



School Councils – Leadership Guide

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Guide for School Council Members – Ontario Ministry of Education



This comprehensive guide has been developed to help school council members fulfill their mandate in the most effective and efficient ways.

Material for this guide has been extracted from the Ministry of Education, *School Councils, A Guide for Members*. The guide can be found at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/council02.pdf>

Practical tips are offered by TVPIC School Council members. School council members should use this guide as a resource.

School councils play a vital role in the education system in Ontario. They provide a forum through which parents¹ and other members of school communities can contribute to improving student achievement and school performance.

In 2000-2001, the Ontario government took significant steps to ensure that parents, through their school councils, would have greater influence in their children's education. New regulations were created that confirm the advisory role of school councils and clearly state that their purpose is to improve student achievement and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents.

The partnership of school and community representatives on a school council helps to build mutual understanding and interaction between a school and its community, resulting in benefits for both. By giving information to parents and community representatives, getting feedback from them, and presenting their views to the school and the school board, a school council involves the community in the discussion of educational issues and helps the school identify and respond to the educational needs of the community.

Membership on a school council also benefits the individuals involved. The personal advantages of becoming a school council member include:

- being an important partner in the education system, whose views are valued;
- contributing to the shared goal of improving student achievement;
- having a vehicle through which to express opinions;
- being able to keep informed about what is happening at the school and the board, and at the provincial level of education.

Participating on the school council will be a rewarding experience for all those who value the opportunity to make a difference in their children's education.

Parent Involvement Committees

The PIC acts as a direct link for parents to the director of education and the board of trustees. The PIC participates at the board level to support, encourage, and enhance the engagement of parents in improving student achievement and well-being. The PIC does this by providing information and advice to the board on parent engagement, communicating with and supporting school councils, and undertaking activities to help parents support their children's learning at home and at school. The manner in which a PIC achieves these goals depends on the local needs of its board and community, and on how the PIC is organized.

School councils are local bodies that support improved student achievement and well-being through the

involvement of parents and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. They advise principals and, where appropriate, school boards on issues affecting education programs and the operation of individual schools. School councils focus on increasing parent involvement within the school community as a key factor in improving student achievement and well-being.

To achieve this goal, school councils work with the school principal to create a welcoming environment, increase opportunities for parents to provide input on and respond to school and board initiatives, identify barriers to parents' engagement in their children's education, and implement strategies to overcome the barriers.

Ontario's Parent Engagement Policy

Introduced in 2010, Ontario's parent engagement policy, as set out in the document *Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools*, articulates a vision of parent engagement in Ontario schools. The policy recognizes that parent involvement is multi dimensional and that parents have a role to play in fulfilling each of Ontario's core priorities for educational excellence. The policy identifies four key strategies designed to support parents as partners so that they have the opportunity – and the knowledge, skills, and tools – to work together with all education partners and contribute fully to the success of Ontario's students and our education system.

Ontario's Vision of Parent Engagement In Ontario's education system, all partners acknowledge the positive impact of parent engagement on student achievement. Students are supported and inspired to learn in a culture of high expectations in which parents:

- ♦ are welcomed, respected, and valued by the school community as partners in their children's learning and development;

- ♦ have opportunities to be involved, and also a full range of choices about how to be involved, in the to support student success;
- ♦ are engaged through ongoing communication and dialogue with other educational partners to support a positive learning environment at home and at school;
- ♦ are supported with the information and tools necessary to participate in school life.

Equally important, the policy acknowledges that developing effective parent engagement practices and programs requires action on the part of education partners at every level of the education system.

Accordingly, it sets out actions for schools, school boards, and the Ministry of Education that will, individually and collectively, contribute to realizing Ontario's vision for parent engagement across the province educational community.

SCHOOL COUNCIL PURPOSE - TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND ENHANCE THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM TO PARENTS.

Ontario Education Act Regulation – School Councils

Regulation 612/00 confirms that school councils are advisory bodies and clearly states that they may make recommendations to their principals or school boards on any matter.

School Council Purpose;

(1) The purpose of school councils is, through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents.

(2) A school council's primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations in accordance with this Regulation to the principal of the school and the board that established the council.

School councils are able to make recommendations to their principals and school boards on any matter.

Principals and school boards, in turn, must consult with school councils on a variety of matters that affect student learning. They must also consider recommendations made by school councils and report back to the councils on how they plan to act on their advice.

Incorporation Regulation 612/00 prohibits school councils from being incorporated. A school council already belongs to a corporation, that being the district school board that established the council. School councils are advisory groups to their principals or to their boards; they have been established to provide one way for parents to express opinions about how to improve student achievement and to ensure that parents can actively participate in the education of their children at the local level. This mandate does not require any additional legal status.

School Council Topics/ Areas of Focus

- ☐ School growth plan (School Improvement Plan)
- ☐ School code of conduct(reviewed and/or revised)
- ☐ School Dress Code(reviewed and/or revised)
- ☐ School council bylaws, School council election procedures (reviewed and/or revised)
- ☐ Determine use of Base Mobilization and Outreach Funds (Parent Involvement Funds)
- ☐ School program and curriculum priorities
- ☐ Healthy schools and student nutrition
- ☐ Safe school issues and/or strategies
- ☐ School budget
- ☐ School timetabling, scheduling , staffing
- ☐ Student achievement and provincial assessment(EQAO, math and literacy testing)
- ☐ School council profile, principal profile, vice-principal profile
- ☐ Provide input to TVDSB policies, procedures
- ☐ Community Use of School Facilities
- ☐ Developing & promoting communication strategies,
- ☐ Preparation/revision of school profile or website
- ☐ Extracurricular activities in the school (sports, clubs, etc)
- ☐ School accommodation (closures, additions, student enrollment, etc)
- ☐ School facilities and grounds

HOW DO SCHOOL COUNCILS ACHIEVE THE MANDATE?

Consultation with Parents

Regulation 612/00 clearly directs school councils to consult with parents of students enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by the council. It is therefore expected that any advice provided to the school principal or school board will be based on the general views of the school community and the best interests of all students in the school.

“To consult” means to seek advice, to confer, to discuss, or to deliberate on the views and opinions held by others. In the spirit of the regulations regarding school councils, there are clear expectations that all partners be consulted:

- School boards and principals are to seek advice from their school councils.
- School councils are to seek input from the parents of their school community about matters under their consideration

Staying Focused on the Mandate

While school councils play a significant role, it is important that they act within the scope of the duties that are outlined in the provincial regulations and policies.

It is important that school councils maintain a broad focus on a range of issues of school-wide concern.

As specified in the regulation, school councils can provide advice to the principal and the board on any matter. It should be noted, however, that they are not authorized to perform managerial or administrative responsibilities that belong to the principal or to other school administrators. For example, assessing teacher performance in the classroom is the responsibility of principals and superintendents, who are granted this authority under the Education Act.

Effective school councils are those that:

- ✓ focus on student learning and the best interests of all students;
- ✓ are actively involved in setting school priorities for improving student achievement;
- ✓ promote meaningful parental and community involvement and actively seek the views of their school communities;
- ✓ have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities;
- ✓ include members who represent the diverse views of their school communities;
- ✓ keep well informed about school and board policies and procedures;
- ✓ have clear and consistent processes for decision making;
- ✓ communicate with the community about their activities;
- ✓ maintain high ethical standards;
- ✓ have members who have developed mutual trust and respect for one another

From time to time, a school council may encounter the particularly difficult situation in which a council member demands that the council devote all of its attention and energy to a single issue. In some cases, the member’s passion for the issue may be counterproductive to the council’s efforts to achieve its goals. Despite such challenges, members should try to focus their energy on fulfilling their mandate.

Effective School Councils

Consultation with Parents by School Councils

One of a school council's main purposes is to share information with parents and the community and to seek their ideas and views about matters under consideration by the council. When and how this happens depends on the issues before the council. The impact of issues before council will vary – from having no direct or indirect impact on the students in the school to affecting all students in the school. The issue before the council will determine when it is appropriate to consult with parents and the community. Some issues may only require that information be provided to the school community. Other issues may require obtaining a formal position from the school community.

Any one or a combination of the following suggestions might be suitable methods of consultation and response:

- Hold a town-hall-style meeting to discuss issues and present information.
- Ask for input by distributing a survey, or send home a newsletter with a tear-off response form to be returned to the school. Hold focus group meetings at various times to ensure that all parents also have the opportunity to participate.
- Post information and requests for feedback on the school website.

School Council Membership

Ideally, the membership of the school council will reflect the diversity of its school community. Parents and guardians must form the majority of members on the council. Ontario Regulation 612/00 establishes that a school council will consist of the following members:

- ✓ a majority of parents,
- ✓ the principal or vice-principal of the school

- ✓ one teacher employed in the school, other than the principal or vice-principal
- ✓ one non-teaching employee of the school one student, in the case of secondary schools (optional for elementary schools)
- ✓ one or more community representatives appointed by the elected council
- ✓ one person appointed by an association that is a member of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations

All council members are encouraged to be familiar with their council's expectations of members and be prepared to make a commitment to conduct the council's business in a professional manner.

Roles and Responsibilities of School Council Members

Accepting the role of school council member carries with it certain responsibilities. Each school council may define the roles and responsibilities of its members in its operating bylaws. These operating bylaws may include the expectation that members attend council meetings regularly.

School Council Parent Representatives

Parent members. A parent member is one who is a parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the school.

Parent representatives are voting members who:

- ♦ participate on any committees established by the school council;
- ♦ contribute to the discussions of the school council;
- ♦ solicit the views of other parents and members of the community to share with the school council;
- ♦ observe the council's code of ethics and established bylaws.

Representative of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations,

The representative of one of these organizations is a voting member who:

- contributes to the discussions of the school council;
- represents the views of his or her association;
- may participate on any committees established by the school council;
- communicates information back to his or her association;
- observes the council's code of ethics and established bylaws.

Elections are held at the beginning of the school year to ensure that even parents who are new to the school community, such as those with children just entering Junior or Senior Kindergarten, or those with children just entering secondary school, will be able to participate in the election of their representatives on the school council. This provision also gives them the opportunity to be considered for election as parent members of their school councils

A board employee who works at the school his or her child attends is not eligible to serve as a parent member on the council. Board employees who do not work at the school their children attend may be elected as parent members as long as they notify the other parents that they are employed by the school board prior to their election.

Elections and Term of Office

Ontario Regulation 612/00 also addresses the term of office of school council members and the need for elections to be held annually, within the first thirty calendar days of the start of the school year. Elections must be held within this time-frame. These changes ensure that any parent who is interested in the school council election process or in participating as a member on the school council has the opportunity to do so.

Remuneration

School council members will not be paid for their work on a school council. However, each board, in consultation with the school council, must develop reimbursement policies regarding the expenses of school council members incurred as part of school council business.

School Council

Note: A school council's operating bylaws may outline other specific duties for the chair/co-chairs, as well as for other officers of the council, such as a secretary or treasurer.

The Chairperson /Co-Chairs A chair or co-chair of a school council must be a parent member of the council.

The chair/co-chairs of the council are elected by the council members and must be a parent or parents who are not employed by the school board.⁶The chair/co-chairs are voting members who, in addition to performing the same duties as other council members, might:

- ♦ arrange for meetings;
- ♦ prepare agendas;
- ♦ chair council meetings;
- ♦ ensure that minutes of council meetings are recorded and maintained;
- ♦ facilitate the resolution of conflict;
- ♦ participate as ex-officio members of all committees established by the school council;
- ♦ communicate with the school principal on behalf of the council.

Note: A school council's operating bylaws may outline other specific duties for the chair/co-chairs, as well as for other officers of the council, such as a secretary or treasurer.

The Role of the Chairperson/Co-Chairs

The chair's role in maximizing the effectiveness of meetings is crucial. Here are some additional tips for those who are chairing council meetings:

- ✓ Start and end each meeting on time.
- ✓ Keep opening remarks welcoming but brief.
- ✓ Introduce any guests, being sure to include all those presenting agenda items.
- ✓ Review the agenda with council members.
- ✓ Outline what is to be accomplished.
- ✓ Keep to the agenda and the time-lines. If new business items are raised that cannot be properly discussed at the meeting because of time constraints, record them on chart paper and carry them forward as agenda items for the next meeting.

- ✓ Maintain order and focus on priorities.
- ✓ Ensure that minutes of each meeting are kept.
- ✓ Allow for both individual and small-group input during discussion of agenda items.
- ✓ Try to remain neutral and provide alternative ways to solve problems or make decisions.
- ✓ Encourage decision making through consensus.
- ✓ If desired, use rules of order to formalize decisions made through consensus.
- ✓ Check that all council members have the same understanding of any decisions. At the end of each meeting, summarize the meeting, reviewing key actions and decisions.
- ✓ Remind members of or establish the time, date, and location of the next meeting and note any items of new business to be included in that meeting's agenda.
- ✓ Occasionally, assess the effectiveness of a meeting. Use the information to improve future council meetings

Officers

8. (1) A school council shall have a chair or, if the bylaws of the council so provide, two co-chairs.

(2) A chair or co-chair of a school council must be a parent member of the council, and shall be elected by the members of the council.

(3) A person who is employed by the board that established the council cannot be the chair or co-chair of the council.

(4) A school council may have such other officers as are provided for in the by-laws of the council.

(5) Subject to subsections (2) and (3), vacancies in the office of chair, co-chair or any other officer of a school council shall be filled in accordance with the by-laws of the council

School Councils - Involving Parents and the Community

One purpose of the school council is to promote and support the involvement of all parents in their children's learning.

Parents play the first and most important role in their children's education and are key partners in building a quality education system. School councils can involve all parents by:

- ♦ providing parents with information and ideas about curriculum-related activities, decisions,
- ♦ planning, and how to help their children with their homework;
- ♦ communicating effectively with parents about school programs and children's progress;
- ♦ recruiting and organizing parents' help and support;
- ♦ identifying and using community resources and services that strengthen school programs, family relations, and student learning and development;
- ♦ inviting parents who have particular expertise to speak to the council (e.g., a nurse to speak about the nutritional needs of children, a marketing professional to help the council with a communication plan);

- ♦ helping parents establish home environments that support their children as students (e.g., helping them with homework, asking them about the day's events, showing an interest in their extracurricular activities, expressing care, and giving guidance).

This involvement contributes both to the children's success in school and to the quality of the school environment. Because parental involvement is so important, school councils need to break down any barriers between the home and the school and make the school a warm, receptive place for parents. School councils should encourage all parents to participate, welcome them to school council meetings, and inform them of the many ways in which they can be involved.

Parents play a valuable role by being members of school councils. Celebrating the council's successes and communicating its accomplishments to the community helps retain the commitment of current school council members and encourages other parents and community representatives to become involved in the future. Involving parents throughout the year on committees and in other volunteer roles is an excellent way to spark interest and motivate parents to contribute in various ways to their children's education.

Every parent has something to contribute.



School Council By-Laws

School Councils must develop certain bylaws to provide them with direction for the operation of council business and to help the council work effectively.

School Council bylaws must address the following areas:

- election procedures
- filling vacancies
- conflict of interest
- conflict resolution procedures

Your council may also wish to develop bylaws related to the following:

- a school council code of ethics
- general expectations regarding meetings (e.g., attendance, promptness)
- the number and scheduling of meetings (at least four meetings must be held each school year)
- the number of parent members on the council

- the number, description, and duties of executive officers
- any requirements regarding signing officers
- the establishment and roles of committees
- a process for seeking input from the community

Code of Ethics -Your school council may find it useful to establish a code of ethics that outlines the council's expectations of its members and guides their behaviour. The code may address matters such as the boundaries of the role and responsibilities of the school council, conflict of interest, and the manner in which members are expected to interact, in the interests of preserving democratic principles and minimizing and/or managing conflict

It is important to ensure that bylaws created by the school council do not conflict with any of the provisions of Ontario Regulation 612/00.

Sample - CODE OF ETHICS

A member shall consider the best interests of all students.

A member shall be guided by the school's and the school board's mission statements.

A member shall act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of a school council, as identified by the school's operating guidelines, the school board, and the Ontario Ministry of Education.

A member shall become familiar with the school's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.

A member shall maintain the highest standards of integrity.

A member shall recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.

A member shall treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.

A member shall encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.

A member shall acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the council.

A member shall respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the school council.

A member shall not disclose confidential information.

A member shall limit discussions at school council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.

A member shall use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise.

A member shall promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community.

A member shall declare any conflict of interest.

A member shall not accept any payment or benefit financially through school council involvement.

Supporting and Promoting School Councils – Principals

WHAT DO THE REGULATIONS MEAN FOR PRINCIPALS?

Supporting and Promoting School Councils

SCHOOL PRINCIPALS PLAY A UNIQUE AND IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE SUCCESS OF EVERY SCHOOL.

According to the regulations, principals are to consult with their school councils, and school councils may provide advice on any matter to their principals or school boards.

Specifically, the objectives of the regulations are to strengthen the advisory role of school councils, set consistent expectations, and make the education system more accountable to parents. To ensure that parents' voices are heard through their school councils, the regulations clearly require that principals (and school boards) support their school councils.

The regulations also clarify the roles and responsibilities of principals in working with their school councils;

- ✓ It is important that principals demonstrate a collaborative and supportive approach to working with their school councils.

- ✓ Strong communication between principals and their councils is essential to successful school councils.
- ✓ It is also essential that principals and the chairs or co-chairs of their councils find an effective method of working together outside of regular meetings.

Some Important Roles Played by the Principal

ACTING AS AN IMPORTANT SOURCE OF INFORMATION.

The principal is perhaps the key source of information for the school council. He or she is the council's best link to finding out about the Education Act and its regulations, ministry directives, laws, school policies, board policies, the school profile, school improvement plans, and other new initiatives at the school and at the board level.

By sharing knowledge and acting as a resource, the principal is able to provide the school council with the information required to be effective. Principals should be prepared to answer questions and volunteer information on any matter being discussed by their councils. The better informed a council is, the better it will be able to provide the principal with good advice and contribute to the effective operation of the school.

The principal's involvement and interaction with the school council are key to the council's success. As a member of the school council and leader of the school community, the principal can provide the guidance and support necessary to help the council achieve its goals and be an effective voice for parents.

Some Important Roles Played by the Principal

RECEIVING AND RESPONDING TO SCHOOL COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS.

School council members have many and diverse interests, and may make recommendations on any matter. In addition to the mandatory areas of consultation, other examples of areas that might be considered by the school council include the scheduling of school special events and school policies regarding field trips.

Good principals have always taken the recommendations made by school councils into account when making decisions; however, according to Regulation 298, principals are now required to report back on the actions taken or not taken in response to school council recommendations. Although to take action or not is still the principal's decision, the principal must provide the council with an explanation of how its recommendations have been considered or why a recommendation was not acted on.

ATTENDING SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETINGS.

The principal is required to attend and participate in every school council meeting or to delegate this responsibility to a vice-principal. This requirement acknowledges the important role that principals play in providing support and continuity for their school councils. The principal and vice-principal may both choose to attend the meetings; however, only one of them can represent the school at the meeting in his or her official capacity.

Principals (or vice-principals) are not eligible to vote on any matters being discussed by their school councils, as it is not appropriate that the principal vote on the advice that he or she is given by the school council (e.g., regarding the school's policy on homework for students).

DELEGATING AUTHORITY.

In addition to attendance at council meetings, the principal may delegate other powers or duties related to the school council to a vice-principal. This is to ensure that the school council is supported by the administration.

ENSURING THAT THE SCHOOL COUNCIL IS IN PLACE.

It is important that the school council be ready early in the school year to begin its work with the principal on the many significant areas identified in the regulation. For this reason, school councils must hold their elections within the first thirty days of the start of the school year. The principal's assistance to an election committee or to the chair of the previous year's council will go a long way towards ensuring that school council membership is in place within the thirty-day time frame required.

NOTIFYING THE COMMUNITY AND POSTING MATERIALS FOR PARENTS.

It is important that the school community know the names of the parent representatives who were elected. The principal must publish names of the school council members no later than thirty days following their election. This information may be posted on the school's website and in the school, and may also be published in the first school newsletter sent out after the elections.

Each principal must find a style that is appropriate to his or her school community, whether the school is large or small, urban or rural, elementary or secondary. Where a principal develops a strong relationship with the school council, parents are more likely to become involved in the school community, and this in turn will have a strong impact on the overall effectiveness of the school.

Some Important Roles Played by the Principal

The principal can demonstrate his or her support of the council's work by encouraging the school council to prepare notices that can be sent home with students for delivery to their parents and posted in an obvious place in the school for parents to examine.

Council news can also be included in the school newsletter.

The principal is legally obligated to notify the school community of the following information related to the school council:

- the date, time, and location of the school council elections, at least fourteen days before the election date
- the results of the school council election (the names of the members elected to the school council), no later than thirty days following the school council election,
- the dates, times, and locations of all regular school council meetings and committee meetings,
- the annual school council report, including a report of fund-raising activities and financial statements

PROVIDING INFORMATION.

As school councils frequently experience changes in membership as students move on to new schools and as parents find new interests, new council members will have to be briefed on the work of the council. As well, parents new to a school may wish to learn about some of the priorities and activities undertaken by the school council in the past. For these reasons, the following information, which will help parents learn about the evolution and actions of their school council, must be stored in the school and made available for a minimum of four years:

- ♦ school council and committee meeting minutes
- ♦ financial transactions/records

A council may decide that other documents would also be of value for reference. These might include the following:

- ♦ school council agendas
- ♦ school council annual reports

- ♦ school profiles
- ♦ principal profiles
- ♦ position papers that were prepared for board consideration or submission to the Ministry of Education

The above information should be readily available to parents wishing to learn more about the history of their school council. Regardless of where the material is kept, whether it be in the resource centre or in another location in the school, parents should be made aware of the location and should have easy access to this material.

(12) The principal of a school shall provide for the prompt distribution to each member of the school council of any materials received by the principal from the Ministry that are identified by the Ministry as being for distribution to the members of school councils. (12.1) The principal shall post any materials distributed to members of the school council under subsection (12) in the school in a location that is accessible to parents. (13) In each school year, the principal of a school shall make the names of the members of the school council known to the parents of the pupils enrolled in the school, by publishing those names in a school newsletter or by such other means as is likely to bring the names to the attention of the parents. (14) The principal shall meet the requirements of subsection (13) in each school year not later than 30 days following the election of parent members of the school council. (15) The principal of a school shall promptly provide the names of the members of the school council to a supporter of the board that governs the school or to a parent of a pupil enrolled in the school, on the request of the supporter or the parent. (16) The principal of a school shall attend every meeting of the school council, unless he or she is unable to do so by reason of illness or other cause beyond his or her control. (17) The principal of a school shall act as a resource person to the school council and shall assist the council in obtaining information relevant to the functions of the council, including information relating to relevant legislation, regulations and policies.

SCHOOL COUNCILS PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ONTARIO. THEY PROVIDE A FORUM THROUGH WHICH PARENTS AND OTHER MEMBERS OF SCHOOL COMMUNITIES CAN CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE.

Consultation with School Councils by Boards and Principals

To ensure that parents, through their school councils, are able to influence decisions affecting their children's education, the school council regulation clearly directs school boards and principals to actively seek the views of their school councils on a variety of matters. Under the regulations, school boards and principals are now required to ask for the views of their school councils before they make decisions on certain matters.

Boards and principals are also required to inform their school councils on how the recommendations have been taken into account when decisions related to their recommendations are made. This is a meaningful addition to the responsibilities of school boards and principals. Including school councils in the development or revision of policies and guidelines or the implementation of education initiatives affirms their role as a key partner in the education system.

Ontario Regulations 612/00 and 298 advise boards and principals that they are also free to solicit the views of their school councils on any matter outside the mandatory areas for consultation.

The Thames Valley District School Board is committed to building a culture that ensures students, parents, staff and community members feel that they are an integral part of the decision-making process. Throughout the year, input is sought on new and revised Board policies and procedures, the coming Budget, name of new and consolidated schools and accommodation studies. We welcome your input in shaping our policies, programs and special initiatives. The Board also often seeks community representation on various task forces and committees.

Sign up for the "Seeking Public Input" mailing list to receive email notification when items have been posted for public input at www.tvdsb.ca/subscribe



School Council Meetings

EFFECTIVE MEETING STRATEGIES

You will know that a council meeting has been effective when all participants feel that:

- **the meeting had a purpose;**
 - ✓ Make sure that parents know and understand the purpose of the meetings.
 - ✓ have clearly established missions, goals and objectives
 - ✓ pursue activities and events that support student success – don't let personal issues or the concerns of individual parents dominate the meetings
- **they have a sense of accomplishment;**
 - ✓ set council meeting dates (and topics, if possible) early in the year and publicize them regularly
 - ✓ develop a dynamic and proactive action plan at the beginning of the year – and follow it
 - ✓ set an agenda for each meeting and send it out ahead of time
- **they contributed to the discussion;**
 - ✓ keep meetings short – start and finish on time
 - ✓ use the agenda to set time limits for reports and discussion – try to stay within those limits
 - ✓ set up sub-committees to handle more involved issues and have most of the discussions at that level – ask sub-committee members to come to council with clear recommendations for action
 - ✓ encourage more “co” roles on council (e.g. co-chair, co-treasurers) – when one member retires, the person in the “co” role will have the skills and experience to take over the position
- **they were valued by others;**
 - ✓ survey parents for topics of interest or speakers they would recommend
 - ✓ invite special speakers or guest experts to present at meetings (topics don't always have to be about school) – invite neighbouring schools and other members of the community to attend
 - ✓ invite students to present on specific topic
- **creative ideas, alternatives, or solutions were generated;**
 - ✓ make meetings fun – provide food and allow some time for socializing
 - ✓ avoid having a lot of discussion about fundraising at each meeting

Meetings

12. (1) A school council shall meet at least four times during the school year.

(2) A school council shall meet within the first 35 days of the school year, after the elections held under sections 4 and 5, on a date fixed by the principal of the school.

(3) 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; and

(b) a majority of the members of the council who are present at the meeting are parent members.

(4) All meetings of a school council shall be open to the public.

(5) A school council is entitled to hold its meetings at the school.

(6) All meetings of a school council shall be held at a location that is accessible to the public.

Preparing for and Running Meetings

Establishing Meeting Dates and Publicizing School Council Meetings

- ➔ Establishing a meeting schedule for the entire year should probably be done at the first meeting of the school year. Some councils find it best to schedule meetings at the same time on the same day.
- ➔ School council meetings should be well advertised to ensure that anyone who has an interest in matters before the council knows that there is an open, sincere invitation for them to attend.
- ➔ Principals can facilitate this by communicating with parents and the community on a regular basis to keep them informed of the activities being undertaken by the council.

Meetings can be publicized within the school community in various ways:

- Circulate the year's meeting schedule as widely as possible throughout the community.

- Advertise in school and community newsletters, noting important or special agenda items.
- Post meeting dates on the hat's-on sign outside the school, if one is available.
- Use a phone-tree system to remind parents of upcoming meetings.
- Publicize meetings at community events.
- Post meeting dates on the school's website.

The Meeting Space

- ◆ School councils are entitled to hold their meetings at the school. School council meetings must be open to the public,
- ◆ The meeting space should be set up in a way that encourages participation,
- ◆ The meeting space should be generous, and tables should be provided for council members.



Tips for Meetings

1. **Be prepared.** Know what you are going to do and why. Know what your priorities are, the alternatives, the time frame and who will give reports.
2. **Have an agenda.** Know what business will be conducted and in what order. Direct the meeting toward the purpose established for the meeting.
3. **Delegate work.** Guide and lead the group. Don't do it all yourself. Take advantage of the talent and experience in your group.
4. **Don't cover too much ground.** Keep expectations realistic. Plan your agenda so that sufficient time is set aside for priority items. Always adjourn at the designated time.
5. **Learn by doing.** Not every meeting will run smoothly, but the job of chairing will become easier with each meeting

CREATING AN AGENDA

A carefully planned and organized agenda is key to a successful meeting.

A good agenda briefly outlines;

- What you intend to discuss and in what order.
- A reasonable time frame, which allows sufficient time for discussion of all the agenda items,
- Items on the agenda should reflect the priorities of the school council, which should reflect the concerns and interests of the school community.

The task of developing the school council meeting agenda is usually the responsibility of the chair/co-chairs and the principal.

When developing an agenda, be sure to:

- provide a place on the agenda for welcoming guests

and introducing new people and nonmembers;

- remember to include "declaration of conflict of interest" at the beginning of the agenda (review the minutes of the previous meeting and include items that need revisiting ("business arising from the minutes");
- determine if there is any "old business" or updates that should be included;
- include time for committee reports;
- determine what "new business" should come before the council;
- include time for brief reports from the principal and student, staff, and community representatives;
- include a period of time for general questions

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

[Date, Time]

[Location]

Sample Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions (15 minutes)
 - Icebreaker or team building activity
2. Approval of Minutes (5 minutes)
3. Business arising from minutes /updates (10 minutes)
4. New business (45 minutes in total)
5. Principal's report (20 minutes)

TVDSB Update

6. Reports (45 minutes in total)
 - Teaching/ Non-Teaching Member
 - Student Representative
 - Home and School/ Parent Group
 - Community representative
 - TVDSB – Email Communication

General information updates (maximum 5 minutes)

Next meeting date, time, and location

Include Parent Involvement Funds (\$500) initiative planning as a regular agenda item

School Councils – Effective Meetings

School councils should have the opportunity to fully discuss every agenda issue. Generally speaking, the chair is responsible for facilitating this process. Meetings are most successful and productive when council members listen and present their ideas effectively.

The key to understanding is listening to and really hearing what others are saying. A major barrier to effective communication is a tendency to evaluate without listening first to what others have to say. The following will help you listen to and really understand what others are saying:

- ✓ Give your full attention to the speaker.
- ✓ Think about what the speaker is saying and take notes, if you find that helpful.

- ✓ Ask questions or paraphrase to clarify meaning

Council members should make every effort to present and convey information, opinions, and feelings clearly and succinctly. Doing so will promote good communication within the council.

The following will help you present your point of view clearly:

- ♦ Think about what you want to say.
- ♦ Jot down key points.
- ♦ Avoid using jargon that others may not understand.
- ♦ Ask for feedback to ensure that everyone understands your position.

Methods for Stimulating Discussion

- ❑ *Chair initiation.* The chair invites a wide range of people to speak, and all who wish to speak are given the opportunity, with time limits given to each speaker.
- ❑ *Pairing.* People are randomly paired off to discuss an issue and then report back to the group.
- ❑ *Table-go-round.* The chair invites each person around the table, in order, to speak to an issue (if he or she chooses), with a time limit given for each speaker.
- ❑ *Absolute quiet.* School council members are given a specific amount of time to think, read, or make notes relating to the issue being discussed.

Methods for Generating Ideas

Brainstorming. The following ground rules help brainstorming become an effective problem-solving tool:

Work with the whole council. Ensure that everyone is clear on the issue to be brainstormed.

- Invite ideas from council members, recording them on a chalkboard or flip-chart.
- Accept all ideas without either positive or negative comment.
- Encourage quantity, not quality – the more ideas the better.
- Modify and combine ideas.
- Finally, ask school council members to rank the ideas they feel are the best.

Round table. This process is similar to brainstorming, but with the group subdivided into small groups of four to six people. Give each group a time limit. Record all ideas on flip charts and report back to the main group after the time limit has been reached.

Keeping Minutes of School Council Meetings

School councils must keep minutes of all council meetings, and these must be available at the school for examination by anyone without charge.³ Minutes are usually recorded by the secretary of the school council and are to be kept at the school for a minimum of four years.

- Accurate minutes provide school council members and the school community with a brief but clear summary of what went on at a meeting, including decisions, future plans, reports, and who is responsible for what.
- School council minutes should note discussion areas but should not include the discussions themselves.
- Minutes should also include a list of those attending the meeting and those who are absent. (Note that it is a good idea to pass around an attendance sheet during the meeting and have those present sign it. The meeting chair can check with members at the end of the meeting to ensure that they have signed the sheet.)

Setting Goals and Priorities

It is important that your school council establish priorities and set goals, and stick to them. Otherwise, there is a real chance that your council will wander, wondering what to do first or, even worse, trying to do too much and not being as productive as it could be.

All members of the council, including the principal, will have the opportunity to review information about past and current achievement, imagine the school's future, and develop specific plans for achieving their vision for the future.

The school council may want to open their planning discussion by asking these questions:

- ➔ Where are we?
- ➔ Where do we want to go?
- ➔ How will we get there?
- ➔ How will we know when we have arrived?

Making Decisions

Running a school council meeting can be as formal or as informal as your council decides, but even informal meetings require some ground rules to help people work together and reach good decisions.

Consensus

In trying to reach consensus, members have to put much effort into trying to find alternatives to which everyone can agree. Because everyone helps reach, and must agree to, the final decision, all members have the chance to influence and understand the decision. As a result, the final decision may be reached with less conflict than with a formal vote and should receive everyone's support.

One caution:

Consensus:

- gives all council members an effective voice in decisions;
- builds on differing perspectives and values;
- allows for flexibility in arriving at solutions;
- can result in better-informed, more creative, balanced, and enduring decisions;
- ensures that final decisions have the support of everyone, thus promoting a sense of commitment to and ownership of the decisions;
- creates a sense of common purpose;
- allows all council members to maintain the integrity of their personal values while agreeing to a new solution.

The following are the basic steps to take to arrive at consensus:

- ✓ Identify the issue or problem.
- ✓ Relate the issue to goals.
- ✓ List the alternatives or solutions.
- ✓ Explore and weigh the solutions in terms of meeting agreed-on goals.
- ✓ Choose the solution that best meets the goals.
- ✓ Plan to implement the solution.
- ✓ Arriving at a decision that everyone can support requires time, a clear process, skill, and the full participation of all members.

The chair should ensure that everyone is heard equally and that quieter or less assertive members are not overshadowed by more vocal or assertive members.

Communication

Communication is the key to ensuring strong partnerships and a successful school council. It is crucial to achieving increased involvement and greater influence for parents in their children's education.

School councils must have sound methods of communicating with the school principal, with the school board, with parents, and with each other.

Chair/Co-Chairs and School Council Members

Chairs/co-chairs must ensure that council members are accessible to each other. Council members with questions, issues, or simply agenda items to add to the next meeting's agenda will need to know how to contact the chair. It is a good idea to develop a list of contact numbers, addresses, and e-mail addresses for all council members at the beginning of the year and to distribute the list to all members.

Chair/Co-Chairs and the Principal

The need to develop a good working relationship between the chair/co-chairs and the principal at the beginning of the year cannot be stressed enough.

Trust, respect, and open communication are the nucleus for an effective partnership and, ultimately, an effective school council. To accomplish this, the chair/co-chairs and the principal must establish an effective way to communicate outside of regular meetings. This includes such things as how each would like to receive information (e.g., by maintaining in-boxes in the school office for materials related to the council, by using e-mail). It may also mean establishing a procedure for what is to happen when an urgent issue arises.

School Council - Creating Public Awareness

Throughout the year, there will be many opportunities for your school council to assume a significant public profile in the school and in the school community, and it is important that you make the most of those events.

Opportunities may take the form of:

- ➔ setting up a school council information table on parent-teacher interview nights;
- ➔ sending students home with a newsletter that could include the council's meeting minutes;
- ➔ posting the council's meeting minutes on the school's website;
- ➔ hosting special events that bring the school community into the school;
- ➔ making use of regular mailings, such as the mailing of report cards, to include a school council update, a list of the council's activities for the year, or the school council's meeting minutes;
- ➔ having the chair/co-chairs speak at various school functions;
- ➔ making personal contact with parents by phone or at special meetings;
- ➔ setting up a school council display in the main foyer of the school;
- ➔ making use of public service announcements and other forms of free radio, TV, and newspaper advertising;

School Council Fund-raising

Some school councils may decide to include fund-raising as one of their priorities. Fund-raising activities may be conducted as long as they are in accordance with board policies and guidelines and the funds raised are to be used for a purpose approved by the board. A school council may find that it is unable to continue a fund-raising activity in which it was previously involved, as the funds raised are not used for a purpose approved by the board. Similarly, a school council may find that it must change the way in which it fund-raises for an approved purpose to comply with board policies and guidelines.

Section 19(1)(1)(iv) of Regulation 612/00 requires that boards solicit school councils' views when developing policies or guidelines regarding fund-raising. Ultimately, if school councils decide that they would like to continue with certain fund-raising projects, they must work with their boards to develop policies or guidelines that permit the fund-raising and the use of funds for particular purposes.

School councils should be aware that, because the school board is a corporate entity and the school is not, any funds raised by the school council (and any assets purchased with those funds) belong, legally, to the board. The board may have policies specifying that the money raised by the council (and any assets purchased by the council) will remain with the school. However, such policies are not legally binding in the event that the school is closed.

All fund-raising activities conducted by the school council must be included in the annual report prepared by the school council.

School Councils - Conflict of Interest

School councils are advisory bodies and would almost never be in a position to make decisions that would be of financial benefit to individual council members. However, a conflict of interest may exist whether or not a monetary advantage has been or may be conferred on the school council member or his or her family.

A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential:

Actual: When a school council member has a private interest that is sufficiently connected to his or her duties and responsibilities as a council member that it influences the exercise of these duties and responsibilities.

Perceived: When reasonably well-informed persons could reasonably believe that a school council member has a conflict of interest, even where, in fact, there is no real conflict of interest.

Potential: When a school council member has a private interest that could affect his or her decision about matters proposed for discussion.

A conflict of interest for a school council representative is any situation in which the individual's private interests may be incompatible or in conflict with his or her school council responsibilities.

A school council member should try to avoid situations in which:

- a conflict of interest is likely to result;
- the member's ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities on the council may be jeopardized;
- the council member or his or her relatives gain or benefit indirectly;

Sample Conflict of Interest By-law

1. Any time the school council does business with the potential for monetary gain/loss with any person, agency, or company, and a member of the school council has a vested interest in any way with that particular person, agency, or company, that member shall declare a conflict of interest and shall not discuss or vote on any such resolution relating to the matter.
2. Each school council member shall avoid situations that could result in an inconsistency between the overall goals and vision of the school council and a personal or vested interest, that arise in connection with his or her duties as a school council member. Should an issue or agenda item arise during a council meeting where a council member is in a conflict of interest situation, he or she shall declare conflict of interest immediately and decline from the discussion and resolution.

THE SCHOOL COUNCIL AND OTHER SCHOOL COUNCILS IN YOUR AREA

Family of Schools Networking

Periodically networking with other school councils can be extremely beneficial.

Networking can occur in a variety of ways – for example, through meetings, teleconferencing, or e-mail – and can involve other school councils in your area, all the school councils in your board, or all the school councils in a regional organization of councils.

- ❖ **WHY NETWORK....**Sharing information regularly with school councils in your area will keep information flowing among the councils, and all councils will benefit from this flow of information.
- ❖ **HOW....**Your council may wish to invite a speaker or panel to provide training or expert information on topics that would be of interest to the whole group. This could also be used as an opportunity to plan strategies and activities that would benefit the whole group. **The responsibility of communicating regularly could be assigned to one school council member, who would then share the information with the rest of the council.**

NETWORKING GIVES COUNCILS THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE BEST PRACTICES; TO LEARN WHAT IS NEW LOCALLY, REGIONALLY, AND PROVINCIALLY; TO FEEL SUPPORTED AND CONNECTED TO A LARGER COMMUNITY; AND TO HAVE A STRONGER VOICE AT THE BOARD LEVEL OR THE PROVINCIAL LEVEL.



School Council Checklist

The following checklist is to be used in conjunction with procedures as outlined in the Ontario Ministry of Education – School Councils “A Guide for Members” This checklist is not intended to be used as a replacement for the procedures.

It is to be used as a template to help keep you on track. You may add to this list and customize it for your own council. The items listed below are a summary of tasks performed in past years with approximate time frames for your reference.

September/October

Actions to be taken within the first 30 days after the new school year commence;

Principal – Post notice of election at least 14 days before the election will take place.

Post in school and send notice home to parents.

Elections

- ☐ Parent Members- in accordance with School Council By-laws
- ☐ Chairperson or Co-Chairpersons
- ☐ Vice Chairperson - optional according to school council by-laws
- ☐ Secretary/Treasurer - optional according to school council by-laws

Appointed

- ☐ Teacher Representative
- ☐ Non-teaching Representative
- ☐ Community Representative(s)
- ☐ Student Representative (if applicable)
- ☐ Ontario Federation of Home and School Assoc. Representative (if applicable)

School Councils Goals

Set goals of School Council for the upcoming year (include plans for the \$500 Parent Involvement Fund)

Establish time lines for reviewing the following:

- (a) School Council By-laws/Constitution – date to be reviewed
- (b) School Code of Conduct – date to be reviewed

Outstanding Items

Review outstanding items from the prior school year.

Communications

Determine method of communication to parents and community (ie. Web site, email, paper, newsletter, phone, etc).

Sub-Committees

Review previous year’s sub-committees. Determine if new ones are necessary and if previous ones should be continued based on goals and/or review material.

November/December

- EQAO Results
- School Improvement Plan
- Action Planning- Parent Involvement Funds \$500

January/February

- Principal Profile
- Review profile and school profile
Submit revised/new profile no later than the end of February
- Review September - December projects
- Plan February – June projects

March/April

- Continue January - June plans.
- Identify parent engagement project; PRO Grant proposal

May/June

- Review and set election and nomination procedures for next year.
- Prepare documents for next year’s School Council (see previous year’s “Outstanding Items”)
- Celebrate Accomplishments
- Prepare and submit reports
 - School Council Annual Report
 - Use of Parent Involvement Funds
 - PSAB- School Council Financial Summary Report
 - Forward the completed report to the School Board

SAMPLE SCHOOL COUNCIL BY- LAWS

(Insert School Name) School Council

Constitution & By-laws, (Operational Framework)

Date Approved:

Date reviewed;

Official Name (Insert School Council Name)

School Council Operational Guidelines

School councils represent a very real opportunity for establishing community relationships and for creating a broadened consensus around the purpose of public education and around student learning as the key focus of schools.

School councils are advisory bodies. The advice should be based on the general views of the school community, and the best interests of all the students in the school. The school council is accountable to the school community it represents.

Mission

The (Insert School Name) School Council shall provide a forum for parents, educators, students and the community to actively participate as contributors to improving student achievement, success and wellbeing.

Mandate

- The (Insert School Name) School Council must operate within the Education Act and may make recommendations to the principal, to the TVDSB, on any matter, in accordance with Regulation 612/330 of the Ontario Education Act.
- (Insert School Name) School Council member shall maintain a general view and school -wide focus on all issues with the best interests of all students and staff in the school by consulting with school community.

In addition to its advisory responsibilities the school council shall:

- Establish and review annually the council's goals, priorities, and procedures.

Objectives/Purpose "Why are we together?"

- To enhance the accountability of the education system.
- To promote and develop strategies for parental involvement in the education of their children.
- To share information(communicate) with parents and the community and to seek their ideas and views about matters under consideration by the council (consult).

Membership

- The following shall be members of the School Council, elected or appointed, in accordance with Regular majority on the Council.) However a person is not qualified to be a parent member if he or she is employed at the school, or is not employed at the school but is a board employee, they must take reasonable steps to inform the council.
- The School Principal.
- One teacher other than the principal or vice-principal.
- One or more non-teaching staff.
- One or more community representative with no pupils at the school.
- One or more persons appointed by an association that is a member of another established organization. i.e. P.T.A. or Home and School Association.
- Non-voting representation of one grade seven and one grade eight student s enrolled at (Insert School Name)serving a two year term. At the principals discretion.
- Note: Should a situation exist where there are not sufficient candidates to fill the vacancies, the council will continue to operate and will attempt to find an individual(s) who will agree to an appointment.

Elections

- Shall be held during the first 30 days of then school year, on a date that is fixed by the school principal in consultation with chair.

SAMPLE SCHOOL COUNCIL BY- LAWS

Term of Office

- The term of office shall be one year. A member may be re-elected/re-appointed indefinitely.

Officers and Duties

Parent Members

([Insert School Name](#)) parent members shall form the majority by election or acclamation. Parent Member duties shall include, but not be limited to;

- Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues
- Participate in council meetings
- Participate in information and training programs
- Act as a link between the school council and the community
- Encourage the participation of parents and community members
- Attend council meeting and fulfill duties.

Chairperson or Co-Chairperson

The ([Insert School Name](#)) School Council shall elect a chair or co-chair, if determined by parent majority, from the parent/ guardian members who are not employed at TVDSB.

Chairperson or Co- chairperson duties shall include, but not be limited to;

- Prepare the agenda in partnership with principal
- Chair the school council meetings
- Ensure the minutes are recorded and kept at the school
- Participate in information and training programs
- Communicate with the school principal on behalf of the council
- Facilitate collaborative decision-making
- Ensure that there is regular communication with the school community
- Facilitate the resolution of conflict;
- Participate as ex-officio member of all committees.

Vice -Chairperson

The ([Insert School Name](#)) School Council shall elect a Vice Chair, unless a Co-Chairperson assumes the duties of the Vice Chairperson, as determined by the majority of parent members. The duties of the Vice -Chairperson shall include, but not be limited to;

- assume the Chairperson's responsibilities in his/her absence
- assist the Chairperson in the performance of his/her duties as delegated
- maintain effective communication with TVPIC Chairperson
- perform other duties as delegated

Secretary

The ([Insert School Name](#)) School Council shall elect a Secretary. The duties of the Secretary shall include but not be limited to:

- record accurate proceedings at meetings
- maintain file copies of agendas, minutes and correspondence
- maintain effective communication with Chairperson
- perform other duties as delegated

Vacancies

- Vacancies for ([Insert School Name](#)) representatives before April 1st may be filled by an appointment of a parent/ guardian until the end of the term. Appointments are made through consensus of the council members.

Meetings

- The ([Insert School Name](#)) School Council shall have a minimum of four meetings a year and others as required.
- A quorum shall consist of the parent members being in majority.
- The school principal or delegated vice principal must be in attendance.

- All meetings are open to the public and shall be held in a public place, such as the ([Insert School Name](#)) Library.
- The School Council shall meet within the first 35 days of the school year, on a date fixed by the principal of the school, in consultation with chair of the school council.
- The principal shall, on behalf of the school council give written notice of the date, time and location to all enrolled school families.
 - o Giving notice in the school newsletter.
 - o Posting notice in the school, at an accessible location.
- Minutes shall be taken at all council meetings. The minutes shall be kept in the School Council binder, in an accessible location to be kept for a maximum of four years.
- In the decision making process, every effort will be made to make decisions by consensus. In the event that a vote is required, every member is given on vote with the exception of the principal.

Sub Committees

- The ([Insert School Name](#)) School Council may establish committees to make recommendations to the council.
- Every committee of the school council shall include at least one parent member of the council.
- The committee of a school council may include persons who are not members of the council.

Conflict of Interest

- A ([Insert School Name](#)) School Council Member shall declare at the beginning of each meeting if the agenda presents a conflict of interest for that member. The Chair and/ or principal will note the conflict and ensure it is accurately recorded in meeting minutes.

Conflict Resolution

- In the event of an internal dispute the Council will seek the advice of the principal. The council will comply with the TVDSB School Council Conflict Resolution Policy.

Annual Report

- The ([Insert School Name](#)) School Council shall prepare and submit a written annual report on its activities to the principal and the school board and to the school families. Also the school council annual report is to be posted at an accessible location in the school and filed in the School Council Binder.

Fundraising

The ([Insert School Name](#)) school council may engage in Fundraising activities as set forth in Reg.612.

RESOLVING CONFLICT

Conflict is a natural part of human existence. In a structured environment, where mutual trust and respect prevail, it can be a positive force. It can encourage people to find creative solutions, clarify an issue, increase the involvement of members, encourage growth, and strengthen relationships. However, conflict also has an ugly side. Left uncontrolled, it can divert energy from the group, destroy morale, polarize individuals, deepen differences, obstruct progress, and create suspicion and distrust.

To a large degree, conflict can be prevented or diffused at an early stage if differing points of view are handled carefully by the chair.

- ✓ Focus the discussion on council issues.
- ✓ Take control in a firm, positive, constructive way.
- ✓ Establish an agenda that is agreed on by all present.
- ✓ Establish ground rules for behaviour. Develop a code of ethics for school council members
- ✓ Treat each person's concerns as legitimate.
- ✓ Use the group to help modify the situation. Ask questions such as "Louise is suggesting that we change the order of the agenda. What does the rest of the group think?"

Guidelines for Resolving Conflict

A four-step approach to resolving conflict

1. Acknowledge the conflict. As a group, acknowledge when a conflict exists and determine the source of the conflict. For example, is it related to facts? Goals? Processes? Values? Personal preferences? Beliefs? Communication?

2. Plan how to deal with the conflict. Once the source of the conflict is defined, decide how to deal with it. This may be done by the chair, another individual on the council, or the entire council. (In particularly difficult times, it may be best to engage a person who has no association with the council to facilitate discussion and problem solving.) At this stage, all council members should reflect on the problem and be prepared to state their concerns and viewpoints.

3. Provide time for discussion. The chair or whoever is facilitating the discussion should introduce the problem and ask each member for input so that the nature and source of the conflict

are clear. Acknowledging each person by listening attentively sets the tone for problem solving and opens the council to a variety of solutions. Emotions should be accepted and dealt with since they are a part of conflict.

4. Seek the best solution. As viewpoints and solutions are described, the individual facilitating the discussion deals with them one at a time. Following the discussion, the person facilitating the discussion may use a process for building consensus to arrive at a new solution.

Council members will be asked the following questions:

- ✓ Can you live with this solution?
- ✓ Will you support the solution?

Depending on the nature of the conflict, it is sometimes best for council members to have time to reflect on the proposed solution, with the decision to be finalized at a future meeting. If the conflict cannot be resolved, the group may wish to seek the assistance of resource staff at the school board.

When conflict is resolved collaboratively, both the whole group and the individuals within the group are strengthened.

TVPIC Tip; when issues continue and "difficult people" refuse to defer to the Chair's leadership or to the rest of the Council, support is available from the Superintendent of Education and/or a TVPIC member.

From time to time, school councils may find that they are not able to come to agreement on matters under their consideration. Consistently being unable to find common ground in decision making is almost certain to result in a dysfunctional council.

In such cases, it is important that the council take time to identify the issues that seem to be triggering its disputes. Often, the volume of disputes may be reflective of unhappiness or uncertainty among members of the council. Alternatively, the disputes may be a healthy sign of growth and development in your council.

It is also possible that, in spite of all efforts of a council to be productive and to work collegially as a team, the unhappiness among some council members may be so great that it polarizes council members on particular issues. Actions taken independently, such as sending unauthorized information home to parents on behalf of council, can seriously jeopardize the council's effectiveness. Other signs of dysfunction may be verbal abuse or harassment of other council members or the chair, constantly interrupting speakers, interjecting derogatory comments, or displaying behaviour that is unbecoming of adults entrusted to represent their community. Such behaviour is bound to **jeopardize attendance at meetings and to discourage potential members from seeking positions** on the council.

SAMPLE- Conflict Resolution Bylaw

Council members are elected to serve the school community and will demonstrate respect for their colleagues on council at all times.

- If a council 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 may direct the individual council member(s) to leave the meeting, citing the reasons for the request.
- The removal of a member for one meeting does not prevent the council member from participating in future meetings of council.
- The incident shall be recorded and submitted to the Superintendent of Schools within one week of the meeting.
- When the chair has requested the removal of a member or members from a meeting, the chair shall request that the disputing members of council participate in a special meeting, the purpose of which will be to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution to the dispute. Such a meeting may be a private meeting, and shall not be construed as a meeting of the council.
- The chair may request the intervention of an independent third party to assist in achieving a resolution to the dispute.
- An independent third party may be a board official or another individual mutually agreed on by the parties involved in the dispute.
- Any resolution reached at the meeting to resolve the conflict shall be signed and respected in full by all parties to the agreement

Sound decision-making by local representatives is essential to student success. School board trustees are one of the oldest forms of elected representation in Ontario. Since 1807, generations of community-minded citizens have made decisions on behalf of local, publicly funded schools, building the foundation of the system we have today. The accomplishments achieved in our school system have much to do with the dedication of the elected people who work tirelessly on its behalf.

Board documents for current and past meetings are available in the [Board Meetings Calendar](#).

Members of the community wishing to address the Board of Trustees at a public board meeting regarding issues of concern to the education system may, as per [Board Bylaws](#), submit an [application](#). For more information please contact [Corporate Services](#).

 Joyce Bennett Trustee, Vice-Chair 519-452-2000 ext. 22400 j.bennett@tvdsb.ca	Schools in London Wards 7, 8, 9, 10 & 13 Aberdeen Public School Arthur Ford Public School Byron Northview Public School Byron Somerset Public School Byron Southwood Public School Clara Brenton Public School Eagle Heights Public School Emily Carr Public School Jeanne Sauvé French Immersion Public School John Dearness Public School Lambeth Public School Lord Roberts French Immersion Public School Masonville Public School Riverside Public School Sir Isaac Brock Public School W. Sherwood Fox Public School West Oaks French Immersion Public School Westmount Public School Wilfrid Jury Public School Central Secondary School H.B. Beal Secondary School Oakridge Secondary School Saunders Secondary School Sir Frederick Banting Secondary School
 Peter Cuddy Trustee 519-452-2000 ext. 22406 p.cuddy@tvdsb.ca	Schools in London Wards 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 Bonaventure Meadows Public School Cedar Hollow Public School Chippewa Public School East Carling Public School Evelyn Harrison Public School F.D. Roosevelt Public School Hillcrest Public School Jack Chambers Public School John P. Roberts Public School Knollwood Park Public School Lord Elgin Public School Lord Nelson Public School Louise Arbour French Immersion Public School Northbrae Public School Northridge Public School Orchard Park Public School Prince Charles Public School Princess Anne French Immersion Public School Ryerson Public School Sir John. A. MacDonald Public School St. George's Public School Stoney Creek Public School Stoneybrook Public School University Heights Public School

	A.B. Lucas Secondary School Clarke Road Secondary School Montcalm Secondary School
 Sean Hunt Trustee 519-452-2000 ext. 22401 s.hunt@tvdsb.ca	Schools in Middlesex County Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald Public School Caradoc North Public School Caradoc Public School Centennial Central Public School Delaware Central Public School East Williams Memorial Public School Ekcoe Central Public School J.S. Buchanan French Immersion Public School Mary Wright Public School McGillivray Central Public School Mosa Central Public School North Meadows Public School Northdale Central Public School Oxbow Public School Parkhill-West Williams Public School Parkview Public School River Heights Public School Valleyview Public School West Nissouri Public School Wilberforce Public School Glencoe District High School Lord Dorchester Secondary School Medway High School North Middlesex District High School Strathroy District Collegiate Institute
 Bill McKinnon Trustee 519-452-2000 ext. 22411 b.mckinnon@tvdsb.ca	Schools in Oxford County A.J. Baker Public School Algonquin Public School Annandale Public School Blenheim District Public School Central Public School East Oxford Central Public School Eastdale Public School Emily Stowe Public School Harrisfield Public School Hickson Central Public School Innerkip Central Public School Laurie Hawkins Public School Northdale Public School Oliver Stephens Public School Plattsville & District Public School Roch Carrier French Immersion Public School Royal Roads Public School South Ridge Public School Southside Public School Springbank Public School Tavistock Public School Thamesford Public School Winchester Street Public School Westfield Public School Zorra Highland Park Public School College Avenue Secondary School Glendale High School Huron Park Secondary School Ingersoll District Collegiate Institute Woodstock Collegiate Institute



Arlene Morell

Chair

Middlesex County

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Schools in Middlesex County

Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald Public School
 Caradoc North Public School
 Caradoc Public School
 Centennial Central Public School
 Delaware Central Public School
 East Williams Memorial Public School
 Ekcoe Central Public School
 J.S. Buchanan French Immersion Public School
 Mary Wright Public School
 McGillivray Central Public School
 Mosa Central Public School
 North Meadows Public School
 Northdale Central Public School
 Oxbow Public School
 Parkhill-West Williams Public School
 Parkview Public School
 River Heights Public School
 Valleyview Public School
 West Nissouri Public School
 Wilberforce Public School

Glencoe District High School
 Lord Dorchester Secondary School
 Medway High School
 North Middlesex District High School
 Strathroy District Collegiate Institute



Lori-Ann Pizzolato

Trustee

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Schools in London Wards 1, 11, 12, 14

Arthur Stringer Public School
 Ashley Oaks Public School
 C.C. Carrothers Public School
 Cleardale Public School
 Ealing Public School
 Fairmont Public School
 Glen Cairn Public School
 Kensal Park French Immersion Public School
 Lester B. Pearson School for the Arts
 Mountsfield Public School
 Nicholas Wilson Public School
 Princess Elizabeth Public School
 Rick Hansen Public School
 Sir Georges Etienne Cartier Public School
 Tecumseh Public School
 Trafalgar Public School
 Tweedsmuir Public School
 Victoria Public School
 Westminster Central Public School
 White Oaks Public School
 Wilton Grove Public School
 Woodland Heights Public School
 Wortley Road Public School

B. Davison Secondary School
 London South Collegiate Institute
 Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School



Sheri Polhill

Schools in London Wards 1, 11, 12, 14

Arthur Stringer Public School
 Ashley Oaks Public School
 C.C. Carrothers Public School
 Cleardale Public School
 Ealing Public School
 Fairmont Public School
 Glen Cairn Public School
 Kensal Park French Immersion Public School
 Lester B. Pearson School for the Arts
 Mountsfield Public School
 Nicholas Wilson Public School
 Princess Elizabeth Public School
 Rick Hansen Public School
 Sir Georges Etienne Cartier Public School

Trustee 519-452-2000 ext. 22408 s.polhill@tvdsb.ca	Tecumseh Public School Trafalgar Public School Tweedsmuir Public School Victoria Public School Westminster Central Public School White Oaks Public School Wilton Grove Public School Woodland Heights Public School Wortley Road Public School B. Davison Secondary School London South Collegiate Institute Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School
 Corrine Rahman Trustee 226-219-6078 c.rahman@tvdsb.ca	Schools in London Wards 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 Bonaventure Meadows Public School Cedar Hollow Public School Chippewa Public School East Carling Public School Evelyn Harrison Public School F.D. Roosevelt Public School Hillcrest Public School Jack Chambers Public School John P. Robarts Public School Knollwood Park Public School Lord Elgin Public School Lord Nelson Public School Louise Arbour French Immersion Public School Northbrae Public School Northridge Public School Orchard Park Public School Prince Charles Public School Princess Anne French Immersion Public School Ryerson Public School Sir John. A. MacDonald Public School St. George's Public School Stoney Creek Public School Stoneybrook Public School University Heights Public School A.B. Lucas Secondary School Clarke Road Secondary School Montcalm Secondary School
 Meagan Ruddock Trustee 519-452-2000 ext. 22403 m.ruddock@tvdsb.ca	Schools in Elgin County Aldborough Public School Davenport Public School Dunwich-Dutton Public School Elgin Court Public School Éva Circé-Côté French Immersion Public School Forest Park Public School John Wise Public School June Rose Callwood Public School Kettle Creek Public School Locke's Public School McGregor Public School Mitchell Hepburn Public School New Sarum Public School Pierre Elliott Trudeau French Immersion Public School Port Burwell Public School South Dorchester Public School Southwold Public School Springfield Public School Straffordville Public School Summers' Corners Public School Arthur Voaden Secondary School Central Elgin Collegiate Institute East Elgin Secondary School Parkside Collegiate Institute West Elgin Secondary School



Jake Skinner

Trustee

226-268-7589

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Schools in London Wards 7, 8, 9, 10 & 13

Aberdeen Public School
 Arthur Ford Public School
 Byron Northview Public School
 Byron Somerset Public School
 Byron Southwood Public School
 Clara Brenton Public School
 Eagle Heights Public School
 Emily Carr Public School
 Jeanne Sauvé French Immersion Public School
 John Dearness Public School
 Lambeth Public School
 Lord Roberts French Immersion Public School
 Masonville Public School
 Riverside Public School
 Sir Isaac Brock Public School
 W. Sherwood Fox Public School
 West Oaks French Immersion Public School
 Westmount Public School
 Wilfrid Jury Public School

Central Secondary School
 H.B. Beal Secondary School
 Oakridge Secondary School
 Saunders Secondary School
 Sir Frederick Banting Secondary School



Bruce Smith

Trustee

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Schools in Elgin County

Aldborough Public School
 Davenport Public School
 Dunwich-Dutton Public School
 Elgin Court Public School
 Éva Circé-Côté French Immersion Public School
 Forest Park Public School
 John Wise Public School
 June Rose Callwood Public School
 Kettle Creek Public School
 Locke's Public School
 McGregor Public School
 Mitchell Hepburn Public School
 New Sarum Public School
 Pierre Elliott Trudeau French Immersion Public School
 Port Burwell Public School
 South Dorchester Public School
 Southwold Public School
 Springfield Public School
 Straffordville Public School
 Summers' Corners Public School

Arthur Voaden Secondary School
 Central Elgin Collegiate Institute
 East Elgin Secondary School
 Parkside Collegiate Institute
 West Elgin Secondary School



Barb Yeoman

Schools in Oxford County

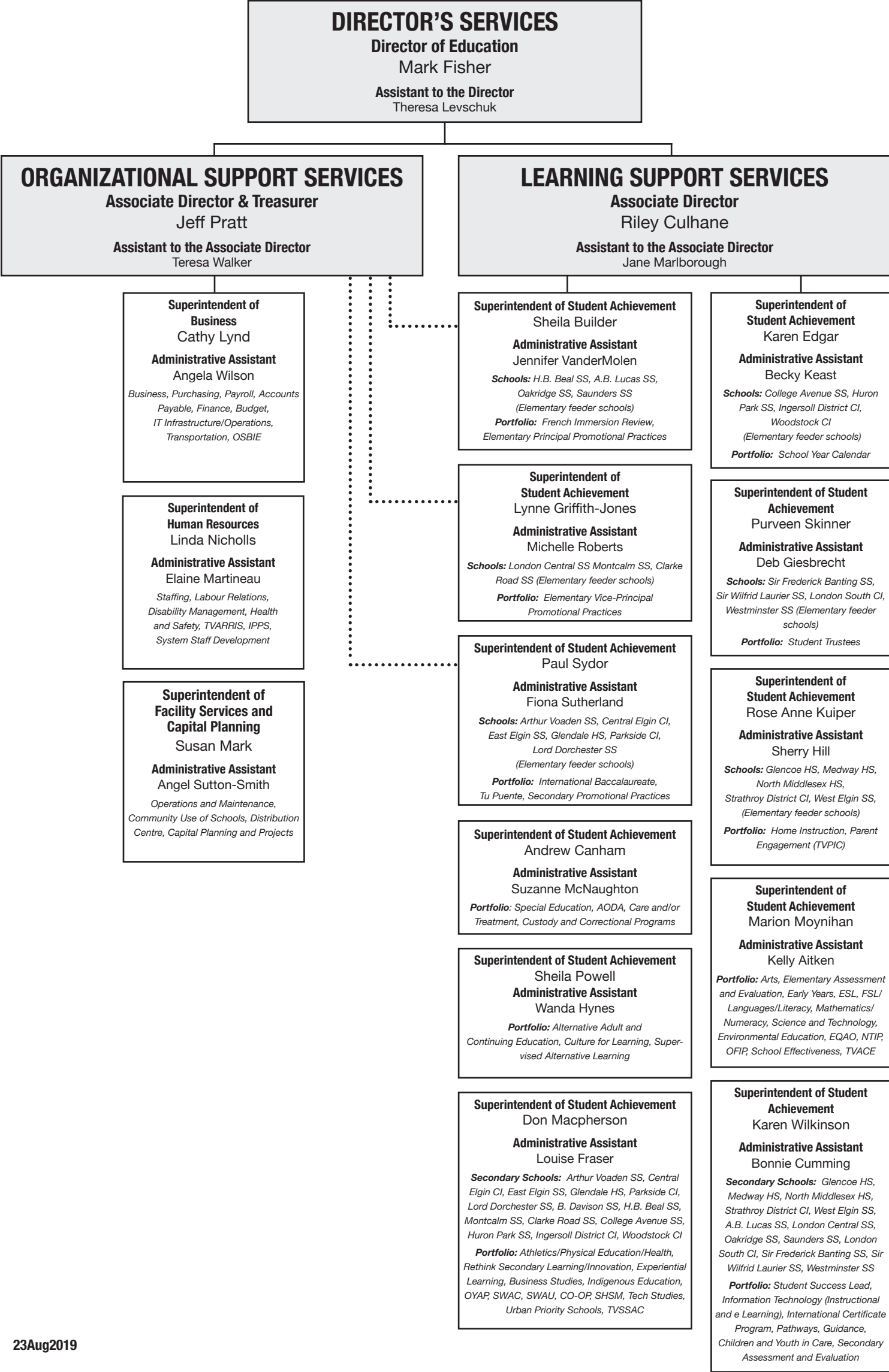
A.J. Baker Public School
 Algonquin Public School
 Annandale Public School
 Blenheim District Public School
 Central Public School
 East Oxford Central Public School
 Eastdale Public School
 Emily Stowe Public School
 Harrisfield Public School
 Hickson Central Public School
 Innerkip Central Public School
 Laurie Hawkins Public School
 Northdale Public School
 Oliver Stephens Public School
 Plattsville & District Public School
 Roch Carrier French Immersion

Trustee 519-452-2000 ext. 22404 b.yeoman@tvdsb.ca	Public School Royal Roads Public School South Ridge Public School Southside Public School Springbank Public School Tavistock Public School Thamesford Public School Winchester Street Public School Westfield Public School Zorra Highland Park Public School College Avenue Secondary School Glendale High School Huron Park Secondary School Ingersoll District Collegiate Institute Woodstock Collegiate Institute
 Carol Antone Indigenous Trustee 519-452-2000 ext. 22405 c.antone@tvdsb.ca	

Thames Valley District School Board

ADMINISTRATIVE OVERVIEW

2019-20



**A.B. Lucas Secondary School**

Cedar Hollow Public School
Jack Chambers Public School
Masonville Public School
Northridge Public School
Stoney Creek Public School
Stoneybrook Public School

Arthur Voaden Secondary School

June Rose Callwood Public School
Locke's Public School

Central Elgin Collegiate Institute

Forest Park Public School
Mitchell Hepburn Public School

Clarke Road Secondary School

B. Davison Secondary School
Bonaventure Meadows Public School
F.D. Roosevelt Public School
Fairmont Public School
John P. Robarts Public School
Lord Nelson Public School
Prince Charles Public School
Princess Anne French Immersion Public School
Tweedsmuir Public School

College Avenue Secondary School

East Oxford Central Public School
Eastdale Public School
Emily Stowe Public School
Oliver Stephens Public School
Southside Public School

East Elgin Secondary School

Davenport Public School
McGregor Public School
Port Burwell Public School
South Dorchester Public School
Springfield Public School
Straffordville Public School
Summers' Corners Public School

Glencoe District High School

Ekcoe Central Public School
Mosa Central Public School

Glendale High School

Annandale School
South Ridge Public School
Westfield Public School

H.B. Beal Secondary School

Aberdeen Public School
C.C. Carrothers Public School
Ealing Public School
Princess Elizabeth Public School
Trafalgar Public School

Huron Park Secondary School

Algonquin Public School
Blenheim District Public School
Hickson Central Public School
Innerkip Central School
Plattsville & District Public School
Springbank Public School
Winchester Street Public School

Ingersoll District Collegiate Institute

A.J. Baker Public School
Harrisfield Public School
Laurie Hawkins Public School
Royal Roads Public School
Thamesford Public School
Zorra Highland Park Public School

London Central Secondary School

Lester B. Pearson School for the Arts
Lord Roberts French Immersion Public School
Ryerson Public School
St. George's Public School

London South Collegiate Institute

Mountsfield Public School
Sir G.E. Cartier Public School
Tecumseh Public School
Victoria Public School
Wortley Road Public School

Lord Dorchester Secondary School

Northdale Central Public School
River Heights Public School
Westminster Central Public School

Medway High School

Centennial Central Public School
Delaware Central Public School
Oxbow Public School
Parkview Public School
West Nissouri Public School
Wilberforce Public School

Thames Valley District School Board – Family of Schools

Montcalm Secondary School

Chippewa Public School
East Carling Public School
Evelyn Harrison Public School
Hillcrest Public School
Knollwood Park Public School
Lord Elgin Public School
Louise Arbour French Immersion Public School
Northbrae Public School
Sir John A. Macdonald Public School

North Middlesex District High School

East Williams Memorial Public School
McGillivray Central Public School
Parkhill-West Williams Public School

Oakridge Secondary School

Clara Brenton Public School
John Dearness Public School
Riverside Public School

Parkside Collegiate Institute

Elgin Court Public School
Eva Circé-Côté French Immersion Public School
John Wise Public School
Kettle Creek Public School
New Sarum Public School
Pierre Elliott Trudeau French Immersion P.S.
Southwold Public School

Saunders Secondary School

Arthur Ford Public School
Byron Northview Public School
Byron Somerset Public School
Byron Southwood Public School
Lambeth Public School
Sir Isaac Brock Public School
W. Sherwood Fox Public School
Westmount Public School

Sir Frederick Banting Secondary School

Eagle Heights Public School
Emily Carr Public School
Jeanne Sauvé French Immersion Public School
Orchard Park Public School
Sir Arthur Currie Public School
University Heights Public School
West Oaks French Immersion Public School
Wilfrid Jury Public School

Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School

Arthur Stringer Public School
Cleardale Public School
Glen Cairn Public School
Kensal Park French Immersion Public School
Nicholas Wilson Public School
Wilton Grove Public School

Strathroy District Collegiate Institute

Adelaide-W.G. MacDonald Public School
Caradoc Public School
Caradoc North Public School
J.S. Buchanan French Immersion Public School
Mary Wright Public School
North Meadows Public School
Valleyview Public School

West Elgin Secondary School

Aldborough Public School
Dunwich-Dutton Public School

Westminster Secondary School

Ashley Oaks Public School
Rick Hansen Public School
White Oaks Public School
Woodland Heights Public School

Woodstock Collegiate Institute

Central Public School
Northdale Public School
Roch Carrier French Immersion Public School
Tavistock Public School

Title: **SCHOOL COUNCILS**

Policy No.: **3016**
Effective Date: **2018 June 26**

Department: Learning Support Services

Reference(s): - Ontario Regulations 612/00 s. 2(1) School Councils

It is the policy of the Board that every school will establish and maintain a school council in compliance with Ontario Regulation 612/00.

The purpose of school councils is, through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. O. Reg. 612/00, s. 2 (1).

A school council's primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations in accordance with this Regulation to the principal of the school and the Board that established the council. O. Reg. 612/00, s. 2 (2).

Administered By: Learning Support Services
Amendment Date(s):

Title: **SCHOOL COUNCILS**

Policy No.: **3016a**
Effective Date: **2018 June 26**

Department: Learning Support Services

- Reference(s):
- Policy: School Councils
 - Policy: Resolving Public Concerns and Complaints
 - Procedure: Resolving Public Concerns and Complaints
 - Ontario Regulations 612/00
 - School Councils: A Guide for Members

The purpose of this procedure of Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) is to establish and to maintain a School Council in every school of the Board, in order to promote and improve student learning through ongoing valued parental, staff and community input.

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1.0 Role of School Councils

1.1 School Councils:

- place the overall interests of the school and all of its students first;
- focus on student learning, achievement and well-being;
- act in an advisory capacity and as a resource to the school principal and, when appropriate, to the Board;
- are actively involved in setting school priorities for improving student achievement;
- promote meaningful parental and community involvement and actively seek the views of their school communities;
- keep well informed about school and board policies and procedures;
- communicate with the community about their activities; and
- may engage in fundraising to support student achievement and well-being in accordance with applicable Board policies.

1.2 A School Council shall not engage in fundraising activities unless,

(a) the activities are conducted in accordance with any applicable policies established by the board; and

(b) the activities are to raise funds for a purpose approved by the board or authorized by any applicable policies established by the board.

1.3 A School Council shall ensure that any funds raised are used in accordance with all applicable policies established by the board.

1.4 A School Council who engages in fundraising activities or financial transactions must follow the TVDSB School Generated Fund Policy and Procedure.

2.0 Composition

Parents/guardians shall form the majority of the School Council. It is expected that the membership of the council will reflect the diversity of the school community. In defining a school community, considerations may include such aspects as geography, language, cultural, ethnic, economic, business, and demographics.

2.1 Membership of a School Council shall include:

- a minimum of 7 and up to a maximum of 15 parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school (except in the adult day school where parent/guardian positions shall be held by students);
- the principal of the school;

- one teacher who is employed at the school, other than the principal or vice-principal;
- one person who is employed at the school, other than the principal, vice-principal or any other teacher;
- in the case of a school with one or more secondary school grades, one pupil enrolled in the school;
- in the case of a school with no secondary school grades, one pupil enrolled in the school who is appointed by the principal of the school, if the principal determines, after consulting the other members of the School Council, that the council should include a pupil;
- in schools which are specifically identified within an Indigenous Tuition Agreement and that also have tuition agreement students attending, one community member appointed by the band(s) that is signatory to the Tuition Agreement;
- one community representative appointed by the other members of the School Council; and
- one person appointed by an association that is a member of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, if the association that is a member of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, is established in respect of the school.

2.2 Eligibility of Membership

2.2.1 Parents/Guardian Representative

Parent/Guardian Representatives must be the legal parent/guardian of a pupil attending the school in which the council is formed.

A parent/guardian is not qualified to be a parent/guardian member of a School Council if,

- (a) they are employed at the school; or
- (b) they are not employed at the school but are employed elsewhere by the board that established the council, unless they take reasonable steps to inform people qualified to vote in the election of parent/guardian members of that employment.

Only one individual per family unit is eligible to be a parent/guardian member of the School Council.

2.2.2 Community Representative

The Community Representative shall be appointed by the council, at the first meeting of the new School Council following elections for Parent/Guardian Representatives.

A person who is employed by the board that established a School Council cannot be appointed as a community representative on the council unless,

(a) they are not employed at the school; and

(b) the other members of the School Council are informed of the person's employment before the appointment.

2.2.3 Secondary Student Representative

The Secondary Student Representative shall be appointed by the Student Council.

2.2.4 Elementary Student Representative

The Elementary Student Representative shall be appointed by the Principal, after consultation with the School Council.

2.2.5 Teacher Representative

The Teacher Representative shall be nominated and elected by members of the teaching staff assigned to the school.

2.2.6 Non-teaching Employee Representative

The Non-teaching Employee Representative shall be nominated and elected by non-teaching employees assigned to the school.

3.0 Elections

3.1 The current School Council may establish a School Council Elections Committee. The committee should have representation from parents, teaching staff, support staff and students (mandatory in secondary schools; in elementary schools, at the discretion of the principal).

3.2. In the case of a new school, the principal may form and chair an Elections Planning Committee. The committee should have representation from parents, teaching staff, support staff and students (mandatory in secondary schools; in elementary schools, at the discretion of the principal).

3.3. Election of Parent/Guardian Representatives

3.3.1 Parents/Guardians of a student enrolled at the school are eligible both to vote for and to run as a parent/guardian representative. Self-nomination is allowed.

3.3.2 Parent Candidate Nomination forms shall be filed by all candidates for parent/guardian positions on the School Council.

3.3.3 No individual campaign literature for School Council elections may be distributed or posted in the school.

3.3.4 School resources, both human and material, may not be used to support particular candidates or groups of candidates, with the exception of the candidate rationale for running which may be shared through the Principal.

3.3.5 If the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of positions, the candidates shall be acclaimed.

3.3.6 The Principal shall conduct a lottery to determine the random ballot position for each candidate.

3.3.7 Elections for School Council shall be conducted by secret ballot. Voters must be present at the school on the election day(s), during the preset hours (day and evening).

3.3.8 All eligible voters shall be entitled to cast one vote for each of the candidate positions available at their school.

3.3.9 If there is a tie for the final position for a representative on the School Council, the winner shall be determined by lot.

3.3.10 The election day proceedings shall be supervised by the school Principal.

3.3.11 If all elected positions have not been filled at the end of the election process and vacancies exist, the newly constituted School Council should follow the Vacancies in Membership section of this procedure.

4.0 Vacancies

4.1 A vacancy in the membership of a School Council shall be filled by election or appointment in accordance with the by-laws of the council.

4.2 If an election is held to fill a vacancy in the membership of a School Council, section 3.0 above, as the case may be, applies, with necessary modifications, to the election.

4.3 A vacancy in the membership of a School Council does not prevent the council from exercising its authority.

4.4 If a member does not attend three consecutive regular meetings, without prior approval of the council, the position may be deemed to be vacated by the council.

5.0 Term of Office

5.1 The term of office for elected and appointed positions on the School Council is one

year.

A person elected or appointed as a member of a School Council holds office from the date of the first meeting of the newly elected School Council (after elections of parent members), until the date of the first meeting of the School Council after the elections of parent members are held in the next school year.

5.2 In the event of an election or appointment part-way through the school year, the term of office will run from the date of the election or appointment, to the date of the first meeting of the School Council after elections are held in the next school year.

6.0 Officers

6.1 A School Council shall have a chair or, if the by-laws of the council so provide, two co-chairs.

6.2 A chair or co-chair of a School Council must be a parent/guardian member of the council, and shall be elected by the members of the council at the first meeting of the newly elected School Council.

6.3 An employee of the board that established the council cannot be the chair or co-chair of the council.

6.4 A School Council may have such other officers as are provided for in the by-laws of the council.

6.5 A School Council that engages in fundraising and/or financial transactions shall have a Treasurer. This office may be combined with another office, if the by-laws of the council so provide.

6.6 Vacancies in the office of chair, co-chair or any other office of a School Council shall be filled in accordance with the by-laws of the council.

7.0 Meetings

7.1 A School Council shall meet at least four times during the school year.

7.2 The first meeting of the newly elected School Council shall be held within the first 35 days of the school year.

7.3 All meetings, including committee meetings, of a School Council shall be open to the public.

7.4 All meetings, including committee meetings, of a School Council shall be held at a location that is accessible to the public.

7.5 The principal of a school shall, on behalf of the School Council, give written notice of the dates, times and locations of the meetings of the council to every parent of a pupil

who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school.

8.0 Quorum

8.1 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;
and

(b) a majority of the members of the council who are present at the meeting are parent/guardian members. O.Reg. 612/00 s.12(3)

9.0 Committees

9.1 A School Council may, in accordance with its by-laws, establish committees to make recommendations to the council.

9.2 Every committee of a School Council must include at least one parent/guardian member of the council.

9.3 A committee of a School Council may include persons who are not members of the council.

9.4 Minutes of committee meetings are to be maintained and provided to the School Council.

10.0 Voting

10.1 Each member of a School Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the council.

10.2 Each member of a committee of a School Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the committee.

10.3 The principal of the school is not entitled to vote in votes taken by the School Council or by a committee of the School Council.

11. By-laws

11.1 Every School Council shall have a set of by-laws.

11.2 The by-laws of a council must include the following:

(a) a by-law that governs election procedures and the filling of vacancies in the membership of the school council;

(b) a by-law that establishes rules respecting participation in school council proceedings in cases of conflict of interest; and

(c) a bylaw that, in accordance with any applicable policies established by the board that established the council, establishes a conflict resolution process for internal school council disputes.

11.3 The by-laws of a council should also include the following:

- a by-law regarding general expectations regarding meetings (e.g., attendance, promptness);
- a by-law regarding the number and scheduling of meetings;
- a by-law regarding the number of parent members;
- a by-law regarding the number, description, and duties of officers of the School Council;
- a by-law regarding the establishment and roles of committees;
- a by-law regarding the process for seeking input from the community; and
- a by-law containing a code of conduct for School Council members.

11.4 It is important to ensure that by-laws created by the School Council do not conflict with any of the provisions of Ontario Regulation 612/00, nor the TVDSB School Council's policy and procedure.

12.0 Minutes and Financial Records

12.1 A School Council shall keep minutes of all of its meetings, including committee meetings, and records of all of its financial transactions.

12.2 The minutes and records of the current and past 4 years shall be available at the school for examination without charge by any person.

13.0 Annual Report

13.1 Every School Council shall annually submit a written report on its activities to the Principal of the school and to the board that established the council.

13.2 If the School Council engages in fundraising activities and/or financial transactions, the annual report shall include a report on those activities.

13.3 The annual report shall be prepared and submitted no later than September 30 of the subsequent school year.

13.4 The Principal shall, on behalf of the School Council, give a copy of the report to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the copy is given, is enrolled in the school. This may be accomplished by:

- (a) giving the report to the parent's child for delivery to their Parent/Guardian(s);
- (b) posting the report in the school in a location that is accessible to Parent/Guardian(s); and

(c) posting the report on the school website.

14.0 Conflict of Interest

14.1 A conflict of interest for a School Council representative is any situation in which the individual's private interests may be incompatible or in conflict with their council responsibilities. A conflict of interest may exist whether or not a monetary advantage has been or may be conferred on the School Council member or their family.

A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential:

Actual: When a School Council member has a private interest that is sufficiently connected to their duties and responsibilities as a council member that it influences the exercise of these duties and responsibilities.

Perceived: When reasonably well-informed persons could reasonably believe that a School Council member has a conflict of interest, even where, in fact, there is no real conflict of interest.

Potential: When a School Council member has a private interest that could affect their decision about matters proposed for discussion.

A School Council member should try to avoid situations in which:

- a conflict of interest is likely to result;
- the member's ability to carry out their duties and responsibilities on the council may be jeopardized;
- the council member or their relatives gain or benefit indirectly;
- favours or economic benefits are accepted by the council member from any individuals, organizations, or entities known to be seeking business contracts with the school;
- any family member, friend, or person, organization, or business entity associated with the council member will be favoured.

14.2 Should an issue or agenda item arise during a council meeting where a council member is in a conflict of interest situation, they shall declare conflict of interest immediately and not participate in the discussion and resolution.

15.0 Conflict Resolution

15.1 From time to time a dispute may arise amongst the members of a School Council. It is expected that the members of that council will make every effort to resolve the conflict as per the Resolving Public Concerns and Complaints Policy and Procedure.

15.2 Should an internal dispute require outside intervention to achieve resolution, the

Superintendent of Student Achievement for that school will assess the unique needs of the situation and determine an appropriate approach.

Such an approach may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Assistance by a Board facilitator, trained in dispute resolution techniques;
- Assistance by an outside trained facilitator;
- Assistance by the Associate Director of Learning Support Service and/or Associate Director of Organizational Support Services; and
- Assistance by the Director of Education.

16.0 Responsibilities

16.1 Responsibilities of the School Council

The School Council shall:

- act in an advisory capacity and as a resource to the school principal and, when appropriate, to the Board;
- place the overall interests of the school and all of its students first;
- focus on student learning, achievement and well-being;
- focus on school-wide issues and what is best for the school and its students;
- operate in a non-judgmental manner, respecting confidentiality, employing constructive discussions and reaching decisions ideally through consensus;
- recognize and respect the rights and responsibilities of individual students and Board employees;
- ensure meetings remain free of discussion about individual parents, students, Board employees, trustees or other council members;
- communicate regularly with parents and other members of the community to seek their views and preferences with regard to matters being addressed by the council;
- promote meaningful parental and community involvement and actively seek the views of their school communities;
- keep well informed about school and board policies and procedures;
- communicate with the community about their activities;
- determine, in consultation with the school based Home and School Association (if applicable), how Parent Involvement Funds will be utilized; and
- submit, no later than September 30 of the subsequent year, a written report to the principal, and to the Board, outlining its goals, activities, and achievements. If the school council engages in fundraising activities and/or financial transactions, the annual report shall include a report on those activities.

The School Council may:

- make recommendations to the Principal of the school or to the board that established the council on any matter; including, but not limited to the following:
 - determination of the local school year calendar;
 - scheduling significant school events;
 - revisions to the school code of student behaviour;
 - curriculum and program goals and priorities;
 - the school's achievement in provincial and school board assessments to support and improve programs delivered in the school;
 - the school profile and the overall growth plan for the school;
 - the principal profile for consideration by the Board in its selection of school Principal;
 - the school's budget priorities including the local capital improvement plan, for consideration during the Board's annual budget review;
 - school-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational and nutritional programs;
 - school-community communication strategies;
 - extra-curricular activities in the school;
 - the community use of school facilities; and
 - Board policy and procedure;
- organize information and training sessions to enable members of the council to develop their skills as council members;
- apply for Parent Reaching Out grants; and
- may engage in fundraising to support student achievement and well-being in accordance with applicable Board policies and procedures.

Each School Council Member shall:

- maintain a school-wide perspective on issues;
- participate in council meetings, contributing positively and functioning as a team member;
- identify all agenda items and/or issues with which they have a possible conflict of interest;
- ensure that the rights to privacy of students, staff and parents will be respected and protected;
- observe the council's code of ethics and established bylaws; and
- evaluate the success in achieving the shared goals for the school.

Each School Council Member may:

- participate in information and training programs; and
- participate on any committees established by the School Council.

16.2 Responsibilities of Chair/Co-Chairs

The Chair of the School Council shall:

- adhere to the responsibilities of School Council Members as noted in 16.1;
- arrange for School Council meetings;
- prepare the agenda for School Council meetings in consultation with the principal;
- chair School Council meetings;
- ensure that the minutes of School Council meetings are recorded;
- communicate with the school Principal;
- ensure that there is regular communication with the school community;
- facilitate the resolution of conflict;
- participate as ex-officio member(s) of all committees established by the School Council;
- consult with senior board staff and trustees, as required;
- adhere to the responsibilities of Parent/Guardian members in section 16.4; and
- perform other roles and responsibilities as indicated in the council by-laws.

16.3 Responsibilities of other Officers

Other Officers of the School Council shall:

- adhere to the responsibilities of School Council Members as noted in 16.1; and
- perform other roles and responsibilities as indicated in the council by-laws.

16.4 Responsibilities of Parent/Guardian Members

Parent/Guardian Members shall:

- adhere to the responsibilities of School Council Members as noted in 16.1;
- solicit the views of other parents and members of the community to share with the School Council; and
- encourage the participation of parents/guardians within the school community.

16.5 Responsibilities of the Student Member

The Student Member shall:

- adhere to the responsibilities of School Council Members as noted in 16.1;
- solicit the views of other students to share with the School Council; and
- communicate information back to other students.

16.6 Responsibilities of the Teaching Staff Member

The Teaching Staff Member shall:

- adhere to the responsibilities of School Council Members as noted in 16.1;

- solicit the views of other teaching staff to share with the School Council; and
- communicate information back to other teaching staff.

16.7 Responsibilities of the Non-teaching Staff Member

The Non-teaching Staff Member shall:

- adhere to the responsibilities of School Council Members as noted in 16.1;
- solicit the views of other non-teaching staff to share with the School Council; and
- communicate information back to other non-teaching staff.

16.8 Responsibilities of the Community Member

The Community Member shall:

- adhere to the responsibilities of School Council Members as noted in 16.1;
- represent the community's perspective, including those of other community groups;
- solicit the views of other community groups to share with the School Council; and
- communicate information back to other community groups.

The Community Member may:

- assist with building partnerships and links between the school and community.

16.9 Responsibilities of the Home and School Association Representative Member

The Home and School Association Representative Member shall:

- adhere to the responsibilities of School Council Members as noted in 16.1;
- represent their Home and School Association;
- solicit the views of their Home and School Association to share with the School Council; and
- communicate information back to their Home and School Association.

16.10 Responsibilities of the Principal

The Principal shall:

- adhere to the responsibilities of School Council Members as noted in 16.1;
- ensure that a School Council is established and maintained as per Ontario Regulation 612/00 and the TVDSB School Council policy and procedure at all times;
- conduct elections for Parent/Guardian Members of the School Council;

- conduct the election of the Chair/Co-Chairs of the School Council from among the newly elected Parent/Guardian Members;
- forward a list of the elected and appointed School Council members to the Director of Education (or designate) no later than 30 days following each election or change of membership in the School Council;
- ensure that the list and contact information for each School Council member is:
 - (a) posted in the school in a location that is accessible to parents, and
 - (b) posted on the school website;
- be accountable for all funds raised by the School Council in accordance with the TVDSB School Generated Funds Procedure;
- ensure that copies of the minutes and financial records of the council are maintained and available per section 12 above;
- ensure that annual reports are completed as per section 13 above;
- assist the Council in communicating with the school community;
- attend all School Council meetings, if the Principal is unable to attend a meeting this responsibility may be delegated to the Vice-Principal;
- distribute promptly to each council member material identified by the ministry for distribution to School Council members and post the material in a school location accessible to parents;
- solicit views on matters pertaining to the establishment or amendment of school and/or TVDSB policies and procedures;
- solicit views on matters pertaining to the School Improvement Plan;
- solicit views on matters pertaining to school budgets;
- solicit views on matters pertaining to the accountability of the education system to parents;
- solicit views on matters pertaining to the communication of school plans to the public;
- consider each recommendation made by the School Council and report to the council with the action taken in response to the recommendation;
- act as a resource to the council on laws, regulations, and board policies and procedures;
- engage in internal conflict resolution activities in accordance with section 15 above;
- support and promote the council's activities and advice;
- obtain and provide information required by the council to enable it to make informed decisions;
- communicate with the Chair or Co-chairs of the Council;
- maintain a school-wide perspective on issues;
- participate in council meetings, contributing positively and functioning as a team member;
- identify all agenda items and/or issues with which they have a possible conflict of interest;

- ensure that the rights to privacy of students, staff and parents will be respected and protected;
- observe the council's code of ethics and established bylaws; and
- evaluate the success in achieving the shared goals for the school.

The Principal may:

- solicit the views of the School Council on any matter;
- participate in information and training programs; and
- participate on any committees established by the School Council.

16.11 Responsibilities of the Superintendent of Student Achievement

The Superintendent of Student Achievement shall:

- ensure that each Principal has fulfilled their responsibilities regarding School Councils per Ontario Regulation 612/00 and the TVDSB School Council policy and procedure;
- ensure that each school has a School Council established and maintained as per Ontario Regulation 612/00 and the TVDSB School Council policy and procedure at all times;
- ensure that the Principal has forwarded a list of the elected and appointed School Council members to the Director of Education (or designate) no later than 30 days following each election or change of membership in the School Council;
- ensure that copies of the minutes and financial records of the council are maintained and available per section 12;
- ensure that annual reports are completed as per section 13;
- engage in internal conflict resolution activities in accordance with section 15; and
- provide support to Principals in responding to School Councils matters.

16.12 Responsibilities of the Director of Education, and Associate Directors of Education

The Director of Education, and Associate Directors of Education shall:

- support and promote the role of School Councils; and
- engage in internal conflict resolution activities in accordance with section 15.

16.13 Responsibilities of the Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees shall:

- support and promote the role of School Councils;
- solicit the views of the School Councils established by the board with respect to the following matters:

- the establishment or amendment of board policies and guidelines that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents, including:
 - (a) policies and guidelines established under subsection 302 (1) of the Education Act with respect to the conduct of persons in schools within the board's jurisdiction,
 - (b) policies and guidelines established under subsection 302 (5) of the Education Act respecting appropriate dress for pupils in schools within the board's jurisdiction,
 - (c) policies and guidelines respecting the allocation of funding by the board to School Councils,
 - (d) policies and guidelines respecting the fundraising activities of School Councils,
 - (e) policies and guidelines respecting conflict resolution processes for internal School Council disputes, and
 - (f) policies and guidelines respecting reimbursement by the board of expenses incurred by members and officers of School Councils;
- the development of implementation plans for new education initiatives that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents, including:
 - (a) implementation plans for policies and guidelines established under subsection 302 (1) of the Education Act with respect to the conduct of persons in schools within the board's jurisdiction, and
 - (b) implementation plans for policies and guidelines established under subsection 302 (5) of the Education Act respecting appropriate dress for pupils in schools within the board's jurisdiction;
- Board action plans for improvement, based on the Education Quality and Accountability Office's reports on the results of tests of pupils, and the communication of those plans to the public;
- the process and criteria applicable to the selection and placement of principals and vice-principals.

The Board of Trustees may:

- solicit the views of School Councils on any other matter; and
- an individual Trustee may attend a School Council meeting, provided that both the School Council Chair/Co-Chairs and the Principal of the school have issued an invitation.

The education of the young people within the Thames Valley District School Board is a shared responsibility of schools, students, parents and community members. School councils provide a link between schools and their communities, a link that promotes a caring, learning environment.

SCHOOL COUNCIL OVERVIEW:

What is a school council? A school council is an organized forum and advisory body where members can discuss issues that affect their school, provide input to the school principal and the school board regarding issues that reflect the community's interest. The purpose of a school council is to improve student achievement and enhance the accountability of the education system. School councils are valuable partners that promote collaboration between the school, home and community.

Who are the school council members? School councils are made up of parents/guardians of students, the school principal, a teacher, a non-teaching staff member, a student (optional at the elementary level) and community representatives. The majority of members must be parents.

What do school councils do? One purpose of the school council is to promote and support the involvement of all parents in their children's learning. School council members attend meetings, and are kept informed about what is happening at the school, school board and provincial level. Members are asked to contribute to the discussions of the school council, actively seek the views of their community and encourage parental and community involvement. School councils maintain a broad focus on a range of issues of school-wide concern.

How do school councils enhance public education? School councils provide an excellent opportunity for parents/guardians to become involved in their child's education. School council decisions and recommendations are based on the best interests of students, while supporting staff in building on the school's strengths. School councils put students first and encourage partnerships that foster increased information sharing about the programs being offered in schools.

Why are school councils important? School councils highlight the public's enthusiasm for parent/guardian involvement in education. School councils take part in the educational decision making process by providing advice to the principal and the school board on school and student achievement related matters.

What issues do school councils address? School councils provide advice on issues that include, but are not limited to, student achievement, curriculum and programs, assessment/accountability, safe schools, parent involvement, code of conduct, dress code, health/safety, fundraising, and school board policies and procedures.

When are school council meetings held? School council meetings are held a minimum of four times a year, with the first meeting held within thirty-five days of the start of the new school year. Locations and times vary from school to school.



What is the Thames Valley Parent Involvement Committee?

The Thames Valley Parent Involvement Committee (TVPIC) is an advisory body whose primary purpose is to promote effective parent engagement, enabling parents to play a stronger role in supporting student achievement as mandated by the Ministry of Education. TVPIC provides advice on parent engagement with a board-wide perspective, acts as a liaison between school councils and the TVDSB and offers support, assistance and resources to school councils.



PARENTS ARE PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

Parents are vital and active participants in our school communities across the Thames Valley District. From fundraising and field trip supervision, to library support and classroom help, our schools are enriched each and every day through the dedication and support of parent volunteers.

Parent groups play an important role in the education system. They enhance learning opportunities for students, build and sustain community partnerships, and provide a forum through which parents and other members of each school community can contribute to improving student achievement and school performance.

For parents wishing to boost their involvement in their children's education, opportunities exist at every school, and there are a number of different parent organizations and committees who continue to seek parent membership.

- The Thames Valley Parent Involvement Committee brings together representatives from across the valley to help address Board-wide issues, and provides invaluable advice and assistance to our administrators.
- Schools across the district are also supported by strong School Councils.
- Home and School Associations have been a part of our history for more than 100 years, and can be found within many of our schools. These schools are further represented by the Thames Valley Council of Home and School Associations.
- Other parent groups, PTAs, parent associations, and school councils provide direct support to schools and classrooms throughout Thames Valley.



BECOME A VOLUNTEER

For parents who are interested in volunteering their time and energy on an individual basis, schools also welcome your support. While needs vary from school to school, volunteer opportunities do exist for classroom support, reading and math tutoring, library assistance, music support, team coaching, and so on. Please contact the school principal for more information on the volunteer opportunities within your child's school.



HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED IN YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION?

- Call the school and plan a visit with your child's teacher.
- Keep the teacher informed about things going on at home (*illness in the family or any major issues.*)
- Go to school events, concerts, sports days, parent-teacher interviews, meet the teacher nights.
- Support the actions of the school – become a positive partner.
- Create a positive learning environment at home.
- Join a school council, home and school association, or local parent organization.
- Volunteer in the classroom and school library.
(*See your child's teacher for information on the best way to do this.*)
- Attend school board meetings to learn more about how the school system is governed.
(*Contact your local Trustee for more information.*)



MORE INFORMATION

We strongly encourage parents and guardians to join the various parent groups that contribute immensely to the success of our schools. For more information, contact:

Thames Valley Parent Involvement Committee
chair@tvpic.ca

Thames Valley Council of Home & School Associations
www.tvdsb.ca/parents.cfm?subpage=21

Ontario Federation of Home and School Association www.ofhsa.on.ca

<https://www.facebook.com/TVCHSA>

Twitter @tvchsa

Email - tvchsa@gmail.com

Web site - <http://www.tvchsa.com>

SCHOOL COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT FORM

Year: _____

SCHOOL _____

PRINCIPAL _____

At the end of the school council term, as mandated by the Ministry of Education Regulation 612, school councils are required to submit an annual report to the school and the school board, **outlining the council's goals, activities, including any fund-raising activities and achievements.**

By **September 30** each year, the report must be completed and;

- A copy kept on file at school
- Copies made available to all parents and School Council members
- A copy submitted to TVDSB by email to l.fraser@tvdsb.ca

If more space is required, please feel free to attach additional information

1. PLEASE LIST THE SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS

	NAME
PARENTS	
REPRESENTATIVE FROM OTHER PARENT GROUPS (PROVIDE NAME OF GROUP)	
PRINCIPAL	
TEACHING REP.	
NON-TEACHING REP.	
STUDENT REP(S)	
COMMUNITY REP(S)	

GOALS of the School Council.... *Supporting student achievement*

School councils are required to set goals annually. List the school council goals for the past year:

MEETINGS of the School Council... *Supporting student achievement*

During the school year, our school council held _____ (number) meetings.

Generally, the school council met on the _____ (first, second, etc) _____ (day) of _____ (every, every other) month.

School Council meetings started at _____ (time) and usually lasted for about _____ (1, 1.5, 2, 2.5) hours.

ACTIVITIES of the School Council... *Supporting student achievement*

Briefly describe the activities your school council undertook this school year. This includes any activity or event that you hosted or participated in that was not a regular meeting. This does *not* include fundraising activities.

FUNDRAISING

Every school council, whether or not they are fundraising, *must* submit a financial report to the Thames Valley District School Board Finance Dept. by September 30th each year.

Our school council: ☐ Does not fundraise

☐ Fundraises (if yes, this should be a sub-committee of your school council)

If your school council is fundraising, please indicate how the school council funds were spent this year (items purchased, donations, etc.).

ACHIEVEMENTS of the School Council... *Supporting student achievement*

Please list the achievements of the School Council including Parent Involvement Strategies

School Council Chairperson (Printed)

Signed

Date

School Council Co/Vice Chairperson (Printed)

Signed

Date

Principal (Printed)

Signed

Date

Thank you for your commitment to your school councils and advancing student achievement.

Developing an Administration(Principal) Profile School Council Template for Input into Principal Selection

School _____

School Council _____

Date _____ 20 _____

Each TVDSB School Council is asked to provide to their 'Family of Schools' Superintendent an annual Principal/Vice-Principal Profile for their school. This template provides the school council a format in which to discuss and comment upon the characteristics best suited to your school community.

Please remember that this information is **not an evaluation** of the current principal/vice-principal in your school. It is a **reference document** which will be used by the superintendent and Trustees in the process of considering future transfers or appointments for principal or vice-principal. You are welcome to include any additional items as deemed appropriate by the School Council.

Please note that this template is supplied as a general guideline. The following are important factors to consider:

- Consult as widely in your community as possible.
- Publicize this item on your school council agenda so parents will know when and where it will be discussed.
- Feel free to create your own profile, use this template as a starter for discussion or rank the listed criteria.

The purpose of this document is to ensure an annual review of the specific leadership profile required by the school. Superintendents and Principals can provide assistance to school councils who request it.

Step One

List five interesting and relevant particulars about your School.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Step Two The Image of the School Leader

Principals and vice-principals play an essential role as school leaders; utilize the **Leadership Framework for Principals and Vice-Principals** as an additional source.

Equity and Diversity

Sample discussion items for School Council

- *Ensures fairness is present in all aspects of school life.*
- *Embeds equity in all aspects.*
- *Encourages true parental involvement and seeks for innovative ways to guarantee a diverse School Council.*
- *Leads by example.*
- *Provides many meaningful opportunities for staff, students, community.*
- *Facilitates meaningful communication among home, school and community.*
- *Ability to advocate for all students.*
- *Promotes and acknowledges the richness of the community encompassing all diversity.*
- *Strong community base – one who celebrates the community's diversity and promotes it and inclusiveness within the school.*
- *Welcomes the community into the school and ensures the community is reflected within the school.*

Please provide the leadership characteristics best suited to the needs of your community:

Improving Student Success and Well-being

Program Review and Implementation

- *Ability to implement sound program.*
- *Understands ministry and curriculum policy.*
- *Demonstrates knowledge of curriculum requirements, including the development of Individual Education Plans (IEP's).*
- *Conducts systematic reviews of all programs.*
- *Sets a tone that is fair and fosters mutual respect.*
- *Promotes co-curricular activities and fosters positive school spirit.*
- *Knowledge of effective transitions and facilitates these transitions for students and parents (eg. Grade 5 – 6, or elementary school to secondary)*
- *Ensures a variety of achievement measures, including for example EQAO assessment results form and integral part of program reviews and subsequent development of plans for student achievement.*
- *Communicates School Improvement Plans to staff, parents, the School Council and the school community.*
- *Uses a variety of assessment results to review programming for students.*
- *Ensures that school results are clearly communicated to parents.*

Please provide the leadership characteristics best suited to the needs of your community:

Parent and Community Engagement

A few examples of suggested comments:

- *Regards parents' as partners valuing parent leadership.*
- *Appreciative and supportive of parents' role in the school community.*
- *Shares and seeks input into School Improvement Plans, School Budget and Staffing models.*
- *Ensures measures of school results are communicated to parents in parent friendly language.*
- *Timely two-way communication with parents including newsletters and meetings, focus groups.*
- *Establishes a clear process for communicating problems that is positive and respectful.*
- *Open-minded and collaborative.*
- *Co-constructs with parent leaders meaningful parent engagement initiatives.*
- *Recognizes and values the Home and School Association*

Please provide the leadership characteristics best suited to the needs of your community:

Safe & Accepting School

- *Highly visible, friendly and interactive with students.*
- *Sensitive to the needs of all students.*
- *Encourages staff involvement in all aspects of school life.*
- *Demonstrates ability to communicate and interact appropriately with all school community partners.*
- *Commits to the enhancement of morale and positive working relationships among staff, students, parents, and the community at large.*
- *Regular communication with parents and staff.*
- *Establishes a clear process for communicating problems that is positive and respectful.*

Please provide the leadership characteristics best suited to the needs of your community:

Comprehensive Statement- Please add additional comments that will be pertinent to the selection of a principal (Administrator) for you school that has not been covered above. For example you may wish to highlight you school's particular special needs, educational environment, uniqueness and the school community.

- To ensure relevance and accuracy please in each school year:
- ✓ evaluate by school council, include the date of the review
 - ✓ annually submit to TVDSB Superintendent of Education

School Council Chairperson

Date



School Generated Funds

Process Manual

For Schools

And

School Councils

(Last Updated February 2018)

Department ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES - FINANCE

Reference(s)

- Policy & Procedure: School Generated Funds
- Policy & Procedure: Fundraising Projects for Schools
- Policy & Procedure: Acceptance of Gifts and Equipment
- Policy & Procedure: Fundraising Activities and Donations for School Projects, Enhancements, Equipment, and Programs
- Policy & Procedure: Student Activity Fees and Fees for Learning Materials and Activities
- Policy & Procedure : Purchasing
- *Education Act, Section 217*
- *Ontario Regulation 298, Operation of Schools, Section 11*
- *Ontario Regulation 612, School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees, Sections 22 & 24*

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1.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board has a responsibility to ensure that all school generated funds are collected in accordance with Board policies, procedures and municipal, provincial and federal laws and regulations. This responsibility includes ensuring that all funds are adequately protected, that they are controlled through proper accounting procedures and that accountability for the funds is maintained.

1.1 TVDSB STAFF MEMBER OR SCHOOL COUNCIL DESIGNATES (For School Council Funds)

- the TVDSB staff member or School Council Designate will act as a coordinator for the event
- the event coordinator(s) must have permission from the Principal prior to collecting any monies and starting the event
- ensure funds collected and invoices for payment are brought to the Fund Administrator on a daily basis
 - School Council funds must be brought to the school office, in a completed and sealed deposit envelope, as soon as it is reasonable to do so, ideally on the day of collection
- ensure details of financial activity relating to their category are recorded accurately
- ensure that funds received are disbursed according to the intent of the source of income
- the event coordinator cannot be the Fund Administrator
- ensure that any individual associated with the School or School Council does not enter into contracts in the name of the school or the Board
- must follow all applicable Board Policies and Procedures

Receipts

- collect money from students, providing all students with a receipt where appropriate as deemed by the Principal or School Council for School Council events
 - situations where a receipt is not necessary include but is not limited to:
 - opt-out days
 - bake sale
 - Toonie Tuesday
- where possible funds collected should be counted by two individuals
 - School Council funds must be counted by two volunteers
- complete, sign and seal the deposit envelope
 - School Council deposit envelopes require signatures from both volunteers who counted funds
- all deposit envelopes, if not detailed on the envelope, must contain a list of all student payments and the method by which they were paid
- take money to office daily
 - School Councils may be required to take funds off site depending on the nature of the School Council event. Funds should be taken to the School Office in a sealed and completed deposit envelope as soon as it is reasonable to do so
- record deposit in receipt log in the office
 - When possible, School Council deposits recorded in the receipt log should be signed in by both volunteers who completed the deposit envelope

Disbursements

- complete voucher slip for payment

- voucher slips completed by School Council require signatures from two authorized School Council designates
- ensure that receipt or invoice is attached to the form
- deliver voucher slip to Fund Administrator
- sign or initial all transactions brought forward by the students they are assisting
- students must be supervised by a Staff Member or School Council Designate when collecting funds

Review

- receive, review and sign off on monthly report(s) to ensure transactions are properly recorded
 - School Councils must document in the minutes of their meetings that the transactions in their category or categories are properly recorded monthly. A copy of the minutes must be provided to the school office for retention purposes.
- ensure that payments do not exceed amount collected by category

1.2 SCHOOL COUNCIL CHAIR

- ensure fundraising activities involving the students and/or school are in compliance with Board policies and procedures and that no direct or indirect benefit is derived by a member of the School Council
- ensure that School Council members are aware that where conflicts of interest exist, they are disclosed
- distribute and/or make available the annual School Council financial reports as indicated in the section of School Councils in the School Generated Funds procedure
- ensure the Treasurer understands their responsibility for receipts, disbursements, banking and record keeping including regular financial reporting for School Council meetings
- authorize the collection and disbursement of School Council funds in conjunction with the Council Treasurer and notify School Administration of any individuals that are authorized to act as School Council designates for deposits and/or disbursements

1.3 FUND ADMINISTRATOR

- record transactions on behalf of Staff Members or School Council
- provide School Council designate with a copy of any submitted and verified deposit envelope as confirmation of receipt
- administer funds on a daily basis
- act as one of the signing officers for the school's bank account
- maintain appropriate supporting and financial documentation
- count funds received in deposit envelopes and verify amounts
- complete prescribed year end procedures
- assist during internal audit

Banking

- prepare bank deposit
- note date deposited in the receipt log
- deposit funds into the bank on regular basis (minimum weekly)

Disbursements

- receive voucher slip requests for payment and ensure each is supported by a receipt or invoice, as well as being initiated by the appropriate authorized individual(s)
- have voucher slips approved by the Principal prior to issuing cheques
- give a copy of the voucher slip to staff member or School Council Treasurer as acknowledgment of payment
- ensure that all voucher slips initiated by students are initialed or signed by the staff member
- make sure that cheques to be signed are accompanied by all appropriate voucher slips and supporting documentation
- disbursements should be made on a weekly basis or as required

Record Keeping

- ensure details of all transactions are properly recorded
- complete bank reconciliation monthly
- print monthly transaction reports and distribute to staff members and identified School Council designate
- prepare financial statements and perform year end procedures
- liaise with staff members and School Council
- report problems to Principal
- calculate and prepare monthly HST rebate claim

1.4 PRINCIPAL

- ensure that the processes for School Generated Funds are implemented in compliance with the Board policies and procedures and ensure compliance by all participants
- communicate responsibilities to all school staff (semi-annually)
- liaise with School Council on proper procedures for School Generated Funds management
- notify the following individuals immediately if funds are lost or stolen:
 - Superintendent of Student Achievement
 - Associate Director & Treasurer Organizational Support Services or designate
 - School Council Chair and Treasurer if School Council funds are lost or stolen
- act as signing officer on the bank account
- manage School Generated Funds
- appoint the Fund Administrator
- ensure processes are in place to adequately control School Generated Funds within the school
- ensure access to suitable technology to support School Generated Funds
- maintain a list of categories noting responsible staff member(s) and identified School Council designates
- open, review, initial and date bank statements before giving them to the Fund Administrator
- review, sign and date bank reconciliations monthly
- review financial records and reports on ongoing basis (initial and date to indicate review)
- review category balances and income and expenditure activity periodically
- review and sign annual financial statements and reports
- determine when a second bank account is required either by legislation or other circumstance and contact Financial Services for assistance
- ensure security over cash and records

- change combinations, keys, passwords (if applicable) when staff involved in the administration of School Generated Funds change
- ensure that any individual associated with the school or School Council does not enter into contracts in the name of the school or the Board
- ensure that the School Council chair is aware of and understands their roles and responsibilities
- notify Superintendent of Student Achievement immediately if problems arise
- distribute annual financial statements according to procedure
- participate during audit/review and ensure implementation of recommendations

1.5 SUPERINTENDENT OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

- reinforce with Principals the need to comply with policies and procedures
- follow up on Internal Audit reports indicating problems with School Generated Funds
- report any of the following to the Associate Director of Organizational Support Services, or designate
 - if funds are lost or stolen
 - any misuse of funds
 - failure to follow any policy, procedure or guidelines

1.6 FINANCIAL SERVICES

- provide support to the schools
- receive approval on annual financial reports from Principal and School Councils
- produce, review and analyze financial statements and follow up with schools and copy Superintendent of Student Achievement with any concerns
- administer School Generated Funds policy and procedures
- keep schools informed concerning changes in applicable legislation
- produce annual financial reports for schools and School Councils
- maintain central file of all School Generated Fund annual statements

1.7 INTERNAL AUDIT DEPARTMENT

- audit or review the transactions processed through School Generated Funds in accordance with established Board auditing practices
- ensure that policies and procedures are followed
- report to schools and Board Administration on findings
- follow up on unsatisfactory responses to findings
- follow up on unsatisfactory findings as determined by Board Administration

2.0 MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

2.1 Financial Statements

The fiscal year-end is August 31. The Financial reports will be prepared by Financial Services once August bank reconciliations are completed by the school and a copy of the August bank statement is forwarded. The Financial Report will be forwarded to the Principal for review and signature. A separate report will be forwarded to the School Council detailing their financial activity for the year (i.e., revenues, expenses, assets, and liabilities). This report should be verified by council and returned to Finance with the appropriate approval signatures.

2.2 Accounting Records

The reports listed below must be printed off on a monthly basis once the bank reconciliation is complete. These reports are generated through SchoolCash.NET.

- the Bank Reconciliation report must be reviewed and signed off by the Principal.
- the Trial Balance report is a summary report showing total revenues and expenses. This report should be reviewed and signed off by the Principal.
- a Detailed Category Summary report shows the beginning and ending category balances, detailed disbursements and deposits for a specified time period. The Detailed Category Summary reports should be distributed to staff members, coaches and School Councils responsible for the category to review and sign off. These signed reports must be maintained in a secure location in the office.
 - School Councils must document in the minutes of their meetings that the transactions in their category or categories are properly recorded. A copy of the minutes must be provided to the school office for retention purposes.
- the waive fee report is for SchoolCash Online users only. The reports shows fees that have been waived by the Principal (not collected from students). The Principal should review and initial this report to ensure they are in agreement with any fees waived.

2.3 Documentation

It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure that all transactions are properly supported and substantiated. From an operational perspective, the Fund Administrator shall ensure that all transactions are properly supported and substantiated. Any unsupported transactions are to be brought to the attention of the Principal. The Fund Administrator shall ensure that:

- all payments made (cheques) are supported by a voucher slip and third party receipts or invoice - e.g. detailed cash register receipt
- all payments must be approved by the Principal in advance of incurring the expense
- all payments must be recorded on a timely basis and must be paid by cheque
- deposit envelopes are completed and signed by the staff member or School Council designates for all deposits
- all funds collected and remitted to the office remain onsite and stored in a safe location which has limited access until deposited
- all funds collected are to be deposited intact to the bank account promptly

It is recommended that staff responsible for maintaining accounting records ensure that access to records is restricted. Records shall be retained in a locking filing cabinet, which, at a minimum, shall be locked during off-hours. It is strongly recommended that school records not be removed from the school premises.

2.4 Records Retention

Accounting records and supporting documents are to be kept by a school for seven (7) years as per the dictates of the Canada Revenue Agency. These records and documents include:

- monthly bank statements
- deposit books

- month-end bank reconciliations
- void cheques (e.g. those cheques which were erroneously completed and/or never issued)
- deposit slips/envelopes, voucher slips (with invoices, receipts or other supporting documentation attached)
- accounting reports: the month-end general journal and/or the general ledger by account reports
- HST Reports

The records of each year should be boxed, labelled with a description of the contents and the record destruction date, and securely stored in the school.

2.5 Filing of Documentation

Documents can be filed in file folders or binders. It is recommended that the following system be used to ensure consistency for audit purposes and staffing changes:

ITEM	METHOD
deposit envelopes and any supporting materials	sequentially
cheque stubs, voucher slips and supporting documentation	sequentially
monthly reports	chronologically (by month)
bank reconciliations and bank statements	chronologically (by month)
student fee reconciliation (secondary only)	chronologically
HST reports	chronologically
transfers	sequentially

2.6 Description of SGF Category / Detail Event Activity Form

A description of each class, club or activity shall be prepared. This summary shall briefly describe each class and club along with the name and the signature of the staff advisor responsible for authorizing disbursements. This description shall be updated on an on-going basis to ensure that it is kept current (e.g. when a staff advisor changes or leaves the school, a new form shall be created). This summary shall be kept by the Principal or designate.

For SchoolCash Online users a Description of SGF Category form must be used for each category. If a fee is posted online, a Detailed Event Activity form can act in the place of the Description of SGF Category form to assign a staff advisor. All categories must have documentation detailing the staff advisor responsible.

School Councils are required to complete a Description of SGF Category form and or a Detail Event of Activity form, which denotes the authorized School Council designate(s) for each established category. School office staff will ensure that any voucher completed is signed by the appropriate authorized School Council designate(s), as per these forms.

2.7 Residual Balances in School Generated Funds Categories

The collection of funds from students for events and activities is to be done on a cost recovery basis; however, residual balances will often occur because the funds collected will not fully balance to costs incurred. Residual balances can fall into 2 categories:

- Residual balances for one-time categories, such as field trips and one-time student events or activities
- Inactive or legacy categories with a residual balances

Positive residual balances in one-time event/activity categories are expected to be marginal in nature. If a positive residual balance is marginal in nature it can be re-purposed. However, if the positive remaining balance is not marginal in nature the school administration should consider whether refunds to students are appropriate.

Residual Balances Guidance

If a residual balance in a category after a one-time event or activity equates to 5-10% of the amount students paid or is more than \$5-10 per student a refund should be considered. The practicality of issuing refunds will depend on the amount collected from each student and the overall residual balance in the category.

A positive residual balance from a one-time event or activity may be an amount where it is determined that issuing student refunds is not practical. However, if the amount is not marginal in nature the school should make every attempt to ensure that the funds are spent on the students that it was collected from.

School Administration will determine the appropriate course of action depending on the circumstances surrounding the specific category.

Inactive or Legacy Categories with Residual Balances

If a school has a category with a positive balance that has not been utilized in the last fiscal year or longer this amount can be transferred using one of the following two approaches:

- Transfer the funds to another “like” category
- Transfer the remaining balance to a clearing category, (as discussed below)

Clearing Categories for Transfers of Marginal balances or Inactive Categories

Schools are to establish the following 2 categories within their School Generated Funds, under the appropriate School Generated Funds Umbrella

- Field Trips/Excursions Residual Balances
- Student Activities Residual Balances

At the conclusion of a one-time event/activity if there is a positive residual balance that is marginal in nature, it can be transferred into the appropriate clearing category. Funds transferred into these clearing categories can then be used for benevolent purposes, to offset future costs of other school events or activities that are similar in nature, or to fund a small deficit balance in a similar event or activity. Funds within clearing categories are not to be used for Capital purchases.

Categories that are ongoing in nature such as Student Council or Athletics (for example), having a residual balance at year end, will have that balance rolled forward to be used in the following year.

2.8 School Audits

The School Auditor is responsible for conducting audits and reviews of the School Generated Fund accounts of all elementary and secondary schools. The selection of the school is based on an internal risk assessment. The School Auditor will provide a report to the school Principal and forward copies to the Director of Education, Associate Director & Treasurer Organizational Support Services, Associate Director Learning Support Services, the Board's external auditors and the appropriate Superintendent of Student Achievement. It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that audit findings are addressed in a timely manner and the Superintendent of Student Achievement to follow up as required.

2.9 HST Procedures

Schools are entitled to an 83.38% rebate on all HST paid from Ontario vendors (68% federal component, 93% provincial component) for student related activities or materials and a 100% rebate on all HST paid for printed books. (Printed book is defined to exclude newspapers, as well as magazines and periodicals that either are not purchased by subscription or that have more than 5% of their printed space devoted to advertising. Also excluded are books designed primarily for writing or drawing or affixing items, such as clippings, pictures, coins, stamps or stickers, agendas, calendars, directories and rate books.)

An HST rebate application form shall be submitted directly to Canada Revenue Agency. All schools are responsible to claim this source of revenue. To claim the HST rebate, original receipts/invoices must be on file, the company HST registration number must be listed on the receipt/invoice and the HST paid must be detailed on the receipt/invoice.

Schools must file HST rebates monthly.

Upon receipt of an HST rebate cheque from Canada Revenue Agency, the Fund Administrator will deposit the HST rebate to the Principal's Discretionary category and/or the School Council category, according to the expenses that generated the rebates.

Refer all correspondence with Canada Revenue Agency to Financial Services.

For any out of province purchases, please contact Financial Services.

2.10 Lost or Stolen School Generated Funds

Where funds are lost or stolen the Principal shall immediately notify:

- the appropriate Superintendent of Student Achievement
- the Associate Director & Treasurer Organizational Support Services or designate
- School Council Chair and Treasurer if School Council funds are lost or stolen

Lost or stolen funds shall not be replaced through Board funds. Any lost or stolen funds shall be reflected in the annual financial statements.

3.0 RECEIPT OF FUNDS

3.1 Receipts (Cash and Cheques)

All funds collected shall remain onsite and stored in a secure safe with limited access. Funds should not remain in a classroom. The only allowable exception to this mandate relates to School Councils as previously stated. In exceptional circumstances, funds may be stored overnight in the school safe without being officially signed in. The deposit envelope must be sealed, with staff member or School Council designate's name, date noted on it along with the reason the envelope is not being deposited as per normal procedure (see section 1.3).

All deposits (cash and cheques) received must be sealed in a deposit envelope with the deposit details recorded on the deposit envelope before being turned over to the Fund Administrator. A list of students who have paid, how they paid (cash / cheque), as well as the amounts paid shall be recorded on either the deposit envelope or on a listing attached to or filed within the envelope. Deposit envelopes are available in two sizes (5 7/8 by 9 1/2 or 9 by 12) through ePurchasing.

Once envelopes are sealed and submitted, they are not to be opened for any reason prior to preparing the bank deposit.

Cheques received to pay for School Generated Fund activities shall be made payable to the school.

All deposit envelopes shall be recorded in the receipt log by the staff member or School Council designate.

The receipt log shall be completed as follows:

- any staff member or School Council designate who turns in a deposit envelope to the school office shall record the date, their name, the category, and the amount of the deposit
- ensure that the proper backup is submitted (list of students paid, how they paid)
- the office staff member who accepts the deposit envelope shall initial the receipt log to indicate that the deposit envelope was received by the school office. The envelope shall then be secured, unopened, in a designated safe with limited access
- the remaining columns of the receipt log (SGF / Board, verified by, deposit to bank, deposit number) shall be completed by the person who verifies the amount in the envelope at the time that the bank deposit is prepared
- the back of the cheques shall be stamped with the school name, bank account number, and "For Deposit Only"
- deposits shall be added to the ledger immediately

3.2 Post-Dated Cheques

Post-dated cheques that are included in a deposit envelope cannot be deposited until a future date. They shall be handled as follows:

- remove the post-dated cheque(s) from the bank deposit and ensure that the "Total Deposit" on the deposit envelope and in the receipt log are updated to reflect the new total
- prepare a new deposit envelope for each uniquely dated post-dated cheque(s). The details on the new deposit envelope shall be completed by the office staff; "source of funds" shall explain that the contents are "post-dated cheques"

- report the date that the cheques can be deposited across the top of the new deposit envelope. Log the new envelope in the receipt log and secure the deposit envelope in the safe until the scheduled date of deposit, then proceed with the normal deposit procedures

3.3 Preparing Bank Deposits

- The contents of each deposit envelope shall be verified and the deposit envelope initialed. If the contents of the envelope differ from the amount noted on the outside, the Staff Member should be notified immediately and must agree with the difference. Once discussed, the deposit envelope and the receipt log should be amended and initialed by both the Staff Member and the Fund Administrator
 - if the contents of a School Council deposit envelope differ from the amount noted on the outside, the School Council Treasurer should be immediately notified of the discrepancy. The Fund Administrator is to complete the deposit using the total verified by cash and cheques within the deposit envelope
- once the deposit envelope has been verified and keyed into the system, funds should be stored in a cashbox with locking capabilities. This will keep the money out of sight and easy to manage in the event of an emergency. When all envelopes have been keyed, the deposit can be confirmed and taken to the bank
- the bank deposit shall be detailed in a multi-copy deposit book. If applicable an “adding machine tape” of the listed cheques deposited (generated from SchoolCash.NET) must be printed and attached to the retained copy of the deposit slip and the copy sent to the bank
- the bank deposit total shall be balanced to the “Total Deposit” amount on the deposit envelopes that support the deposit
- the actual date of deposit to the bank shall be noted in the receipt log. The Fund Administrator shall ensure that all deposit envelopes recorded in the receipt log (but not yet deposited) have been included in the bank deposit (with the exception of post-dated cheques which have been logged by office staff for future deposit)

3.4 Deposits to the Bank

A multi-copy deposit book shall be maintained to record and detail all bank deposits. To minimize the school's exposure in the event of loss or theft, deposits shall be made at least once per week during the school year, and more frequently during those periods when there is a high volume of funds received. The frequency of bank deposits is at the discretion of the Principal. It is the responsibility of the Principal to secure all money in a locked safe until it is to be deposited in the bank.

Under no circumstances shall cash on hand be disbursed. Cash that has been accepted for deposit to the bank shall be deposited to the bank intact and shall not be used to make payments.

3.5 “Night Deposit” Process

The bank deposit process requires the Fund Administrator to travel to the school's local bank branch at least once a week. Deposits performed in person at a branch are Thames Valley's preferred method of bank deposits. However, in certain circumstances this process may not be practical. With school Principal approval, a school may perform Night Deposits. The processes outlined in Section 3.3 - Preparing a Bank Deposit are to be followed. When a deposit is ready to be taken to the bank, the following steps are to be followed:

- Record the deposit in the school's multi-copy deposit book
- Place two copies of the deposit from the deposit book into the Night Deposit bag along with all funds to be deposited
- Ensure that Deposit bag is sealed and the contents are secure
- Peel off a copy of the bags deposit slip containing the bag's serial number and attach it to the remaining multi-copy deposit book page
- Enter the Night Deposit bag's serial number into the field called "Night Wallet" in the Deposit Module of SchoolCash.net
- Upon arrival at the bank, use the key provided by RBC to open the Night Deposit shoot and drop the Deposit Bag down the shoot

Verification of the amount deposited will not be received by the school until it receives its next bank statement. If there is a discrepancy between the amount believed to be deposited and the amount reflected on the school's bank statement, the amount reflected on the bank statement will be deemed to be correct and an adjusting entry in SchoolCash.net will be required. If there is a large discrepancy between the amount believed to be deposited and the amount reflected on the bank statement, please contact the RBC London team at serviceteamlon@rbc.com with a cc to your school's Financial Services contact. The details of the deposit and the deposit bag serial number will be required.

Deposits containing \$2,500 in cash or more are not to be deposited through the Night Deposit Process; these deposits must be processed within a branch at a customer service wicket.

The term "Night Deposit" is used by banks to describe the deposit chute located at branches. This will allow staff to perform a SGF deposit without having to wait in line at a busy branch or at a branch without a dedicated business wicket. For the safety of staff performing bank deposits, it is expected that any deposits performed under the Night Deposit process will be completed during or directly after normal working hours. Deposits completed under this process are not to be completed at night.

3.6 Receipt of Funds from Another School

A receipt shall be issued to another school for funds received (e.g. tournament fees) to ensure that the school that has issued the payment has a receipt for their records and the school in receipt of funds has a copy for their records.

3.7 Receipt of Funds After Hours

Where a staff member or School Council designate is in receipt of funds after hours, the individual shall deposit those funds into a secure drop box in the school where available. Ensure the deposit envelope is sealed, with Staff Member(s) or School Council designates name, date and reason on the envelope. There must be 2 people present when the drop box is opened the next day. The funds will be returned to the Staff Member who made the initial deposit to deposit as per normal procedure (see section 1.1). Wherever possible, the funds should be pre-counted before dropping them in the box and recounted the next morning.

4.0 DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

- all disbursements must comply with the Purchasing Policy and Procedure and the Expense Reimbursement Policy and Procedure. Valid School Generated Fund expenses ordered through Purchasing can be reimbursed monthly once the invoice has been paid taking into account the HST rebate
- all payments must be approved by the Principal in advance of incurring the expense
- reimbursements to Principals must be approved by their Superintendent for proper segregation of duties and approval authority
- all disbursements shall be made by cheque
- cheques are to be signed at the time of issuance by two signing officers. The use of signature stamps or electronic signatures is unacceptable
- cheques made payable to cash are not acceptable
- all cheques must be accounted for. Damaged/voided cheques are to be maintained for future reference. Blank cheques are to be stored in a secure location in order to prevent loss or theft

4.1 Cheque Requests

No payments shall be made without a voucher slip completed and signed by the Staff Member or School Council designate requesting the cheque. All voucher slips shall be accompanied by proper receipts or invoices. Principal authorization is to be received before the cheque is issued. Payment cannot be made from statements, credit/debit slips and must be original itemized invoice/receipts. The cheque number is to be noted on all requests.

4.2 Advance of Funds

A voucher slip request shall be completed in order to obtain an advance of funds. The request shall be authorized by the Principal prior to disbursement. Any remaining funds shall be returned to the School Generated Funds account immediately.

Where the advance is received for an item, such as tips for large trips, an Advance of Funds Control Sheet shall be provided to the staff member. The staff member will disburse the funds and track how the funds were disbursed. The control sheet is then returned to the Fund Administrator with any remaining cash, and attached to the original voucher slip. Any cash returned is recorded in the receipt log and follows the normal deposit procedures.

Where the advance is required for float purposes (such as a dance), the amount shall be returned in a separate deposit envelope from any proceeds from the dance.

4.3 Voided or Damaged Cheques

All voided or damaged cheques are to be attached to the original voucher request. The word, "VOID" shall be written boldly across the face of the cheque.

4.4 Replacement of Cheques

If a payee has indicated they did not receive the cheque issued by the school, or it has been lost, review the bank statements to ensure the cheque has not been cashed. If there is no record of the cheque being cashed, the bank shall be notified and a stop payment requested. A replacement cheque may then be issued, noting the previous cheque number. This transaction shall be properly recorded in the records.

5.0 BANKING

5.1. Bank Account

Each school will maintain a single bank account in the school's name for School Generated Funds.

Use of client cards, bank machines or electronic banking is not permissible.

Cheques are to be pre-numbered and laser printer compatible. Hand written cheques are not acceptable.

Exceptions to the single bank account would be granted where legislative requirements or special circumstances exist. The Principal shall contact the appropriate support person in Financial Services for assistance before establishing a second account. The Principal shall review account activity of a second account monthly to ensure that it is appropriate for continued use.

5.2. Board Banking Arrangements

In order to benefit from the Board's arrangement with the Royal Bank, it is recommended that all schools maintain their bank account with the Royal Bank where geographically feasible.

Benefits include:

- obtaining a preferred interest rate on bank balances
- waiving of most bank service charges on the account

The appropriate support person in Financial Services may be contacted for more information.

5.3. Banking Protocols

The following protocols shall be followed:

- the Principal must be a signing authority and shall designate the staff that have signing authority for the school's bank account. Signing authority shall be a minimum of three to a maximum of four people. A school's Administrative Secretary must be one of the school's signing authorities.
- a signature on a cheque indicates that supporting documentation has been examined and that approval has been granted. Thus, signatures shall not be provided without proper supporting documentation (e.g. blank cheques shall never be signed)
- all cheques shall be pre-numbered and computer generated

- bank statements must cut off on the last day of the month. Statements should include cancelled cheques or scanned copies of such
- bank statements are to be opened by the Principal, reviewed, dated and initialed before turning over to the Fund Administrator
- bank reconciliations shall be prepared on a monthly basis (as of the last day of the month) and reviewed, signed and dated by the Principal. The Principal, shall:
 - ensure that the bank statement balance agrees with the amount reflected in the bank reconciliation
 - ensure that the balance recorded in the school records for the bank account agrees with the amount reflected in the bank reconciliation
 - review all outstanding deposits, outstanding cheques and miscellaneous charges for accuracy
 - ensure that NSF cheques are taken into consideration when the bank reconciliation is completed
 - ensure that School Council receives notification of any cheques issued to them that are returned NSF
 - ensure that the bank statement is attached to the bank reconciliation and filed in chronological order (e.g. by month)