

Constitution For Walden Public School

Walden School Council

Reviewed and Updated October 2020

Section I Name

The name of the organization shall be Walden Public School Council, hereafter referred to as the Council.

Section II Mission Statement

The council is an advisory body, which will work collaboratively with the School and Board to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. It will also assist to provide a sharing, caring and learning environment so that each student will realize their fullest potential. The council is established under the Education Act-Ontario Regulations 612/00 (School Councils) and faithfully adheres to the Regulations therein.

Section III Goals

The goals shall reflect the mission of the Council:

1. To promote, maintain and support a positive school environment for students, staff and parents/guardians at Walden Public School.
2. To facilitate communication among parents and/or guardians, administrators, teachers and the students in the school community.
3. To be a liaison with the school community.
4. To provide input into school decision-making by providing recommendations in accordance with governing regulations to the principal of the school and the board that established the Council to address the needs of the students at Walden Public School.

Section IV Responsibilities of School Council

1. To act as an advisory body. The Council will provide recommendations to the school principal and to the school board on any matters including, but not limited to, those listed below:
 - ❖ Local school year calendar
 - ❖ School code of student behavior
 - ❖ Curriculum and program goals and priorities, to ensure students have opportunities to meet Ministry standards.
 - ❖ The responses of the school or school board to achievement in provincial and board assessment programs.
 - ❖ Preparations of the school profile
 - ❖ Selection of principals
 - ❖ School budget priorities, including local improvement plans
 - ❖ School communication strategies: more use of emails, website and social media

- ❖ Methods of reporting to parents and the community
 - ❖ Extra-curricular activities in the school
 - ❖ School-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational, and nutritional programs
 - ❖ Community use of school facilities
 - ❖ Local coordination of services for youth and children
 - ❖ Seeking the views of the school community (through questionnaires, informal discussions, topic-specific meetings)
 - ❖ Encouraging and promoting parental engagement and support (by publicizing opportunities for ways to get involved)
2. To develop a yearly plan with goals, priorities and procedures.

Section V Authority

The council may take recommendations to the principal of the school or to the board that established the council on any matter. The council will respect the management rights and responsibilities of the principal of the Board.

Section VI Membership

1. The council shall reflect the diversity of our school community. Parents and guardians will form the majority of members on the Council.
2. The Council itself shall consist of:
 - i. A minimum of 5 and a maximum of 15 parents, and/or guardian of the students enrolled in the school, elected by the parents and guardians. Note: Parents and/or Guardians employed by the Board that established the Council shall not be eligible unless the parent and/or guardian disclose this information to the voters prior to election.
 - ii. The school Principal
 - iii. At least 1 teacher (other than the principal or vice-principal, elected by members of the teaching staff)
 - iv. At least 1 non-teaching staff member elected by members of the non-teaching staff. (Currently we do not have a non-teaching staff member)
 - v. A minimum of 1 and up to 2 community members appointed by the Council. Community members must not be employed by the school. (Currently no one is in this position)
3. Elections shall occur within the first thirty days of the start of each school year. If the number of candidates is less than or equal to 15, the candidates shall be acclaimed. If the number of candidates exceeds 15, the principal shall be responsible for ensuring an election is held.
4. In the event of an election, one child from each family shall go home with a ballot sheet and a brief biography/position statement for the candidates. All eligible voters shall be entitled to cast one vote for each of the candidate positions available. Only the names of the successful

candidates shall be made public. All individuals standing for election shall be notified of the results before the results are released to the school community.

5. The term of office for all Council positions is one year.
6. Each parent and/or guardian seeking to be on Council 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 Board.
7. For a Council motion to pass there must be a quorum of members present and the parents or guardians must constitute a majority of those present.
8. If Council members have received notice of a motion at least one week prior to the meeting, a motion shall pass by a simple majority, whether or not a quorum is present, as long as the parents /guardians make up the majority of those present.
9. Attendance
 - i. It is expected that Council members will attend at least half of the council meetings. If a member fails to attend at least three meetings in a row or fails to attend at least half of the meetings, the council may elect to remove that member and fill the empty position.
10. Should an elected parent/guardian council position become vacant for any reason, before the next election, that council shall fill the vacancy by appointment from the non-elected candidates from the previous election. If none of those candidates remain interested in filling the position, the council may request that interested parents/guardians from the school community submit their names for consideration.
11. The Chair of the Council shall be a parent and be elected by the Council.
12. A member of Council may be re-elected or re-appointed for additional terms.
13. No honorarium shall be paid to members of the Council.
14. A council member may be asked to resign by 2/3 majority vote if he/she is not supportive of this constitution.

SECTION VII Roles of Council Members

1. The Chair of the Council
 - ❖ Establishes Council meeting dates and times as approved by Council
 - ❖ Calls Council meeting
 - ❖ Prepares agendas for the Council meeting with input from Council
 - ❖ Provides an electronic copy of the agenda to the principal for posting on the school website at least three days prior to meeting date.
 - ❖ Chairs Council meeting
 - ❖ Ensures that the Secretary of the Council records and maintains council meeting minutes
 - ❖ Communicates with the school principal
 - ❖ Ensures that there is regular communication with the school community.

- ❖ Consults with senior staff members of the school board and trustees as required.
- ❖ Organizes future elections
- ❖ Appoints an alternate in the event that the Chair is unable to attend a meeting.
- ❖ Receives correspondence on behalf of the Council.
- ❖ Issues correspondence on behalf of the Council.
- ❖ Facilitates conflict resolution.
- ❖ Observes the Council's Code of Conduct and established bylaws.
- ❖ Attends meetings as scheduled.

2. The Secretary of the Council

- ❖ Ensures that the minutes of the school council meeting are recorded and maintained as per Section 16, subsection 1,2, and 3 of the Regulations.
- ❖ Provides an electronic copy of the minutes to the Principal for posting on the school website (once they have been approved at the next meeting)
- ❖ Issues correspondence on behalf the Council in consultation with the Chair
- ❖ Maintains all official documents of the Council including policy manuals, constitution and bylaws.
- ❖ Prepares the annual report of the Council with the input of the Chair and members of the Council.
- ❖ Observes the Council's Code of Conduct and established bylaws.
- ❖ Attends meetings as scheduled.

3. The Members of Council

- ❖ Participate in Council meetings as scheduled, as well as information and training programs.
- ❖ Act as a link between the Council and the community.
- ❖ Encourage parents/guardians to participate in their child's education.
- ❖ Observe The Council's Code of Conduct and established bylaws.

4. The Principal of Walden Public School

- ❖ Supports and promotes the Council's activities
- ❖ Consults with the Council as necessary.
- ❖ Acts as a resource to the Council on laws, regulations, board policies and collective agreements.

- ❖ Encourages the participation of parents/guardians and other people within the school community.
- ❖ Ensures that copies of the minutes of Council meetings are kept at the school and posted on the school website.
- ❖ Notifies the school community of information related to the Council.
- ❖ Communicates with the Chair as required.
- ❖ Receives and responds to school council recommendations.
- ❖ Observes the Council's Code of Conduct and established bylaws.
- ❖ Attends meetings as scheduled.

5. The School Staff Representatives

- ❖ Contributes to the discussions of the school council
- ❖ Solicit views from their staff group to share with the Council
- ❖ May participate on any committees established by the school Council
- ❖ Communicate information back to their staff groups
- ❖ Observe the Council's Code of Conduct and established bylaws
- ❖ Attends meetings as scheduled

6. The Community Representatives:

- ❖ Contributes to the discussion of the Council
- ❖ Represents the community's perspective.
- ❖ May participate on any committees established by the Council
- ❖ Helps build partnerships and links between the school and the community
- ❖ Observes the Council's Code of Conduct and established bylaws.
- ❖ Attends meetings as scheduled.

Section VIII Meetings

1. A minimum of 4 meetings of the Council will be held yearly. The newly elected Council shall set a meeting schedule for the year. More meetings can be called with the majority approval of the Council.
2. The Council shall meet within the first 35 days of the school year, after the election held under section 4 and 5 of the regulations, on a date fixed by the principal of the school.
3. A meeting of the Council cannot be held unless,
 - i. A majority of the current members of the Council are present at the meeting; and

- ii. A majority of the members of Council who are present at the meeting are parent/guardian members (Quorum is over 50% of voting members).
- 4. The principal shall, on behalf of the Council give written notice of the dates, times and locations of the meeting of the Council to every parent/guardian of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given is enrolled in the school.
- 5. All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public.
- 6. Parties wishing to make a presentation to the Council may submit a written brief prior to the scheduled meeting; said brief may be submitted to the school office or directly to the Chair of the Council and may not exceed 15 minutes in time.
- 7. Council meetings shall be no longer than 2 hours in length. A maximum of two 15 minute extensions may be approved by a vote of majority of those members present.
- 8. The purpose of the Annual General Meeting shall be to
 - i. Receive reports of the years' work
 - ii. Receive reports from subcommittees
 - iii. Transact other business as deemed appropriate by the Council

Section IX Committees

1. Each committee of the Council shall be chaired by a member of the Council and include at least 1 parent/guardian member.
2. Committees are responsible to the Council.
3. Committees may include persons who are not members of Council.
4. Standing committees shall serve until their mandate has been completed.
5. A simple majority of members of a committee shall constitute a quorum.
6. The Chair of the council shall be an ex-officio member without a vote on all standing committees.
7. The standing committees of the Council may be:
 - ❖ Education
 - ❖ Public Relations/Communication
 - ❖ School Advocacy
 - ❖ Nomination
 - ❖ Extra curricular activities and programs
8. The role and responsibilities of each committee are as follows:
 - Education
 - To provide advice on curriculum goals and priorities; E.g. Reviewing and providing input on draft/proposed curriculum documents; to provide comments and recommendation on proposed programs or review of programs and priorities
 - To provide advice on the responses of the school or school board/section to achievement in provincial and board assessment programs; e.g. providing

comments and recommendation on existing and proposed assessment programs.

- To provide advice on School-Community strategies as they relate to education/curriculum matters; e.g. providing information forums for parents and students on timely education and curriculum subjects.
- To ensure students have opportunities to meet Ministry standards
- To suggest services for students to improve learning, such as assistance from reading specialists and guidance counsellors.

Public Relations/Communication

- To maintain a positive image of the Council in both the educational and greater communities by profiling relevant Council news to the Walden Public School parents and the media, including social media.
- To meet when deemed necessary.
- To make regular reports of the Council.
- To review all submissions with the Principal or designate.

Nomination

- To present a slate of candidates for annual September elections
- To conduct the election as per sections 4 and 5 of the regulations.

School Advocacy

- To attempt to influence legislation governing the Rainbow District School Board and/or Walden Public School
- To act upon any political action endorsed by the Council for the ultimate well-being of Walden Public School.
- Draft the yearly Principal Profile to submit to the Council for approval by Feb.1st of each school year.

Extra curricular activities and programs

- To meet when deemed necessary
- To organize extracurricular activities and programs previously approved by the Council
- To submit regular reports to the Council.

Note: All committees are responsible for the submission of their final report of yearly activities and achievements to the Council Secretary one month prior to the date of the Annual General Meeting.

Section X Voting

1. Each member of the Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the Council.
2. Each member of a committee of the Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the committee.
3. The principal of the school is not entitled to a vote in votes taken by the Council or by a committee of the Council.

Section XI Election Procedures

1. An election of parent/guardian members of the Council shall be held during the first 30 days of each school year, on a date that is fixed by the Chair or co-chairs of the Council after consulting with the Principal.
2. The election of school staff members of Council (teaching and non-teaching) shall also be held in the first 30 days of each school year.
3. The nomination committee shall be responsible for presenting a slate of candidates for election, and conducting the elections as per relevant sections of the regulations.

Section XII Resources

1. The Council shall be self-funded.
2. Where appropriate, the Council may rely on outside resources to assist in the performance of its responsibilities.

Section XIII Code of Conduct

The Council is unable to engage in personnel matters involving students and teachers or teachers and parents/guardians or any other members of the school community. The Council will speak as one voice and adhere to the decisions taken and agreed upon by the majority of the members. The Council shall practice full transparency towards the school community.

Section XIV Amendments

Any proposed change or addition to the constitution must be present in motion form, be congruent with the governing regulations and be passed by a 2/3 majority at a meeting with quorum.

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