committees as those established by the Council.

A. COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Council committees will conform to and will be accountable to the Council as follows:

Committee Creation & Naming:

Pre-established committees will be struck in September at the first meeting of the Council. The committee's name and intent will be agreed to by the Council at that time and adhered to thereafter. It is hoped that a past committee member (where applicable) will speak to the Committee's purpose and past activities.

New committees as required can be established and struck by the Council throughout the year

Purpose:

To assist the Council in the undertaking and achievement of the Council's purpose and objectives.

Membership & Voting:

- a) Membership of each committee will be limited to 12 parent/guardian members.
- b) Membership will be on a volunteer basis and representative of the diversity of our school.
- c) In the event that more than 12 people request to be part of a committee, the committee may continue to operate until the next Council meeting, at which time the Committee Chair will make a request of the Council to expand membership of the committee.
- d) Members may join a committee at any time in the school year.
- e) Each member will be entitled to vote at committee.
- f) Members have a term of one school year.
- g) A teaching or administrative staff may be appointed as a representative on each Council committee as a full voting member at the discretion of the Principal. To do so will not alter the committee size as indicated in a) above.

Committee Operation:

- a) Each committee will designate at least one person to chair for the year.
- b) Activity and financial plans for each committee will be presented to the Council at the first general meeting following the establishment of the committee.
- c) Meetings can be scheduled at any time at the discretion of the committee chair.
- d) Items may be put on the committee's agenda through the chair.
- e) Sub-committees can be struck by a committee and are accountable to the committee and therefore the Council as is the case for all committees.
- f) Notice of committee meetings will be posted on the Council bulletin board and included in the Principal's newsletter five school days prior to the meeting.
- g) Minutes shall be kept by the committee chair or designate.

Committee Dissolution:

All committees will be dissolved at the Annual General Meeting.

All committees will be subject to dissolution by the Council when and if

- 1. Their purpose for creation no longer reflects the purpose of the Council or
- 2. They exhibit continued disregard for the established Articles of the Council's Constitution.

Any member of the Council who believes that a Committee has not shown due regard can inform the Council in writing. The Council will investigate the complaint and if valid, will provide the Committee with notice of same.

A decision to dissolve a committee will be determined by the Council after and only after due notice is given in line with Article 11.

Reporting Responsibilities:

- a) Committee chair or delegated representative will report on their activities at each Council meeting.
- b) Committee chair or delegated representative will provide notice of future meetings at each Council meeting.
- c) Actual and planned financial expenditures (if using association funds) will be provided to the Council treasurer on a monthly basis.
- d) Minutes of each committee meeting will be provided within a reasonable period prior to the next month's meeting and will be;
 - Posted on the Council Bulletin Board
 - Placed in the office binder.
 - Submitted to the Council
- e) Any and all initiatives/recommendations, written or oral from Council Committees will be submitted to the Council for approval and through them to the Principal for consideration.
- f) Any parent can contact any committee member verbally or by letter, with questions or input on issues being considered by a committee and all signed correspondence will be part of the record of the committee and therefore the Council.
- g) All signed correspondence to and from a Committee will be open and readily accessible to any member of the Council or members of the school community
- h) Any members of the school community may attend any Council committee meeting as an observer. An observer will be defined as one who attends 'to observe' with no privilege to participate in discussion or vote.