

ÉCOLE ROBERT H. SMITH PARENT COUNCIL

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

1. NAME

The name of the Parent Council shall be École Robert H. Smith School Parent Council.

2. CODE OF CONDUCT

All Parent Council members shall:

- a) Ensure that all activities support the well-being of students as the primary focus of all decisions;
- b) Comply with Winnipeg School Division policies including the Code of Conduct
- c) Uphold the Constitution and in the absence of provisions in this Constitution/By-Law, "Robert's Rules of Order" will be followed.
- d) Perform their duties with honesty and integrity;
- e) Advocate on behalf of students;
- f) Be punctual and in regular attendance;
- g) Be prepared to listen and to respect the ideas expressed;
- h) Operate in a collegial manner with fellow members and administration;
- i) Seek to make equitable decisions;
- j) Ensure that items dealing with the disclosure of, personal or financial information about a parent or matters related to the lunch program; negotiations with employees, are discussed in confidence;
- k) Demonstrate discretion and confidentiality with respect to information;
- l) act respectfully towards others who may have differing opinions; be supportive of decisions adopted by the majority;
- m) Refrain from the use of offensive language;
- n) Respect the decision of the Chair on points of order.
- o) The Parent Council shall not be used for commercial purposes, or for partisan politics, and it shall not distribute information that is not in accordance with WSD policies and objectives of the Parent Council.

3. PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Parent Council is to enhance educational programs by:

- Fostering a positive, collaborative relationship with the school administration, staff members and parents.
- Promoting effective communication between the school, home and community.
- Encouraging all parents to take an active role to enhance the educational lifelong learning process.
- Involving parents/guardians to support educational opportunities for children.
- Providing input in the development of the Code of Conduct and WSD policies.
- Providing input with respect to identifying the needs of the school for vacancies of school Principals.
- Providing input where a significant change is contemplated for a school or school program.

- Providing input and participate in fundraising activities and have the opportunity to be involved in the organization and operation of major fundraising projects initiated by the school.
- Initiating and coordinate fundraising projects in consultation and with the approval of the school Principal where staff and students are involved and provide an accounting of spending from the fundraising projects.
- Initiating proposals for funding from outside organizations in consultation with, and the approval of, the school Principal.
- Any funds acquired by the Parent Council shall be used only for the benefit of students and staff of École Robert. H. Smith School. There shall be no fundraising on behalf of outside organizations.
- Providing input on community access to facilities.
- Providing input on the annual budget for the school division.
- Providing input on the annual school plan.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- All parents/guardians/caregivers as identified on student registration whose children attend École Robert H. Smith School shall be voting members.
- The Principal or designate are non-voting members of the Parent Council. The Principal or designate shall serve as a resource member and act as a liaison between staff and community through the Parent Council and shall be responsible to ensure all Parent Council activities are in alignment with the Winnipeg School Division policies and procedures.
- School staff representative(s) shall be non-voting members of the Parent Council and shall be selected by administration.
- Members of the school community who are not parents/guardians of students currently in the school may attend meetings as non-voting members.

5. THE PARENT COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

- The Executive shall consist of an elected Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer to be elected at the first Council meeting at the Annual General Meeting in September.
- The role of the Executive is to carry out specific duties as outlined in section 5. All Parent Council activities and decisions must be approved at Parent Council meetings.
- Executive positions can run consecutive terms (September to June) as long as the membership continues to nominate and elect that member in each election year.

6. POSITIONS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS

6.1 The Role of the Chair:

- Shall prepare an agenda in consultation with school administration for all meetings.
- Shall preside at all meetings of the Parent Council.
- Shall call the meeting to order on time or as soon as a quorum is present. If no quorum is present within ½ hour of the stated meeting time, the meeting will be cancelled or informal discussions held.
- Shall announce each item of business as it arises and call on the proper person to speak.
- Shall ensure that a motion is stated clearly before allowing discussion.
- Shall recognize members who are entitled to the floor.

- Shall call for a vote on motions for final decision by the Parent Council.
- In order to expedite the conduct of business and provide opportunity for all members to participate, the Chair shall:
 - Keep a speaking list and announce the list periodically.
 - Ensure efficient and orderly progression through the agenda.
 - Ensure the discussion is on topic.
 - Ensure all members have the opportunity to participate and that no one or more members dominates the proceedings.
 - Shall maintain order, proper conduct and decorum during the meeting.
 - In the absence of provisions in this Constitution/By-Law, "Robert's Rules of Order" will be followed.
 - Clearly state the motion or topic of consideration and ensure members are ready for the vote or that consensus has been reached, then move on to another topic.
- Shall take such action or ensure that such actions are taken by others to achieve the objectives and purpose of the organization.
- Shall be a signing officer.
- Shall be the official spokesperson for the Parent Council at school events.
- Shall conduct business with respect to the rights and obligations of each member.
- Shall prepare any Parent Council news to be included in the school's regular communications.
- Shall provide all files/records to the school any and all materials relating to the Parent Council in their possession at the end of their term of office to the Principal.
- Shall ensure the Treasurer submits financial statements to the Principal for review.
- Shall be responsible for the management of the Chair's email.

6.2 The Role of Vice Chair:

- Shall chair all meetings in the absence of the Chair. In the absence of both these Officers, Parent Council shall elect an acting Chair.
- Shall assume the position of Chair in the event of the resignation of the Chair on an interim basis not to exceed three months.
- Shall take such action or ensure that such actions are taken by others to achieve the objectives and purpose of the organization.
- Shall conduct business with respect to the rights and obligations of each member.
- Shall be a signing officer.
- Shall be responsible for the management of the Vice-Chair's email.

6.3 The Role of the Secretary:

- Shall record the minutes of all meetings for approval at the next meeting and file a copy of the approved minutes with the school.
- Shall be responsible to provide the draft minutes to the Chair and Principal for review, within 10 business days following the meeting.
- Shall keep a copy of the Constitution, and a permanent record of activities of the Parent Council during their time of office and deliver to their successor in office all official correspondence and records.
- Shall coordinate sending a note home in beginning of September with calendar of events.

- Shall coordinate sending a note home in May with a review of the year and AGM/elections notice.
- Shall prepare Monthly meeting Sign In Sheets/Agendas on printed letterhead.
- Shall post approved minutes online with assistance from school support staff.
- Shall manage the École Robert H. Smith School Parent Council email.
- Shall share information about events from community with Parent Council Email Distribution List.
- Shall keep all standard correspondence, policies and administrative content as well as a copy of all meeting minutes in the school office.
- Shall be a signing officer.
- Shall be responsible for the management of the Secretary's email.

6.4 The Role of the Treasurer:

- Shall provide a current official statement from the financial institution at the end of each year.
- Shall present a statement of account and balance sheet to the Annual General Meeting for approval.
- A copy of the approved statement of account and a copy of the balance sheet should be filed at the school.
- Shall be responsible for and reporting on the accounts of the organization.
- Shall be a signing officer on all accounts.
- Shall maintain good record keeping of all financial activities of the Parent Council using acceptable accounting standards.
- Shall prepare and make available a financial report for each meeting.
- Shall ensure that another financial signing officer has access to the books and banking papers in the event of their absence.
- Shall prepare a monthly financial statement for approval by the Parent Council.
- Shall ensure all funds collected through fundraising activities are deposited at a banking institution immediately after or as soon as possible after each event.
- Shall provide the school any and all materials relating to the Parent Council that are in their possession at the end of their term of office.
- Shall be responsible for the management of the Treasurer's email

7. ELECTIONS

- The election of members to the Executive shall take place at the Annual General Meeting which is held the last Thursday of September each school year.
- The elections shall consist of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer for the ensuing year.
- For all meetings a minimum of 8 voting members must be present to constitute a quorum.
- Voting shall be done by ballot where two or more nominations are being considered.
- Terms of office for all Executive positions shall commence on the first day of October.
- Notice of an election and vacant positions shall be sent out not later than June of each school year.
- A list of nominees shall be posted at the Annual General Meeting. Nominations from the floor will be accepted at the Annual General Meeting.

- The term of office of the elected members shall be 1 year.
- Only parents/guardians of children registered in the school at the time of the Annual General Meeting shall be eligible for election.
- The eligible voters for the elections shall be in accordance with Section 3 (Membership) of the constitution.
- Eligible voters must be present at the Annual General Meeting to participate in the election unless previous arrangements to participate through electronic means have been agreed upon by the Chair in an emergency situation. Nominees must be present at the Annual Meeting unless previous arrangements to participate through electronic means have been agreed upon due to an emergency.
- All meetings shall be conducted efficiently and with fairness to the members present.
- The Parent Council shall appoint two scrutineers who are non-voting members to examine and count the ballots of each vote taken and report the results to the presiding officer.
- To be elected into an executive position, a nominee requires more than one-half of the votes of the members present.
- Where on any vote for an executive position there are more than two nominees, and no nominee receives more than one-half of the votes of those members present, the name of the nominee who received the least number of votes shall be struck off the list of nominees and a further vote shall be taken.
- In the event of a tie vote in electing an executive position, the members of the Parent Council present shall determine by lot who shall cast the deciding ballot.
- The voting/ratification procedure at the elections will be by a show of hands or by secret ballot if anyone objects to a show of hands. A simple majority will elect.

8. RESIGNATIONS/VACANCIES

- If an executive member finds that they are unable to perform their duties midterm, they shall notify the Parent Council in writing with a minimum of two (2) weeks' notice.
- Any elected member who is not performing their duties as stipulated in the by-laws, will be asked by the Chair to resign from their position. The said member shall have the right to appeal at a Parent Council meeting.
- If the matter relates to the Chair the Vice-Chair will assume the duties of the Chair.
- The absence of any executive member from three (3) consecutive Parent Council meetings, without notification, will constitute a vacancy.
- Vacancies of the executive members before an annual meeting shall be filled by an election for the duration of the term.

9. QUORUM

For all meetings a minimum of 8 voting members must be present to constitute a quorum.

Arrangements may be made for a member to participate in a regular meeting through electronic means to achieve quorum and that member shall be deemed to be present at the meeting. The electronic means shall include teleconferencing and videoconferencing. Members must make a request in writing to the Chair 24 hours prior to the meeting.

10. REGULAR MEETINGS

- The Parent Council will strive to hold regular monthly meetings with a minimum of five meetings held within the school year.
- Regular meetings shall be held on dates agreed upon at the first Parent Council meeting of the year.
- Regular meetings may be called by the Chair or upon the request of at least eight (8) voting members.
- All parents/guardians shall be notified of the Parent Council meeting at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance.

11. SPECIAL MEETING

A Special meeting shall be called by the Chair upon receipt of a request of eight (8) members in writing, setting forth the reason which shall be stated in the notice and shall deal only with business stipulated in the request. All members of Parent Council must be notified at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance.

12. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- The first Parent Council meeting of the school year is the Annual General Meetings (AGM).
- All Parents are invited to the AGM.
- Notification of a general meeting shall take place in advance and shall include details of the meeting (i.e. slate of nominees or specific amendments to the Constitution).
- Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be posted at least four (4) weeks prior to the meeting. Election of Parent Council Executive positions for the ensuing year shall be held at the Annual General Meeting in September.

13. AGENDA

- The Chair or designate will conduct the meetings according to the agenda. All items to be discussed must appear on the agenda.
- Any member may request that an item be added to the agenda by advising the Chair at least two days in advance of a meeting, if possible.
- A matter that is not included in the agenda may be added to the agenda at the beginning of the meeting at a regular meeting if a majority of the members present agree to do so.
- Agenda for Parent Council meetings may include the following topics:
 - a) Call to Order
 - b) Approval of the Agenda
 - c) Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting
 - d) Reports
 - i) Principal's Report
 - ii) Chair's Report
 - iii) Treasurer's Report
 - iv) Committee Reports
 - e) Previous Business
 - f) New Business
 - g) Next Meeting Date

h) Adjournment

14. STANDING COMMITTEES

Standing Committees may be established as required consisting of parent representatives such as: Fun Lunch, Promotions & Fundraising, Volunteer Recruitment and Activities, Picnic, Environment, Family Dance, Staff Appreciation.

The responsibilities of the Standing Committees will be identified and approved at the Annual General Meeting. Regular updates will be provided to the Parent Council for information and decisions as necessary.

The Parent Council will appoint a representative to the WSD South District Advisory Committee, and the WSD French Immersion Advisory Committee.

15. MOTIONS

- Before any motion is considered, every motion, shall be moved, seconded and stated by the Chair after which it shall be accepted, rejected, withdrawn or otherwise disposed of only by a vote of the present members
- The member who moved a motion may withdraw it from consideration before a vote is commenced and provided no other member present objects to it being withdrawn.
- If there are amendments to a motion, they are dealt with in the same way as the motion. The wording of the amendment must pertain to the wording in the actual motion - that is, you can amend a motion by adding words at the end, inserting words, deleting words and/or substituting other words in their place.
- Prior to a motion or amendment being voted on, the Chair may wish to have the motion read by the secretary.
- The amendment is voted on and the motion (as amended) (or not amended) is voted on.
- The Chair shall have the motion read to the Parent Council and declaring the result of the vote as carried or defeated or that the Committee has agreed by consensus, ensures that the secretary and all Parent Council members are aware of what were the results.
- A motion, other than an appeal from a ruling of the Chair, shall be defeated on a tie vote.

16. VOTING

- All parents/guardians are eligible to be voting members. No proxy voting will be allowed.
- Arrangements may be made for a member to participate in a regular meeting through electronic means to achieve quorum and that member shall be deemed to be present at the meeting. The electronic means shall include teleconferencing and videoconferencing. Members must make a request in writing to the Chair 24 hours prior to the meeting.
- All voting shall be done by a show of hands or by a secret ballot if so desired.
- All motions shall be decided by a majority vote of the members present.
- Majority vote is determined by quorum (one half of the total number plus 1), unless otherwise provided for herein, shall be valid and shall bind the Parent Council.
- Prior to the vote being taken, the Chair should have the motion read to the Committee. The Chair should call the vote: - "All those in favour" - "All those opposed"
- The Chair may vote with the other members on all motions, and any motion on which there is an equality of votes shall be deemed to be defeated.

- The Chair shall declare the result of all votes.
- Other voting methods, such as general (unanimous) consent or a consent agenda may be utilized, when appropriate.

17. POINTS OF ORDER

- A member may bring a departure from the rules of order to the attention of the Chair by raising a point of order. (A breach of the rules of order under this by-law)
- A member may interrupt another member to raise a point of order.
- The point of order shall be clearly stated, with reference to the particular rule that has been breached.

18. APPEAL THE RULINGS OF THE CHAIR

- The Chair shall decide on the point of order without debate.
- When the Chair is called upon to decide a point of order or practice, they shall give their decision, and shall state the rule applicable to the case without argument or comment, subject to an appeal.
- An appeal of the ruling of the Chair can be made by any member. If this appeal is seconded, the vote on the appeal shall be taken without debate and decided by a majority of the members present, except the mover may explain the reason for appeal and the Chair may explain the reasons for the ruling.

19. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Where, during any meeting, there arises a matter in which a parent/guardian or their dependent has a direct or indirect financial gain or loss; the parent/guardian shall disclose the general nature of the direct or indirect financial gain or loss and withdraw from the meeting without voting or participating in the discussion and refrain at all times from attempting to influence the matter.

20. FINANCIAL AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- All funds will be deposited in an École Robert H. Smith School Parent Council Bank Account.
- All disbursements must be made by cheque.
- All expenditures must be approved by the Parent Council.
- All requests for funds must detail the purpose and the amount requested.
- Signing authority for cheques shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer and school administrator in an emergency.
- Request for major finances must be presented to Parent Council with a written quote, estimate, or detailed outline of items required to purchase for approval at a regular meeting. Expenditures - all disbursements of funds shall be made by cheques drawn on the Parent Council account and must be accompanied by an original invoice or receipt.
- All Parent Council activities and events will be financed through social activities, fundraising, grants and donations.
- The Parent Council may request support from the Principal for costs (printing and supplies) related to Parent Council meetings, if applicable.

- The school will be given a determined amount of fundraising monies and in return, the Parent Council requires a complete record of expenditures with copies of receipts, when possible.
- All monies received must be accompanied by an official statement outlining where the funds came from. In turn, a receipt will be issued upon receipt of these funds.
- The Parent Council's fiscal year is August 1 to July 31.
- The Parent Council will retain the services of a professional accountant to conduct an official Audit every second year as required.
- Parent Council will not reimburse unauthorized expenditures.
- The Executive has the authority to allocate funds in an emergency situation prior to a Parent Council meeting providing that an official receipt is presented to the Parent Council at the next meeting.
- That the Parent council report all fundraising activities as required under the Income Tax Act.

21. PUBLIC RELATIONS

No member of the Parent Council shall make a public statement, or issue a formal statement on behalf of the Parent Council regarding a school matter except with the consent of the Principal or designate.

22. RECORD KEEPING

Parent Council communications and record keeping methods and tools, including the use of websites, social media, and digital file sharing systems, shall be reviewed and approved by the Principal each September to ensure they are in accordance with WSD policy.

23. DISSOLUTION

- Notice of motion must have been given at the previous regular meeting and must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of its members present at the time of the vote.
- In the event of dissolution and following payment of all outstanding debts, disbursement of remaining funds will be discussed at the final Parent Council meeting.
- In the event of dissolution of the Parent Council, all records of the organization shall be placed under the jurisdiction of the Principal of the School.
- The funds shall be turned over to the school Principal to use as recommended by the members of the Parent Council.

24. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

- Amendments to the Constitution may be made at any regular meeting at which business is conducted providing:
 - The proposed amendment is consistent with current WSD Policies, and has been approved in consultation with the Principal.
 - A minimum of fourteen (14) days written notice of the meeting has been given.
 - The notice of the meeting including notice of the specific amendment proposed.
- A two-thirds (2/3) majority of those in attendance will be required to amend the Constitution.