

Leslie Frost Public School- School Council Constitution
Created April 2019

References and Related Documents

- Ontario Ministry of Education: School Councils-a Guide for Members
- TLDSB Administrative Procedure-School Councils
- TLDSB School Councils Procedure Appendix 5.4 -School Council Constitution Template

Article 1 Name

1.1 The organization shall be known as Leslie Frost Public School Council. Hereafter it will be referred to as the Council.

Article 2 Purpose and Scope of Council

2.1 The Council will support student success and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents by making recommendations to the Principal and the school board.

2.2 School Councils, as advisory bodies, may make recommendations to the school Principal or to the Board on any matter that will improve student achievement, well-being and accountability of the education system to parents. Council will advise on the following:

- School and learning environment
- Curriculum and program
- Communication and promotion of school activities
- School code of conduct
- School improvement plan
- School dress code
- Fundraising activities
- School leadership
- School-community communication strategies
- Extra-curricular activities
- School-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational and nutritional programs
- Community use of school facilities
- Co-ordination of local services for children and youth
- Board policies

2.3 School Councils will also focus on engaging parents and fostering involvement in their school community as a key factor in improving student achievement and success. This may involve developing strategies to:

- Encourage and broaden opportunities for parents
- Remove barriers for parents who find involvement challenging
- Recognize parent and community volunteers
- Report on levels of parent engagement/involvement
- Report on Parent Engagement Fund allocation

Article 3 Membership

3.1 Members of the School Council may include:

- Parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school
- One community representative
- One student
- One teacher employed at the school
- One support staff member
- The Principal or Vice Principal of the school
- One person appointed by the Ontario Federation of Home and school Association, if the association is represented in the school

3.2 Parents/guardians shall form the majority of the Council

3.3 The Leslie Frost Public School Council shall have between 7-15 voting members as follows:

Parents/guardians:

- Maximum of 10 members
- Must have a child attending the school
- A Board employee who works at the school his or her child attends is not eligible
- A Board employee who does not work at the school their child attends may be eligible as long as they notify the other parents that they are employed by the Board
- School trustees are not eligible
- The council will encourage representation from both tracks of the school, English and French Immersion.

Community Representative:

- Maximum of 2 members to be chosen by Council
- The Council must appoint at least one community representative, who cannot be an employee at the school

Student Representative:

- One student appointed by the Principal, if deemed appropriate by the school council

Teacher Representative:

- One teacher elected by other teachers in the school (excluding the Principal and Vice-principal)

Support Staff Representative:

- One non-teaching staff member elected by other non-teaching staff members
- Eligible members may include secretary, educational assistant, custodial staff etc

3.4 The Principal (or Vice-Principal if so delegated) is a non-voting member of the Council

Article 4 Roles

4.1 The Principal shall:

- attend all meetings unless unable to do so by reason of illness or other cause
- assist in the establishment and operation of School Council
- support and promote School Council activities
- distribute and post information from the school, the Board and the Ministry of Education seek input from Council on school policies and guidelines, new initiatives, improvement plans and communication
- consider recommendations made by Council and advise Council of actions taken
- act as a resource and provide, where reasonable, information requested by Council
- maintain on-going communication the with the School Council Chair

4.2 The School Council Chair shall

- In collaboration with the school Principal shall call School Council meetings
- prepare the agenda for meetings in collaboration with the Principal
- chair School Council meetings
- ensure that minutes and financial records are maintained
- maintain on going communication with the Principal
- encourage community representation
- facilitate communications with parents and community
- ensure representation at Regional School Council meetings
- serve as council chair for not more than 2 years in a row

Note: the Chair will automatically become a member of the District School Council Parent Involvement committee and will be invited to attend a minimum of 4 meetings of this committee per school year. The chair may delegate this role to another member of the School Council

4.3 The School Council Vice-Chair shall:

- fulfil duties of the School Council Chair in the absence of the School Council Chair

Note: the School Council Chair and Vice-chair may choose to share responsibilities and operate as Co-chair instead

4.4 The Secretary shall:

- record and report, without prejudice, the proceedings of the Council by preparing minutes of each School Council meeting
- Submit the minutes of each meeting to the Principal or Vice-Principal to be posted on the Leslie Frost Public School webpage in the parent resource section
- Prepare correspondence on behalf of the Council as needed, including the annual report

4.5 The Treasurer shall:

- keep full and accurate accounts of monies received/disbursed on behalf of the Council
- Act in accordance with the Guidelines For School Generated Funds document
- Present a completed financial statement at the final Council meeting of the school year
- Prepare an account of all School Council fundraising activities and how funds were used for the annual report.

Note: Records of all meetings and financial transactions shall be kept for seven years in a place known to the Principal and readily accessible to all school council members.

4.6 All members shall:

- attend and participate in Council meetings
- participate in information and training programs as needed
- act as a link between the Council and community
- welcome the participation of parents/guardians from all groups and of other people in the community
- follow Board policies and procedures and comply with applicable legislation
- act in good faith

Article 5 Election Procedures

5.1 During the last meeting of the previous year an Election Committee shall be struck by the Council to help plan the election process for the following year, the gathering or nominations, and the running of the election.

5.2 The Election Committee shall:

- provide nomination forms
- ensure that the school community is notified of election procedures and the election date, location, and time at least fourteen days in advance of the election

If more than 10 nominations are received:

- request a profile from candidates and make these available to voters
- conduct the elections by secret ballot
- help the Principal notify all candidates of the results
- keep all results and related information confidential

5.3 Elections shall occur within the first thirty days of the start of each school year on a date established by the Chair after consultation with the Principal.

5.4 The Principal shall give written notice of the date of the election of parent members at least fourteen days before the day of the elections. The notice, including date, time, and location of the election shall be distributed to every parent who has a student enrolled in the school and posted in the school in a location accessible to parents.

5.5 Each parent/guardian seeking election must be nominated or self-nominated in writing, must have a child registered at the school, and must declare if he or she is employed by the school board

5.6 Each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent/guardian membership position on the Council.

5.7 All individuals standing for election shall be notified of the result before the results are released to the school committee

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

5.9 The School Council shall help the Principal ensure that the names of the new members are publicized to the school community within 30 days of the election.

5.10 An orientation package is provided to each successful candidate

Article 6 Term of Office

6.1 After elections have been held a person who has been elected as a member of the School Council shall hold office from the date of the election until the date of the first meeting after elections in the next school year

6.2 A person may be re-elected from year to year

Article 7 Filling Vacancies

7.1 A Parent Council position shall be considered vacant once the following steps occur:

- Member misses 2 consecutive meetings without sending regrets
- Parent council sends a letter of intent to the missing member

- Member does not respond before the next Parent Council meeting **OR**
- Member sends a letter of withdrawal to parent council

7.2 Should an elected parent/guardian Council position become vacant before the next election, the Council shall fill the vacancy by appointment from the non elected candidates from the previous election.

7.3 If none of the previous candidates remain interested in becoming a Council member, the Council may request that interested parents/guardians from the school community submit their names for consideration. The council shall then appoint one of those who indicate an interest.

7.4 When a vacant spot on Council is filled, the new members term shall expire at the time of the next election

Article 8 Meetings

8.1 The first meeting shall take place within 35 school days of the school year after the election

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

8.3 At the first meeting of the new School Council at the beginning of the year in collaboration with the school Principal or designate the Council shall set dates, times and locations for its meetings throughout the year. All meetings shall be held at the school or in a location accessible to the public.

8.4 Within 30 days of election, the new Council will create and follow a communications plan to raise awareness of Council activities and increase parental involvement

8.5 All meetings are open to the public

8.6 A meeting can only be constituted if a quorum is present and comprised of a majority of parents.

Article 9 Quorum

9.1 Quorum shall consist of 50 per cent of the voting members plus one.

9.2 If a voting member cannot be present they may authorize another voting member, in writing, to act and vote as their proxy.

9.3 A person attending a council meeting as a proxy for a voting member counts towards quorum

9.4 In the absence of a quorum, any business requiring decisions either by consensus or vote must be deferred to the next meeting or dealt with in a manner outlined in Article 12

Article 10 Conflict of Interest

10.1 Members of the Council shall declare a conflict of interest in matters that they, members of their families, or business entities in which they may have a vested interest, stand to benefit either directly or indirectly from decisions of the Council.

10.2 A member shall exclude him or herself from discussions and resolutions in which

- a conflict of interest if like to result
- the members ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities as a member of the Council maybe jeopardized
- the Council member his or her relatives, or a business entity in which the member may have an interest may gain or benefit directly or indirectly as a result of actions that may be taken by the

Principal or Board in response to advice that the Council provides to the Principal or to the board.

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

Article 11 Conflict Resolution

11.1 Every Council member will be given an opportunity to express his or her concern or opinion about the issue at dispute

11.2 Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times

11.3 Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption

11.4 The Student Council Chair's responsibility is to clarify the statements made by all speakers, to identify common ground among the points of view raised and to set out the joint interests of all members

11.5 If all attempts at resolving the conflict have been exhausted without success the School Council Chair shall request the invention of a superintendent or other Board administrator to facilitate a resolution to the conflict

Article 12 Decision Making

12.1 The Council shall attempt to reach decisions by consensus

12.2 If a consensus is not possible Roberts Rules of Order will be used for decisions requiring a vote. (Motion made. Motion seconded. Discussion. Vote.)

12.3 All school Council members and proxies present at the meeting will be eligible to vote

12.4 Prior to a vote the voting method should be established. In the interests of efficiency and transparency most votes will be by show of hands. However in the event of a sensitive or contentious issue a request for ballot voting may be made and considered.

12.5 Should a time sensitive or urgent matter require a decision before the next Council meeting, a motion that has been seconded may be circulated by email to all Council members for discussion and voting by email.

Article 13 Governance

13.1 The Council shall act in transparent manner

13.2 The Council will always endeavor to consider the needs and best interests of students before making decisions

Article 14 Making amendments

14.1 Notice of intent to amend the Constitution, along with specific details of the amendment(s) must be provided at least one meeting prior to any vote

14.2 Any amendments to the Constitution must have a minimum of two thirds of the Council in favour of the amendment.