



OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

SCHOOL COUNCIL RESOURCE GUIDE

HELPFUL TIPS, FORMS AND INFORMATION

Updated September 2017



IMPORTANT CONTACTS

The first point of contact for school councils should always be the school principal. In addition to your principal, the following persons may be able to assist you in your role.

Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

www.ocdsb.ca

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Executive Officer

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Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils

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Co-chairs of OCASC

chair@ocasc.ca

Ontario Ministry of Education

www.edu.gov.on.ca

The Ontario Education Act

www.edu.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_900298_e.htm

School Councils: A Guide for Members

www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/involvement/

The Ontario Ministry of Education has also created a handbook to assist parents participating in their school's council. This handbook could prove useful if councils are interested in the history of school councils in Ontario, an overview of the roles and responsibilities within the Ontario education system, and detailed examples of specific actions taken by school councils. A printer friendly version of this handbook, *School Councils: A Guide for Members*, can be found online at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/council02.pdf>.



OTTAWA-CARLETON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR ELECTION AS A SCHOOL COUNCIL CHAIR AT THE OTTAWA-CARLETON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD (OCDSB)!

School Councils are important partners in improving student achievement, enhancing communication, and promoting a safe school culture. Thank you for volunteering your valuable time and expertise to fulfill the important role of School Council Chair.

The OCDSB is pleased to provide the School Council Welcome Package, full of valuable resources, tips, and ideas for a successful school year. The contents of the package and other materials are also posted on our website (www.ocdsb.ca) for access by all school council members and parents/guardians. This guide will assist you in planning your activities for the term ahead and guide you to additional resources from the Ministry of Education (www.edu.gov.on.ca).

In a continued effort to support school councils, we have also developed a weekly e-newsletter and a school council webpage on our website. The OCDSB's ability to assist you, your council, and all parents has also been enhanced through our Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) and our partnership with the Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC). If you are interested in being added to our electronic newsletter distribution, please send a notice of your interest, with the email address you would like included and the name of your school to pic@ocdsb.ca.

Your first point of contact is always the principal of your school. You can also contact staff at the District office: Policy Analyst (pic@ocdsb.ca or 613-596-8253) and Michele Giroux, Executive Officer (michele.giroux@ocdsb.ca or 613-596-8211 ext.8310) are available to answer your questions. You will, of course, want to stay in touch with your local trustee, as the board member who represents the zone in which your school is located. Contact information can be found on the Trustee fact sheet included in the welcome package.

On behalf of the trustees and staff of the OCDSB, thank you for providing your leadership as a School Council Chair.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Seward', written over a horizontal line.

Shirley Seward
Chair of the Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Adams', written over a horizontal line.

Jennifer Adams
Director of Education and
Secretary of the Board

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CHAPTER 1

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL COUNCILS

Chapter 1: Roles and Responsibilities of School Councils

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL COUNCILS

WHAT DO SCHOOL COUNCILS DO?

School Councils bring together the parent community and enhance the communication between the school and the school community. This is accomplished by providing feedback and advice to your school principal and the school district on significant education issues, and by planning activities that support the active participation of parents/guardians and your school community.

The responsibilities of school councils are established provincially in the Ontario *Education Act* under regulations 612/00 and 613/00. At the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, our policy, P.014.SCO: School Councils and procedure PR.509.SCO: School Council Elections, Constitution, and By-Laws outline the responsibilities of school councils in the Board’s jurisdiction. Your school council constitution further describes the responsibilities of your school council that are specific to your school community.

HOW DOES YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL WORK WITH THE OCDSB?

Through meaningful consultation, your school council will work directly with the school principal to provide advice and comments on your school’s overall performance and to support parent engagement. In addition to responsibilities and activities included in your school council’s constitution, additional opportunities for consultation and outreach activities identified by the province and the OCDSB include:

Advisory	Outreach Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Learning Plan (SLP) School based services and community partnerships (e.g. lunch programs) School budget priorities Input on the principal profile Local school calendar Community use of school facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a sense of community with parents and guardians School-community communication strategies Workshops and/or seminars for parents/guardians Planning and fundraising for extracurricular activities Reporting to parents/guardians and the community



TIP

All OCDSB policies and procedures are available at www.ocdsb.ca.



NOTES



TIP

A school council may choose to appoint additional members or establish a maximum number of members in its constitution.



NOTES

WHO SITS ON YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL?

Membership on school councils is open to all parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school, as well as community members, intermediate/secondary students, the school principal (non-voting), teachers and administrative staff. There must be a majority of parents/guardians among your school council members. Your school council should reflect the diversity of your community. Members of the Council are elected annually in the fall.

Elementary School Councils	Secondary School Councils
<p><i>(minimum of 9 members)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a minimum of 5 parents/guardians of students who attend the school (elected by their peers) • a minimum of 1 community representative who is appointed by the school council • the school principal (non-voting) • a teacher elected by his/her peers • an administrative staff member elected by his/her peers • upon consultation with the school council, a student may be appointed by the principal 	<p><i>(minimum of 11 members)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a minimum of 6 parents/guardians of students who attend the school (elected by their peers) • a minimum of 1 community representative who is appointed by the school council • the school principal (non-voting) • a teacher elected by his/her peers • an administrative staff member elected by his/her peers • a student elected by his/her peers

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS?

Your constitution will describe the responsibilities of the officers and members of your school council. These responsibilities may include the following:

Chair/Co-Chair

- arrange for meetings, prepares agendas, and chairs meetings
- ensure that meeting minutes are recorded and kept in a safe place for a minimum of four years
- participate as ex-officio member on council committees
- communicate with the school principal on behalf of council
- maintain the constitution and ensure a regular review by the council
- communicate with the school community on a regular basis and ensure that parents/guardians of all students are consulted on matters under consideration

- facilitate the resolution of conflicts
- consult with senior board staff and trustees as required
- prepare an annual report and ensure the treasurer prepares financial statements to be submitted to the principal for distribution to the school community and the OCDSB

Parent Representatives

- contribute to school and school council discussions
- solicit views of other parents/guardians and community members to share with the council
- participate on council committees
- observe the council’s code of ethics and constitution
- encourage parents/guardians and community members to participate in events and programs

Community Representatives

- contribute to school and school council discussions
- represent the community’s perspective and help build partnerships and links between the school and the community
- participate on council committees
- observe the council’s code of ethics and constitution
- encourage parents/guardians and community members to participate in events and programs

Student Representatives (Secondary Schools only)

- contribute to school and school council discussions
- solicit views of students to share with the council
- participate on council committees
- observe the council’s code of ethics and constitution
- communicate with students on behalf of the council

School Staff Representatives

- contribute to school and school council discussions
- solicit views from staff to share with the council
- participate on council committees
- observe the council’s code of ethics and constitution
- communicate with staff on behalf of the council



NOTES



KEY POINT

No remuneration or honorarium may be paid to school council members.



KEY POINT

School council members are protected by the OCDSB's liability insurance policy while acting within the scope of their duties on behalf of the OCDSB. Such duties/activities must be sanctioned by, and under the jurisdiction and control of, the principal.



TIP

Your school council constitution may establish or delegate specific responsibilities as noted above to other officers of your school council, such as a secretary, treasurer, communication or events coordinator.

School Principal (Non-voting)

- seek input of the school council on the School Learning Plan (SLP), school budgets and community partnerships
- facilitate annual school council elections
- distribute and post council communications to parents/guardians (including the annual report)
- support and promote the council's activities and acts as a resource on by-laws, regulations, and policies
- attend all school council meetings or appoint a vice-principal delegate when required and may participate on council committees
- forward relevant information from the OCDSB and the Ministry to the council
- consider each recommendation made by the school council and advises the council of any action taken in response to the recommendation
- solicit views of the school council on important educational issues such as: the development of school policies and guidelines regarding student achievement and well-being
- develop school code of conduct, dress code, school learning plans, the communication of those plans to the public; and Board policies (as directed)
- communicate with the council chair
- observe the council's code of ethics and established bylaws
- encourage parents/guardians and community members to participate in events and programs

WHAT ARE YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL'S ANNUAL GOALS AND PRIORITIES?

In addition to your responsibilities as an advisory body, school councils are responsible for establishing annual goals and priorities, providing information and training for your new school council members, and promoting the best interests of your school community as a whole.

The following are some ideas on how your School Council can create effective goals for the upcoming year:

1. *Understand your community* – identify the unique characteristics, resources, needs of your community.
2. *Create a list of goals* – determine your top priorities. Are they aligned with the school learning plan?
3. *Develop strategies* – maximize the resources and skills of the people in your school community to achieve your goals.
4. *Evaluate your results* – analyse what works and what doesn't in your school community to help with future planning.

5. *Remember that communication is key* – talk to and listen to people in your school community, share your plans, goals, and ideas for the year.
6. *Share your successes and challenges with us* – we can help you. For example, send the details of your upcoming event or fundraiser to our Communications Department and we'll help communicate.

WHAT'S IN YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION?

Your school council is responsible for developing and maintaining a school council constitution that outlines the way in which your school council will conduct its business. Your constitution must comply with both the provincial regulations and the OCDSB's policies and procedures and, at a minimum, your school council constitution **must** include:

- your council's name, purpose, and objectives;
- your council's officers and members;
- the responsibilities of the officers and members on your council;
- your council's requirements for meetings, quorum, and voting rights;
- your council's rules for conduct at meetings;
- the procedures to amend your school council's constitution/bylaws;
- your council's procedures for annual elections and filling interim vacancies (for example through election, rotation, or by seeking volunteers);
- your council's procedures to address any conflicts of interest;
- your council's resolution process for internal school council disputes;
- your council's affiliation with other organizations, such as the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC); and
- any other committees of your council and their membership.



Notes



KEY POINT

School councils should work collaboratively and make decisions by consensus or voting. In the event that a resolution cannot be reached, the school council chair or principal shall ask the school superintendent to mediate the disagreement.



TIP

Many OCDSB school councils have posted their constitutions on their websites. You can compare notes with other school councils by visiting these websites.



TIP

The constitution is an excellent resource tool. If your council is experiencing challenges, check your constitution. It may help identify the path forward.



NOTES

CHAPTER 2

SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS

Chapter 2: School Council Elections



NOTES

Horizontal lines for taking notes.

SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The OCDSB School Council Policy (P.014.SCO) and Procedure (PR.509.SCO) are based on the Ministry of Education’s regulations with respect to the creation and operation of school councils. In order to ensure fairness, transparency and the opportunity for new parents/guardians to participate and become part of a school council for the upcoming school year, the regulations are very specific on the timing and process to be followed for school council elections, as outlined below. Further details can be found in Procedure PR.509.SCO, *School Council Elections, Constitution and By-laws* and the Ministry’s Regulations – school councils.

WHEN ARE SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS?

School council elections must be held annually within the first 30 calendar days of the first day of the school year. The first school council meeting must be held within the first 35 calendar days of the first day of the school year, but following the election of the new council. Note: To facilitate scheduling, it is acceptable to hold the elections and the first council meeting on the same date. The agenda for the first school council meeting should include unfinished business of the current council (if any), the election of a new chair and any new business.

WHO CAN BE ELECTED TO YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL?

Any parent/guardian of a student enrolled in your school can be elected as a parent member of the school council.* Your school council constitution will describe the membership and officer positions on the council, as well as the roles and responsibilities that accompany these positions.

The school principal will ensure that the elections of the teaching and administrative staff members are carried out each fall by their peer group. At the intermediate and secondary levels, the school principal will also ensure that the election of the student member is carried out each fall by the student body.

The term of office for all elected school council members is one year. The elected school council member holds office from the date that he/she is elected until the date of the next school council elections. A school council member may be re-elected as per the terms established in the school council constitution.

Any parent/guardian of a student enrolled in your school can vote to elect the parent members of the school council. The teaching and administrative staff members as well as the student member (intermediate and secondary levels) of the council must be elected by their peers. Each person is entitled to one vote for each vacant position on the council.

**Employees of the school district can be elected to a school council provided their employment status is disclosed. However, an employee cannot be the Chair or Co-chair of the Council. They must not work in the school for which they are seeking election to council.*



TIP

The parent community elects the members of the council. Once elected, the members elect from amongst themselves the officers (chair, vice-chair, treasurer, secretary, etc.).



NOTES

ELECTION CHECKLIST

Timeline: Within the first 30 calendar days of the first day of the school year

Responsibility: Principal/Chair

OCDSB Policy/Procedure Reference: PR.509.SCO

Action:

- At least two weeks in advance of the election, the school principal will send out a notice of the date, time and location of the election. He/she should ensure it is posted in a location that is accessible by parents/guardians and give the notice to the student for delivery to his/her parent/guardian.
- The number of positions open for nomination and the deadline for nominations are clearly stated, including teaching staff, non-teaching staff, and student positions to be filled.
- Post/circulate a list of candidates and/or profiles in the first September School newsletter and on school bulletin boards, ideally two weeks prior to the election date with a notation that nominations will be accepted until the time of voting.
- Post/circulate any proposed changes to the school council constitution for the coming year in advance of the election meeting.
- Ensure that notice of proposed constitutional change is given along with notice of election.

Timeline: Closing date/election day

Responsibility: Candidates

OCDSB Policy/Procedure Reference: PR.509.SCO

Action:

- Nominations by candidates are made in person or in writing to the school council chair. Nomination and Candidate Profile forms are available in the newsletter and through the school office.
- If parent elections are held during a meeting, nominations can be accepted until the time that voting begins.
- If a parent election is being held during the day, nominations can be closed at a specific date and time determined by the school council, and the notice of the meeting will contain a date for the closing of nominations.

Timeline: Election Day

Responsibility: Principal/Chair/Candidates

OCDSB Policy/Procedure Reference: PR.509.SCO



NOTES

Action:

- All elections will be conducted by secret ballot. Ballots are prepared for election.
- Elections will be held at the school on the date/time previously publicized in the notice of election. Voting by proxy is not allowed.
- Only the name of the successful candidate and the total number of votes cast is announced.
- For any positions for which the exact number of candidates required, or fewer, are nominated, the election will be declared to be by acclamation.
- In case of a tie vote, tied candidates will draw lots to determine who is elected.
- Membership must consist of at least five parents (elementary schools), and at least six parents (secondary schools). Check your constitution.
- Hold elections for teaching staff and non-teaching staff representatives.

Timeline: September

Responsibility: Principal/Student’s Council

OCDSB Policy/Procedure Reference: P.014.SCO Attachment 2, section 1.1 PR.509.SCO section 3.3

Action:

- Elect student representative(s) to the school council (mandatory at secondary schools, at the discretion of principal in elementary schools).

Election of Officers

Timeline: First Meeting of Council on or after election day

Responsibility: Chair/Members of Council

OCDSB Policy/Procedure Reference: P.014.SCO Section 3.4

Action:

- Members are elected to the school council by the parent community. Once elected, the members elect from amongst themselves the officers of council- chair (or co-chairs), vice chair, treasurer and secretary.

HOW DOES YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL FILL VACANCIES?

Your school council constitution will define the process for filling interim vacancies on your school council should a parent member resign. Vacancies during the school year should be filled by election or appointment as described under the elections section.

If every reasonable attempt has been made to hold elections and there are not sufficient members elected, then the school principal working with the school superintendent and interested parents/guardians may develop an interim structure for a school council for the current school year only.



School Council Parent Self-Nomination Form

As a school council member, you can help discover new and exciting ways to contribute to the education of students in your school. Education is a partnership involving parents, students, teachers, principals, school boards, government, and the community. Your involvement in the council gives you the opportunity to strengthen that partnership, and to be part of a dedicated team working to ensure a high quality of education and an accountable education system for the children of Ontario (Ministry of Education).

I wish to declare my candidacy for an elected position as a parent/guardian representative on the school council.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Business Phone: _____

Email: _____

I am the parent/guardian of _____, who is currently registered at this school. *(Name of student)*

I am an employee of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB)*:

Yes No

Candidate's Signature

Date

**OCDSB employees can be members of a Council but cannot act as Chair or Co-chair of the Council.*

PLEASE INCLUDE A BRIEF AUTOBIOGRAPHY ON THE BACK OF THIS FORM OR ON A SEPARATE SHEET ATTACHED TO THIS FORM.

You will be notified when your nomination has been received

The personal information on this form is collected under the authority of the *Education Act* and will be used to facilitate the election process of school councils. If you wish to review this information or have questions regarding its collection, please contact your Principal.



School Council Parent Candidate Form

I wish to nominate _____ for an elected position as a parent/guardian representative on the school council.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Business Phone: _____

Email: _____

I am the parent/guardian of _____, who is currently registered at this school. *(Name of student)*

_____ is the parent/guardian of _____.
(Name of person nominated) (Name of student)

The person I have nominated is an employee of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB):

Yes No

Nominator's Signature

Date

PLEASE INCLUDE A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF THE CANDIDATE YOU HAVE NOMINATED ON THE BACK OF THIS FORM OR ON A SEPARATE SHEET ATTACHED TO THIS FORM.

You will be notified when your nomination has been received

The personal information on this form is collected under the authority of the Education Act and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and will be used to facilitate the election process of school councils. If you wish to review this information or have questions regarding its collection, please contact your Principal.

OCDSB School Council Parent Candidate Nomination Form (August 2010)



School Council Nomination Form Receipt

The nomination form for parent/guardian representative on the school council for:

_____ at _____
(Parent nominee's name) *(School name)*

has been received by:

_____ *(Name of Principal or Chair of the nominations committee)* _____ *(Date)*

The nominee or nominator has been notified of the receipt of the nomination:

Yes

No

_____ *(Signature of Principal or Chair of the nominations committee)* _____ *(Date)*

ENSURE THAT THE PERSON NOMINATED IS ELIGIBLE TO RUN:

A District Employee who works at the school his or her child attends cannot be elected as a parent member; he/she can be elected as a staff member. He/she can be elected as a parent member at a different school from the one he/she works at if his/her child attends that school and if he/she notifies the other parents of the fact that he/she works for the District prior to the election.

OCDSB School Council Nomination Receipt Form (August 2010)



School Council Election Ballot

Date: _____

School: _____

For: _____

(Which election i.e. parent/guardian representatives)

Vote for no more than _____ candidates on this ballot.

Place an X in the box before the name(s) of the candidate(s) of your choice. Note that the persons whose names are marked with an asterisk are employees of the OCDSB.

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
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OCDSB School Council Election Ballot (August 2010)



NOTES

CHAPTER 3

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETINGS

Chapter 3: School Council Meetings

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETINGS

In order to ensure transparency and promote communication within your school community, the regulations are very specific on school council meetings and reporting requirements, as outlined below.

WHEN AND WHERE DOES YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL MEET?

Typically, school councils meet in the evening once a month during the school year. At a minimum, your school council must meet 4 times a year. The first meeting must be held within 35 days of the first day of the school year after your new school council is elected.

All school council meetings and school council committee meetings must be open to the public and held at a location that is accessible to everyone. Typically, school councils meet in their school. The times and dates of school council meetings must be published and made available to all parents/guardians.

HOW DOES YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL CONDUCT BUSINESS?

- For all school council meetings, a majority of the current members of the school council must be present. Of the members who are present, the majority must be parents/guardians;
- For committee meetings, at least one member must be a parent member of the school council;
- The preferred model for making decisions is through consensus. Consensus allows all school council members to contribute to the solution and promotes a sense of common purpose; and
- Your school council can also make decisions by voting. Each member (except the principal) is entitled to one vote.

HOW DOES YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL REPORT TO THE PUBLIC?

Your school council’s records, including minutes, the annual report, agendas, and newsletters, must be available to the public at the school or on the school’s website.

Minutes for School Councils (including committee meetings) must:

- be prepared after each meeting;
- include financial transactions; and
- be retained or on the school website for public examination at no charge for the current year plus six years.



KEY POINT

“For assessment to be helpful to students, it must inform them in words, not numerical scores or letter grades, what they have done well, what they have done poorly, and what they need to do next in order to improve.”

~Cooper, 2007, p. 5



NOTES



TIP

Regular newsletters from the school council help keep parents/guardians informed and encourage participation. Your school council may want to distribute your upcoming meeting agenda and a note on activities to all parents/guardians.

The Annual Report (including activities of the Council) must:

- include financial statements;
- be prepared at the end of the school year and distributed in September of the following school year;
- be submitted to the principal for posting and distribution to all parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school; and
- be submitted to the OCDSB’s Chief Financial Officer in accordance with Ministry requirements for financial reporting.

Annual report must:

- include activities of the council;
- include financial statements;
- be submitted to the principal for posting and distribution to all parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school;
- be submitted to the OCDSB’s Chief Financial Officer in accordance with Ministry requirements for financial reporting; and
- be prepared at the end of the school year and distributed in September of the following school year.



Notes



SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING CHECKLIST

Participants in meetings should feel that the time they spent was worthwhile. Although no one can guarantee that every meeting will be regarded as meaningful, the chair of the school council can take some steps to address concerns. This is done by ensuring that certain responsibilities are confirmed before, during, and after the meeting. You may wish to use the following list to see how well your group is doing.

Before the meeting:

- Book a meeting room
- Order refreshments
- Prepare and circulate an agenda
- Put the items on the agenda in order of priority
- Check the room arrangements and audio-visual equipment
- Ensure appropriate materials are on hand

At the beginning of the meeting:

- Call the meeting to order at the designated time
- Welcome attendees and make introductions
- Be certain there is a recorder
- State the purpose of the meeting
- Review and agree on the tentative agenda
- Estimate the amount of time to be spent on each item

During the meeting:

- Keep the group focused on its purpose
- Monitor the discussion so that everyone has a chance to speak
- Clarify and summarize when appropriate
- Assist the group in using agreed on procedures
- Bring out all sides of an issue
- Move the group toward decisions
- Check for consensus

At the end of the meeting:

- Make sure assignments and agreements are clear
- Announce the date, time and place of the next meeting
- Identify the purpose of the next meeting and any items that will be on the agenda
- Debrief or adjourn the meeting

After the meeting:

- Check with the recorder to be sure that the minutes are clear before distributing
- Help others carry out the decisions made during the meeting

NOTES



SAMPLE AGENDA

School Council Meeting Tuesday, 24 March 2015

Location

7 pm

Agenda Item	Folio	Estimated Time
1. Call to Order—Chair		
2. Approval of Agenda		
3. Chair’s Report		5 minutes
4. Principal’s Report		5 minutes
5. Approval of Minutes, February 24, 2015	1	1 minute
6. Matters for Action:		
a. Treasurer’s Report and Monthly Statement	2	20 minutes
b. Communications Committee Report and Update	3	
7. Matters for Discussion		
a. School Yard Greening Project		20 minutes
b. Accommodation Review Update		
8. New Business—Information and Enquiries		10 minutes
9. Announcements		5 minutes
10. Adjournment		

SCHOOL COUNCIL SAMPLE RULES OF ORDER

The rules of order for the conduct of meetings of the OCDSB and any Committees of the Board, are set out in our by-laws which are posted on our website: <https://goo.gl/jdDeCC>. School councils may or may not wish to adopt the same rules. If a council wishes to use a simple form of the rules, the information below should be followed:

- The Chair is responsible for managing the meeting and maintaining order.
- An individual must be recognized by the Chair before he or she speaks.
- The discussion and all comments by individual speakers should be directly related to the agenda item.
- Where a decision is required, it may be made by consensus.
- To move a motion, an individual begins with the statement "I move..."
- Another individual must second the motion by saying, "I second the motion." This indicates that he or she agrees, in principle, and that the proposal should be discussed.
- Once a motion has been moved and seconded, the chair restates the motion so everyone is clear on what is being proposed. From this point until the motion has been voted on, all discussion should be focused on the motion.
- After stating the motion, the chair asks if the council is ready to discuss the motion or ready to vote on the proposal.
- If members of the group wish to discuss the motion, the chair opens debate. Each participant may speak to the motion. If someone wishes to speak more than twice, someone else must pass them their speaking rights in accordance with the rules of procedure. Once debate is complete, the chair puts the motion to a vote.
- The chair shall put the motion to a vote or conduct the vote by asking for those in favour and those opposed. The vote may be conducted by a show of hands, by standing or by ballot.
- The majority needed to pass the motion should be stated in the school council operational procedures or constitution (i.e. 50% +1, in case of a tie, the motion is lost).



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SCHOOL COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Committees are created by a school council to delve deeper into an issue that is too time consuming or complicated to discuss at council meetings alone.

A committee can be made up of members of the school council and/or additional parents, teachers, or members of the community who are unable to attend regular council meetings but who may be willing to serve on a short-term specific-task committee.

Some specific guidelines for forming committees are:

- Committees should be formed after initial school council discussion of the topic and consensus is obtained to create a committee to look into the matter.
- Items requiring more lengthy discussions or research are assigned to the committee.
- The school council should establish a clear mandate for the committee.
- Committees should make decisions or recommendations, according to the mandate the school council gives them.
- Committee members should:
 - » Be willing to participate, both individually and as a team
 - » Be willing to prepare reports for school council, as required
 - » Set priorities and follow through on them
 - » Understand the expected time commitment
 - » Work towards consensus

Here are some committees your school council may wish to consider striking:

- Constitution or Operational Procedures Committee: to review or prepare the school council constitution and/or operational procedures to present to school council for discussion and approval. The committee may also work towards developing a school council mission or vision statement.
- Special Events Committee: to plan events such as volunteer appreciation.
- Communications Committee: to plan and carry out communication strategies to improve the links between home and school, and between the community and the school and local media.
- Fundraising Committee: to plan and coordinate fundraising campaigns for special projects.
- Education-Business Partnership Committee: to help establish partnerships that enhance student learning with community businesses.

CHAPTER 4

GRANTS FOR SCHOOL COUNCILS

Chapter 4: Grants for School Councils



NOTES

GRANTS FOR SCHOOL COUNCILS

Grants can be an important source of funds for school councils. There are many organizations that offer grants for which school councils may be eligible. The Province of Ontario offers three grant programs which are specifically designed to support parental engagement initiatives. These are:

1. \$500 grant to school councils — This is a guaranteed funding source for every school council. It is provided directly to the council through the school board. There are no limitations on the use of the funds and no reporting is required other than in your Annual Financial report.
2. Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grants for School Councils — School councils may apply to the Ministry for a grant in an amount up to \$1,000. There are limitations on the use of the funds and reporting is required to the Ministry of Education.
3. Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grants — Organizations, other than school councils, may apply to the Ministry for a grant in an amount up to \$30,000. There are limitations on the use of the funds and reporting is required.

In addition to these, there are many other grants that school councils have access to. These include grants through organizations such as Evergreen (<https://www.evergreen.ca/>).

25 IDEAS ON HOW TO USE THE \$500 PARENT INVOLVEMENT FUNDING TO INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF YOUR SCHOOL COUNCIL

Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization (OCISO), a partner of the school district, has been working for many years to increase the involvement of all parents, in the school. They have compiled a list of 25 suggestions for effective ways for school councils to use the \$500 grant to increase involvement throughout your whole school community.

1. Offer child care at your school council meetings.
2. Offer pizza and a movie to the children during meetings. They will bring their parents to you! Please refer to the School Council's Guide to the School Food and Beverage Policy, included in this handbook, to help you make healthy food choices for your event.
3. Offer homework club for students during your school council meetings.
4. Provide basic information to all parents every year about school councils including: how to participate, types of issues discussed, past accomplishments, and benefits of participating in school councils.
5. Hold a school community event such as a multicultural potluck/international



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dinner or heritage fair at the beginning of the year instead of the end. This encourages parents to feel comfortable in the school early on. Please refer to the School Council's Guide to the School Food and Beverage Policy in this guide, to help you make healthy food choices for your event.

- 6. Purchase multicultural entertainment for your events.
- 7. Have important flyers and notices translated.
- 8. Offer bus tickets to parents who need them to attend meetings.
- 9. Set up a parent resource room with information in many languages about the school, the education system, the school council, and parenting.
- 10. Host an Iftar (feast) after sundown during Ramadan if your school has a large population of Muslim families. Please refer to the School Council's Guide to the School Food and Beverage Policy on page 63, to help you make healthy food choices for your event.
- 11. Host a council meeting out in the community at a popular community centre or library.
- 12. Buy time on ethnic language radio stations, such as CHIN, CKCU, and CHUO during shows that are the main languages of your school. Use the time to advertise school council meetings, meet the teacher night, or special events in other languages.
- 13. Advertise school council meetings and special events in "other language" newspapers, such as Capital Chinese News, EcoLatino, Muslim Voice, etc.
- 14. Host events that celebrate all cultural festivals of your school community. Refer to the OCDSB Multi-faith Calendar.
- 15. Hire interpreters to be present for meet the teacher nights and parent teacher interviews (advertise this ahead of time).
- 16. Host informal "Coffee with the Principal" mornings once per month. Offer light refreshments and highlight a different language each month. Please refer to the Ontario School Food and Beverage Policy, included in this handbook, to help you make healthy food choices for your event.
- 17. Host an informal "Breakfast with the School Council" when parents are dropping their children off. Offer a light breakfast and explain the school council. Please refer to the School Council's Food and Beverage Policy guide, included in this handbook, to help you make healthy food choices for your event.
- 18. Serve Halal food at your School Council sponsored events (include mention in the advertising). Please refer to the School Council's Food and Beverage Policy Guide, included in this handbook, to help you make healthy food choices for your event.
- 19. Have interpreters call diverse parents in their own language to invite them to a council meeting.
- 20. Include the phrase "you are invited!" or something similar to your flyer, even if the notice is in English, and have it translated into other languages. Place the phrase in all languages at the top of your flyer or notice.
- 21. Put multi-lingual posters and flyers about School Council meetings in businesses frequented by the community (laundromat, library, community centre, etc.).
- 22. Add a social "meet and greet" aspect to school council meetings so parents

can get to know each other — 15 minutes of tea and networking at the beginning of the meeting can go a long way towards helping people feel connected and included.

- 23. Hold one or two Saturday meetings per year so parents who work during the evenings can attend.
- 24. Invite a Multicultural Liasion Officer (MLO) to offer a workshop for parents about a parent’s role in the education system, communicating with the school, Safe Schools, understanding report cards, etc. Offer childcare and translate the flyer.
- 25. Host “Issues Nights” — Invite guest speakers to discuss topical educational or parenting issues (e.g. drug and alcohol prevention, homework, reading, parenting a teenager, etc.).



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PARENTS REACHING OUT (PRO) GRANTS FOR SCHOOL COUNCILS

Project Guidelines

The Provincial PRO Grant program is administered annually, and the specific rules may change from year to year. School councils can submit only **one** proposal. If a school council submits more than one proposal, **ONLY** the first proposal submitted will be processed.

You can learn more from the Ministry of Education:

- <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/schools.html>
- Ottawa Regional Office, Education Officer, 613-225-9219

Suggestions for Topics and Potential Speakers from the OCDSB

Topic	Speaker Sources
<i>Advocating for your child</i>	Edu-Advocates
<i>Healthy Eating or various health issues impacting students</i>	Ottawa Public Health
<i>Key OCDSB and/or Ministry initiatives (e.g. Aboriginal education strategy or Environmental education)</i>	Consider OCDSB and/or Ministry staff in conjunction with an external speaker.
<i>Parenting under pressure</i>	The Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO)
<i>School Safety and Police Issues</i>	Ottawa Police Service
<i>Understanding special education</i>	Consider OCDSB and/or Ministry staff in conjunction with an external speaker.
<i>The importance of sleep</i>	The Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO)
<i>Be social media smart</i>	Paul Davis
<i>Drug awareness</i>	We The Parents



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CHAPTER 5

UNDERSTANDING THE OCDSB

Chapter 5: Understanding the OCDSB

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board is governed by an elected Board of Trustees. Trustees serve a four-year term. The current term ends November 30, 2018. Each trustee represents a geographic area called a zone. A zone is made up of one or more municipal ward boundaries. The schools within each zone boundary are identified on the following page. Individual trustees act as a liaison between their community /zone and the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees meets regularly at the Administration Office. The Board usually meets twice a month as Committee of the Whole (COW) and once a month for Board meetings. Generally, COW is the meeting where issues are discussed in detail. Final approval of decisions happens at Board meetings.

School councils often have an established relationship with their zone trustee. The zone trustee can help you understand issues that are before the Board for consideration.



TIP

Board meetings are open to the public. They are also live streamed at www.ocdsb.ca.



TIP

Did you know that you can appear as a delegation at a Board or committee meeting?

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2019–2020

The Board of Trustees also includes two Student Trustees elected for a one-year term. For the current Student Trustees, please refer to the OCDSB website.

Trustee Fax Number: 613-596-8789



Lynn Scott
Zone 1
Chair of the Board
West Carleton–March/
Stittsville/Rideau–Goulbourn
613-832-3813
lynn.scott@ocdsb.ca



Christine Boothby
Zone 2
Kanata North/Kanata South
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Donna Blackburn
Zone 3
Barrhaven/
Knoxdale–Merivale
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Wendy Hough
Zone 4
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613-862-0243
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Rob Campbell
Zone 5
College
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rob.campbell@ocdsb.ca



Chris Ellis
Zone 6
Rideau–Rockcliffe/
Alta Vista
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chris.ellis@ocdsb.ca



Jennifer Jennekens
Zone 7
Gloucester–South
Nepean/Osgoode
613-219-5166
jennifer.jennekens@ocdsb.ca



Keith Penny
Zone 8
Orléans–Cumberland
613-808-8190
keith.penny@ocdsb.ca



Lyra Evans
Zone 9
Rideau–Vanier/Capital
613-913-1695
lyra.evans@ocdsb.ca



Erica Braunovan
Zone 10
Vice-Chair of the Board
Somerset/Kitchissippi
613-858-2275
erica.braunovan@ocdsb.ca



Mark Fisher
Zone 11
River/Gloucester–Southgate
613-668-2044
mark.fisher@ocdsb.ca



Sandra Schwartz
Zone 12
Innes/Beacon Hill–Cyrville
613-868-5249
sandra.schwartz@ocdsb.ca

LIST OF TRUSTEES/ZONES AND SCHOOLS WITHIN EACH ZONE

Lynn Scott

Zone 1 — West Carleton–March/Stittsville/Rideau–Goulbourn

A. Lorne Cassidy Elementary School
Goulbourn Middle School
Huntley Centennial Public School
Kars on the Rideau Public School
Manotick Public School
North Gower/Marlborough Public School
Richmond Public School
Stittsville Public School
Stonecrest Elementary School
Westwind Public School

South Carleton High School
West Carleton Secondary School

Bill Mason Outdoor Education Centre
Frederick Banting Secondary Alternate Program

Christine Boothby

Zone 2 — Kanata North/Kanata South

Bridlewood Community Elementary School
Castlefrank Elementary School
Glen Cairn Public School
Jack Donohue Public School
John Young Elementary School
Kanata Highlands Public School
Katimavik Elementary School
Roch Carrier Elementary School
Roland Michener Public School
South March Public School
Stephen Leacock Public School
W. Erskine Johnston Public School
W.O. Mitchell Elementary School

A.Y. Jackson Secondary School
Earl of March Secondary School

Donna Blackburn

Zone 3 — Barrhaven/Knoxdale–Merivale

Barrhaven Public School
Berrigan Elementary School
Cedarview Middle School
Half Moon Bay Public School
Jockvale Elementary School
Knoxdale Public School
Manordale Public School
Mary Honeywell Elementary School
Sir Winston Churchill Public School

John McCrae Secondary School
Longfields–Davidson Heights Secondary School
Merivale High School
Sir Robert Borden High School

Wendy Hough

Zone 4 — Bay

Bayshore Public School
Crystal Bay Centre for Special Education
D. Roy Kennedy Public School
Lakeview Public School
Regina Street Alternative School
Severn Avenue Public School
Woodroffe Avenue Public School

Woodroffe High School

Rob Campbell

Zone 5 — College

Agincourt Road Public School
Bells Corners Public School
Briargreen Public School
J.H. Putman Public School
Meadowlands Public School
Pinecrest Public School

Bell High School
Sir Guy Carleton Secondary School

Elizabeth Wyn Wood Secondary Alternate Program

Chris Ellis

Zone 6 — Rideau–Rockcliffe/Alta Vista

Alta Vista Public School
Arch Street Public School
Charles H. Hulse Public School
Featherston Drive Public School
Hawthorne Public School
Manor Park Public School
Pleasant Park Public School
Queen Elizabeth Public School
Queen Mary Street Public School
Riverview Alternative School
Rockcliffe Park Public School
Vincent Massey Public School

Canterbury High School
Hillcrest High School
Ottawa Technical Secondary School
Ridgemont High School

M.F. McHugh Education Centre
Storefront School

Jennifer Jennekens

Zone 7 — Gloucester-South Nepean/Osgoode

Adrienne Clarkson Elementary School
Castor Valley Elementary School
Chapman Mills Public School
Farley Mowat Public School
Greely Elementary School
Metcalfe Public School
Osgoode Public School
Steve MacLean Public School
Vimy Ridge Public School

Osgoode Township High School

Keith Penny

Zone 8 — Orléans–Cumberland

Avalon Public School
Convent Glen Elementary School
Dunning-Foubert Elementary School
Fallingbrook Community Elementary School
Heritage Public School
Maple Ridge Elementary School
Orléans Wood Elementary School
Summerside Public School
Terry Fox Elementary School
Trillium Elementary School

Cairine Wilson Secondary School
Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School

MacSkimming Outdoor Education Centre

Lyra Evans

Zone 9 — Rideau–Vanier/Capital

First Avenue Public School
Hopewell Avenue Public School
Lady Evelyn Alternative School
Mutchmor Public School
Robert E. Wilson Public School
Viscount Alexander Public School
York Street Public School

Glebe Collegiate Institute

Erica Braunovan

Zone 10 — Somerset/Kitchissippi

Broadview Avenue Public School
Cambridge Street Community Public School
Centennial Public School
Churchill Alternative School
Connaught Public School
Devonshire Community Public School
Elgin Street Public School
Elmdale Public School
Fisher Park Public School/Summit Alternative School
Glashan Public School
Hilson Avenue Public School

Adult High School
Lisgar Collegiate Institute
Nepean High School

First Place Alternate Program
Reality Check
Richard Pfaff Secondary Alternate Program
Urban Aboriginal Alternate High School Program

Mark Fisher

Zone 11 — River/Gloucester-Southgate

Bayview Public School
Blossom Park Public School
Carleton Heights Public School
Clifford Bowey Public School
Dunlop Public School
Fielding Drive Public School
General Vanier Public School
Robert Bateman Public School
Robert Bateman Public School
Roberta Bondar Public School
Sawmill Creek Elementary School
W.E. Gowling Public School

Brookfield High School

Sandra Schwartz

Zone 12 — Innes/Beacon Hill–Cyrville

Carson Grove Elementary School
Emily Carr Middle School
Forest Valley Elementary School
Glen Ogilvie Public School
Henry Larsen Elementary School
Henry Munro Middle School
Le Phare Elementary School
Robert Hopkins Public School

Colonel By Secondary School
Gloucester High School

Norman Johnston Secondary Alternate Program

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

The Board administration is led by the Director of Education and a team of senior administrators; this includes six Superintendents of Instruction (SOIs). Each SOI oversees a superintendency - a group of schools in a geographic area. The six superintendencies are:

- South Superintendency
- West Superintendency
- South East Superintendency
- Kanata Superintendency
- Central Superintendency
- East Superintendency

You can find the current list of Superintendents on the district website, and the list of the schools within each superintendency in the following page.

School Superintendents are in regular contact with principals in their schools. Superintendents of Instruction can be a resource to school councils, particularly when dealing with issues that arise at the council or in the school.



Notes

LIST OF SCHOOLS WITHIN EACH SUPERINTENDENCY

South

Shawn Lehman Superintendent of Instruction

A. Lorne Cassidy Elementary School
Adrienne Clarkson Elementary School
Barrhaven Public School
Berrigan Elementary School
Castor Valley Elementary School
Cedarview Middle School
Chapman Mills Public School
Farley Mowat Public School
Goulbourn Middle School
Greely Elementary School
Half Moon Bay Public School
Jockvale Elementary School
Kars on the Rideau Public School
Manotick Public School
Mary Honeywell Elementary School
Metcalf Public School
N.G./Marlborough Public School
Osgoode Public School
Richmond Public School
Stittsville Public School
Westwind Public School

John McCrae Secondary School
Longfields–Davidson Heights Secondary School
Osgoode Township High School
South Carleton High School

Kanata

Eric Hardie Superintendent of Instruction

Bayshore Public School
Bells Corners Public School
Bridlewood Community Elementary School
Castlefrank Elementary School
Glen Cairn Public School
Huntley Centennial Public School
Jack Donohue Public School
John Young Elementary School
Kanata Highlands Public School
Katimavik Elementary School
Lakeview Public School
Roch Carrier Elementary School
Roland Michener Public School
South March Public School
Stephen Leacock Public School
Stonecrest Elementary School
W.E. Johnston Public School
W.O. Mitchell Elementary School

A.Y. Jackson Secondary School
Bell High School
Earl of March Secondary School
West Carleton Secondary School

West

Neil Yorke-Slader Acting Superintendent of Instruction

Agincourt Road Public School
Briargreen Public School
Broadview Public School
Churchill Alternative
D. Roy Kennedy Public School
Knoxdale Public School
Lady Evelyn Public School
Manordale Public School
Meadowlands Public School
Pinecrest Public School
Regina Street Alternative School
Riverview Alt. School
Severn Avenue Public School
Sir Winston Churchill Public School
Woodroffe Avenue Public School

Adult High School
Continuing Education
Merivale High School
Nepean High School
Sir Robert Borden High School
Woodroffe High School
Elizabeth Wyn Wood Secondary Alternate Program
Frederick Banting Secondary Alternate Program
Norman Johnston Secondary Alternate Program
Richard Pfaff Secondary Alternate Program
Urban Aboriginal Alternate High School Program

Central

Olga Grigoriev Superintendent of Instruction

Cambridge Street Public School
Centennial Public School
Connaught Public School
Devonshire Public School
Elgin St Public School
Elmdale Public School
First Avenue Public School
Fisher Park/Summit Public School
Glashan Public School
Hilson Avenue Public School
Hopewell Avenue Public School
Manor Park Public School
Mutchmor Public School
Queen Elizabeth Public School
Queen Mary Street Public School
Robert E. Wilson Public School
Rockcliffe Park Public School
Viscount Alexander Public School
W.E. Gowling Public School
York St. Public School

Glebe Collegiate Institute
Lisgar Collegiate Institute

South East

Dorothy Baker Superintendent of Instruction

Alta Vista Public School
Arch Street Public School
Bayview Public School
Blossom Park Public School
Carleton Heights Public School
Charles H. Hulse Public School
Clifford Bowey Public School
Crystal Bay Centre for Special Education
Dunlop Public School
Featherston Drive Public School
Fielding Drive Public School
General Vanier Public School
Hawthorne Public School
Pleasant Park Public School
Robert Bateman Public School
Roberta Bondar Public School
Sawmill Creek Elementary School
Steve MacLean Public School
Vinny Ridge Public School
Vincent Massey Public School

Brookfield High School
Canterbury High School
Hillcrest High School
Ridgemont High School

East

Mary Jane Farrish Superintendent of Instruction

Avalon Public School
Carson Grove Elementary School
Convent Glen Elementary School
Dunning-Foubert Elementary School
Emily Carr Middle School
Fallingbrook Elementary School
Forest Valley Elementary School
Glen Ogilvie Public School
Henry Larsen Elementary School
Henry Munro Middle School
Heritage Public School
Le Phare Elementary School
Maple Ridge Elementary School
Orleans Wood Elementary School
Robert Hopkins Public School
Summerside Public School
Terry Fox Elementary School
Trillium Elementary School

Cairine Wilson Secondary School
Colonel By Secondary School
Gloucester High School
Ottawa Technical Secondary School
Storefront School
Sir Guy Carleton Secondary School
Sir Wilfrid Laurier Secondary School

CHAPTER 6

COMMUNICATION IS THE KEY

Chapter 6: Communication is the Key



NOTES

- Having the chair/co-chairs speak at various school functions;
- Making personal contact with parents by phone or at special meetings; and
- Setting up a school council display in the main foyer of the school.

Your goal is to effectively communicate with your parent community. In choosing communication strategies, your council should consider:

- Who needs to know this;
- Which groups or communities need to be informed;
- With whom are you communicating already;
- Is the school reaching everyone it should; and
- What organizations should we be reaching?

Next, you might decide exactly what you wish to communicate by asking questions such as the following:

- What does the audience need to know;
- What have we communicated up until now;
- How can we ensure that you are reaching everyone; and
- Is the information appropriate for the audience?

Finally, you might determine how to deliver the messages you wish to communicate to your intended audience by asking questions such as the following:

- What is the best way and time to communicate our message;
- How are we currently exchanging information with the different groups in the school community;
- How can we assess the effectiveness of our current communication strategies;
- What communication efforts are working – and what ones are not working;
- Are the messages designed to suit different audiences;
- Do we promote two-way communication; and
- How will we know that the message has been received?

Have you ever wondered what the public perception of your neighbourhood school is? If you wish to enhance that presence you can use a variety of communication tools including:

- Local newspapers;
- Conversations with friends and neighbours;
- Radio, television, or websites;
- School newsletters;



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- Conversations with students;
- Service clubs and business associations;
- Personal friendships with educators in the District; and
- Personal visits to schools.

Remember your goal is to communicate – so “toot your school’s horn”. Your council might want to consider including the following in your communication plan:

- Successful inter-active parent/child programming;
- Asking for feedback — what do we do well and what can we do better;
- Specific strategies to get parents involved;
- Outline planned school council priorities for the year; and
- Keeping your communication plan fluid – it is a living document.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community outreach is a whole-school activity. It should involve staff, students, families and school council members and should be on-going and consistent. The purpose of community outreach is to ensure that your school becomes the hub of your neighbourhood. A welcoming environment breeds community support and community engagement.

The following are some of the ways your school council can communicate with the diverse groups that make up your community:

- Distribute newsletters and flyers to the community;
- Invite the neighbourhood to visit your school;
- Consult with business and neighbourhood associations on community issues and needs;
- Get out into your community – utilize recreation and cultural centres for school council meetings;
- Welcome local translators to your meetings;
- Encourage leaders of diverse cultural and language groups to share information about the school council with members of their communities;
- Avoid scheduling meetings on religious holidays; and
- Designate council members to work with specific organizations or networks.

Here are a few suggestions to help make your council's outreach successful:

- Create an outreach committee;
- Hold sessions with parents and other community representatives to brainstorm ideas for reaching others;
- Obtain specific information regarding outreach from everyone;
- Treat every parent and community representative with respect, trust, and courtesy;
- Make sure that there is a formal mechanism in place that lets parents and community representatives communicate what they want, need, like, and dislike throughout the year;
- Be sure to follow up on any concerns they raise;
- Offer information, workshops, and support for parents to help them learn more about what goes on in the school and how they can contribute to what their children are learning at school, both academically and socially;
- Include parents in pertinent planning sessions;
- Invite community leaders to school events; and
- Ask teachers, parents, and council members to recruit other parents to become involved in the school.

COMMUNICATION TIPS FOR SCHOOLS

Generally speaking, elementary students bring home school-based information. Be sure to include school council information in the school's monthly calendar and in-school newsletters. Ask the principal if you can have a section on the school's website to highlight activities and accomplishments and to promote parental involvement.

You might also want to try:

- Leveraging the school's Twitter and/or Facebook account to reach your parent community;
- Posting to the school's website;
- Organizing a telephone tree;
- Collecting e-mail addresses from parents and set up distribution lists;
- Hosting information sessions — try to remember to accommodate working parents/guardians when setting up in-school meetings;
- Seeking out inexpensive advertising methods; and
- Making use of free public service announcements.



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NOTES

COMMUNICATING WITH US!

The OCDSB is committed to communicating with school councils and to ensuring avenues of communication exist between school councils.

Methods of Communication

The District uses several methods of communication when interacting with school councils. These include:

1. **www.ocdsb.ca**
The District website offers up to the minute information on all district initiatives, on-going consultations, board and committee meeting agendas and minutes, and information about our programs and services.
2. **School Council Newsletter**
The District issues a weekly school council newsletter filled with information and events. Anyone can subscribe to newsletter - not only members of school council. The messages are sent to your personal email account and your email address remains confidential. If you want to be added to this list, please email us at schoolnewslettersinfo@ocdsb.ca.

If you are interested in getting information about an upcoming event included in the weekly school council newsletter, please send a short paragraph explaining the details of the event and the poster (if applicable) no later than Wednesdays at 12:00 p.m. to schoolnewslettersinfo@ocdsb.ca.

CHAPTER 7

PIC AND OCASC

PIC AND OCASC

At the OCDSB, we are fortunate to have two important groups working to support and encourage parent involvement in schools in our District.

PIC

The Parent Involvement Committee is an important resource to the school district. The Ministry has required all districts to have a committee comprised of parents, community members, the Director of Education, or designate, and a trustee. A majority of the committee must be parents.

The current PIC mandate is:

1. To support, encourage, and enhance meaningful parental involvement within schools and across the District, including, outreach to parents who find it more challenging due to language, recent immigration, poverty, newness to the system, or other factors;
2. To work collaboratively with the school board and ensure linkages between parents, the Director of Education and trustees;
3. To develop strategies for enhancing parental engagement and outreach;
4. To hold District-wide meetings and to engage in inter-school communications; and
5. To participate in the promotion, application, and implementation of grant applications and projects funded under the Ministry of Education Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Program.

Watch our website for more information about the PIC, its mandate and membership structure and the work that is underway.

OCASC

The Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils is an umbrella organization for school councils in the District. OCASC holds monthly meetings for all school councils. These meetings are usually held on the third Thursday of the month and are important opportunities for school councils to learn about new initiatives, share ideas, and collaborate. OCASC keeps school councils and parents updated and informed through its website, www.ocasc.ca.



NOTES

OCASC INFORMATION PACKAGE

WHAT IS OCASC?

The Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) is an umbrella organization for school councils of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB). In a nutshell, OCASC is about:

- Sharing Information
- Facilitating Communication
- Representing its Membership

Our statement of purpose reads:

The Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) is an organization for school councils and parents to share information and facilitate communication within the communities of the OCDSB in order to enhance the education of all its students. OCASC represents its membership to the OCDSB, government and the wider community.

When and where does OCASC meet?

OCASC generally meets on the third Thursday of each month. Meetings are held in the library (second floor) of Fisher Park Public School, 250 Holland Avenue, just north of the Queensway, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Participants are encouraged to arrive at 6:45 to register and sign in. Please check ocasc.ca to confirm dates, locations and times. The Secondary Schools Committee (SSC) meetings take place on the second Thursday of the month. We generally offer refreshments and snacks at all meetings.

Who should come to OCASC meetings?

OCASC meetings are open to the public and any parent or other interested person is welcome to attend meetings. School councils are encouraged to elect an OCASC representative and an alternate. They attend the OCASC meeting and report the shared information back to their councils.

Why should your school council become a member of OCASC?

We share best practices and share solutions to problems. We foster a sense of community and foster the notion that councils are key to well-run, welcoming schools. We work with the OCDSB to build more effective consultation, stronger communications and collaboration.

How does a school council become a member of OCASC?

The school council of any elementary or secondary school in the OCDSB can join OCASC. The annual membership fee of \$35.00 entitles a council to participate in votes taken at OCASC meetings. Fees may be waived if requested.

What are your priorities?

Helping councils work together and be efficient and effective. Making sure your kids get the most out of their schooling. What we do and how we do it can be found on our website: <http://ocasc.ca/about-ocasc/>

What does my membership get me?

- Advance notice of speakers at future OCASC meetings via our newsletter. E-mail chair@ocasc.ca to be added to the newsletter recipients list.
- Participate in discussions to represent your school council and take back new information to your school council.
- Invite OCASC to your school council meeting to talk about the interesting things happening across the board: to have someone from OCASC speak to your school council, contact chair@ocasc.ca.
- Participate in "Chalk-It-Up": this is a favourite part of the monthly OCASC meeting. It is an opportunity for you to take a couple of minutes to talk to the assembled representatives - to share best practices, find out if other schools are struggling with the same issues, ask for suggestions on how to handle situations, and to exchange contact information for further communication.

- Meetings provide an opportunity for school councils to stay informed about current board activities through guest speakers and group discussion.
- Advertise an event at upcoming any school council organized activities of interest to parents via Facebook, Twitter, or the OCASC website. Email your event details to chair@ocasc.ca

OCASC Committees . . . what are they?

Secondary School Committee

The OCASC Secondary Schools Committee (SSC) is a sub-committee of OCASC which meets once per month throughout the school year, generally on the second Thursday of the month, to discuss issues that are specific to the secondary schools within the OCDSB.

We encourage secondary schools to participate in both the regular OCASC Assembly meetings and the SSC meetings. We also encourage schools with grade 7 and 8 students to participate in the SSC by sending a representative to the monthly meetings, as we have learned from experience that parents of grade 7 and 8 students find it valuable to start hearing about what is happening in the high schools prior to the start of grade 9. Please feel free to contact the chair of the Secondary Schools Committee at ssc.chair@ocasc.ca

OCDSB Committees

OCASC is fortunate to have representation on many of the committees in the OCDSB. Each year in November, OCASC selects individuals to represent the organization on these committees. Information from committee will be posted at www.ocasc.ca or the District website.

- The Committee of the Whole (COW)
- Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)
- Parent Involvement Committee (PIC)
- Advisory Committee on Equity (ACE)
- Advisory Committee on the Arts (ACA)
- Committee of the Whole (Budget)
- School Year Calendar Committee
- Advisory Committee for Extended Day and Child Care Programs
- Alternative Schools Advisory Committee

Want to know more?

We value your input. We welcome your comments, suggestions, feedback and questions throughout the year. There are many ways to reach us:

- At our website ocasc.ca
- Via email at chair@ocasc.ca
- Follow us on Twitter at [@OCASC_ca](https://twitter.com/OCASC_ca)
- Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/ocasc



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OCASC MEMBERSHIP

OCASC encourages every school council to become a member of OCASC. For a yearly membership fee, a school council can designate an OCASC representative, and alternate if desired. The membership allows the member council to participate fully in all OCASC activities and discussions, and thereby contribute to regular and ongoing communication between school councils. The fee itself allows the Assembly to cover the costs of events including the annual School Council Training Day and other council training opportunities, monthly meetings, presentations, website maintenance, educational conferences and other shared opportunities.

Every September Councils are invited to join OCASC through a “Welcome to OCASC” package sent to every school council. It includes a registration form which can be sent to OCASC via Board mail or brought in person to a meeting.

Meetings are open to the public and are held on the third Thursday of every month in the library of Fisher Park School starting at 7 pm.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS COMMITTEE

The Secondary Schools Committee is a Standing Committee within OCASC. Many of the challenges and issues facing secondary schools are different in both scope and function from those facing elementary school councils. This committee can focus exclusively on secondary school needs in their discussions and direct their energies toward topics and concerns of secondary parents, councils and students. The Secondary Schools Committee (SSC) meets on the second Thursday of every month, also at Fisher Park School in the library at 7 pm.

CHAPTER 8

SCHOOL FOOD AND BEVERAGE POLICY

Chapter 8: School Food and Beverage Policy



NOTES

SCHOOL FOOD AND BEVERAGE POLICY

The OCDSB is committed to making its schools a healthier place in order for students to reach their full potential. A healthy school environment supports student achievement and enhances students’ social and emotional well-being.

As of September 2011, all Ontario school boards were required to ensure that all food and beverages sold on school premises meet the requirements as outlined in the Ministry’s new School Food and Beverages Policy (PPM 150).

The School Food and Beverage Policy is particularly relevant for school councils as there are potential implications to fundraising activities. Because many current fundraising projects are centered on food sales, school councils may need to reassess their current fundraising practices to ensure they are meeting the new food and beverage standard. Healthy fundraising practices reinforces student learning about nutrition and encourages healthy eating habits for those who buy and consume the items.

This section of your handbook will guide you through the Ministry’s policy, including the rationale, exemptions, and best practices. Also included, in the Ministry’s policy is a Nutrition Standards for Ontario Schools table that outlines specific foods that fall under the sell most, sell less, and not permitted for sale categories, and healthy fundraising ideas, to simplify the transition into providing healthier foods in your school.

SCHOOL COUNCIL’S GUIDE TO THE SCHOOL FOOD AND BEVERAGE POLICY

What You Need To Know About The School Food And Beverage Policy

Q. Why has the government released a school food and beverage policy?

A. The government passed the Healthy Food for Healthy Schools Act in April 2008 to make schools healthier places for students to learn. This policy is an important step in enhancing students’ health. It reinforces the knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding healthy eating developed through the Ontario curriculum. The policy will also help reduce students’ risks of developing serious, chronic diseases, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes and certain types of cancer.

Q. What does this policy mean for schools?

A. All food and beverages sold in schools for school purposes must meet the nutrition standards set out in the policy. This includes food and beverages sold in all venues (e.g., cafeterias, vending machines, tuck shops), through all programs (e.g., catered lunch programs), and at all events (e.g., bake sales, sports events).



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Q. Are there any exemptions?

A. The standards do not apply to food and beverages that are:

- offered in schools to students at no cost;
- brought from home or purchased off school premises and are not for resale in schools;
- available for purchase during field trips off school premises;
- sold in schools for non-school purposes (e.g., sold by an outside organization that is using the gymnasium after school hours for a non-school-related event);
- sold for fundraising activities that occur off school premises; and
- sold in staff rooms.

Q. When did this change take effect?

A. All schools had to comply with the School Food and Beverage Policy by September 1, 2011.

Q. What are the nutrition standards?

A. The nutrition standards embody the principles of healthy eating outlined in Canada's Food Guide and are intended to ensure that the food and beverages sold in schools contribute to students' healthy growth and development. The Ministry's Nutrition Standards for Ontario Schools table can be found at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/Appendix150.pdf>.

There are three categories of food products in the Nutrition Standards for Ontario Schools:

Healthiest (Sell Most) – These products are the healthiest options and generally have higher levels of essential nutrients and lower amounts of fat, sugar, and/or sodium. They must make up at least 80 per cent of all food choices that are available for sale. For example, if a cafeteria offers 10 items for sale, at least eight must fall under the "sell most" category.

Healthy (Sell Less) – Compared to "sell most" products, these products may have slightly higher amounts of fat, sugar, and/or sodium. They cannot make up more than 20 per cent of all food choices that are available for sale.

Not Permitted – These are products that generally contain few or no essential nutrients and/or contain high amounts of fat, sugar, and/or sodium (e.g., deep-fried and other fried foods, confectionery). Food and beverages in this category may not be sold in schools.

A typical school cafeteria menu may look very similar to the menu that existed prior to the introduction of the nutrition standards. For example, a hamburger may be considered a "Sell Most" choice if it is prepared with extra-lean ground meat, whole grain bun, fresh lettuce and tomato. However, it may not be "permitted for sale" if it is prepared with regular ground meat, white bun and processed cheese.



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Q. Do the nutrition standards apply to food or beverages sold for fundraising activities?

A. It depends where the fundraising takes place. The nutrition standards apply to food and beverages sold on school premises for school purposes, including fundraising.

Q. What about special-event days such as pizza lunches?

A. A school principal, in consultation with the school council, may designate up to ten days as special-event days on which food and beverages sold in schools would be exempt from the nutrition standards. Principals are also encouraged to consult with their students in making these decisions.

However, schools are encouraged to consider selling food and beverages that meet the nutrition standards or non-food related items for all celebrations.

OCDSB PROVIDERS

The OCDSB revises its list of providers of food and dairy to schools every year. We aim to ensure that schools have access to local suppliers of healthy nutritional food at reasonable cost. Working with councils and providers the list is regularly updated to reflect changes in both providers and the needs of schools. Every year the list of approved food providers is posted on the District website, communicated to school principals, and shared in the school council newsletter. Please refer to the OCDSB website for the current list of food and dairy products providers.

HEALTHY FUNDRAISING

Q: What is healthy fundraising?

A: It is raising funds through activities that are not related to food or that utilize healthy food and beverages.

Q: Why healthy fundraising is important?

A: Healthy fundraising reinforces classroom healthy eating education and also encourages positive role modeling of healthy eating habits for those who buy and consume the items. It also provides parents, family members, and friends who are interested in supporting school fundraising efforts with a healthy option. Their willingness to support school fundraisers may be impeded if the foods and beverages are of limited nutritional quality.

Q: Where to get ideas on healthy fundraising?

A: For healthy fundraising ideas, please refer to the Healthy School Fundraising fact sheet & School Fundraising ideas document - provided in your Healthy Schools 2020 workshop folder, on your Healthy Schools 2020 CD, and available online at www.healthyschools2020.ca. You can also visit the Nutrition resource Center for other resources, including Bake it UP! Tasty treats for healthier schools bake sales.



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CHAPTER 9

SCHOOL COUNCIL FUNDS MANAGEMENT GUIDE (SUMMARY)

Chapter 9: School Council Funds Management Guide (Summary)

SCHOOL COUNCIL FUNDS MANAGEMENT GUIDE SUMMARY

In October 2014, the Finance department at the OCDSB brought forward a new School Council Funds Management Guide. In October 2014, the Finance department at the OCDSB brought forward a new School Council Funds Management Guide, which can be found on the District website. This Guide is to assist councils in being compliant with the September 2013 OCDSB policy P.133.FIN Management of School Council Funds. Even though a procedure (PR.580.FIN Management of School Council Funds) exists to help School Councils comply with the policy, the guide goes further. It was developed in consultation with school councils and aims to assist school council members and the broader school community to develop and institute practices that allow funds to be managed in a consistent, transparent and appropriate manner. Below are some excerpts from the Guide which are intended to help councils manage their funds.

FUNDRAISING

Quick Reference

1. The school principal is responsible for ensuring that fundraising activities comply with Board policies and procedures and is ultimately responsible for approving the school council fundraising plan.
2. A fundraising plan (or budget) should be established at the start of the year or, for initiatives identified during the year, once the plan to proceed with the initiative is approved.
3. The intended use of funds should be clearly defined prior to the commencement of any fundraising activity.
4. The intended use may include an amount to meet school council administrative requirements or to serve as a reasonable reserve to meet unanticipated student needs.
5. Resources generated through fundraising activities should be used during the school year for the benefit of existing students. Deficit spending and loan financing arrangements are not permitted. Unspent funds for continuing/recurring initiatives are to be carried forward to the following year for that purpose.
6. Funds can be raised for specified projects to be undertaken in future years. Common projects include playground structure replacement and landscaping enhancements.
7. Prior approval may be required from various departments within the District. For example, prior to purchasing playground equipment, the principal must contact the District’s Facilities Division to ensure that equipment purchased meets safety standards.
8. Capital equipment purchased using school council generated funds becomes the property of the Board.
9. Certain fundraising activities may result in donations of property that are eligible for an official donation receipt for income tax purposes. Refer to the Charitable Donations section in this guide.



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- 10. Residual balances relating to discontinued initiatives may be repurposed by the school council. Large balances should be returned to their contributors (e.g. donations received for a playground structure should be returned to the donor if the project is cancelled).

BANKING

Quick Reference

- 1. In accordance with policy P.133.FIN Management of School Council Funds, the school council will determine whether the banking arrangements for funds managed by the council will be:
 - Provided by the school office with the approval of the school principal; or
 - Administered by the school council through a recognized financial institution.
- 2. The policy requires that the Declaration of School Council Banking Arrangements be completed each year. This requirement recognizes that school council membership changes over time and completion of the declaration helps new members recognize the importance of school council’s responsibilities to properly manage financial matters.
- 3. A new declaration must be completed if banking arrangements change. A change in financial institution where the school council banks or a decision to have banking arrangements provided by the school are two examples that will result in the need to complete a new form.
- 4. Bank arrangements provided by the school office will use the school’s financial institution and District’s financial management practices. Funds held for school council purposes will be accounted for separately from other funds managed by the school.
- 5. A school council that administers its own banking arrangements will maintain all of its funds in one bank account under the school council’s name. The bank account must provide monthly statements and ensure that cleared cheques are returned in either hardcopy or electronic format.
- 6. The declaration is included in the Sample Forms and Templates section of the School Council Funds Management Guide.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

A school council will summarize its financial activities in a financial report which is also referred to as a financial statement. The report will show the school council’s revenues and expenses as well as assets, liabilities and net financial position. The sources and use of funds as well as net financial position should be analyzed to show how the money was, or will be, used. The nature of school council activities allows for a highly simplified yet informative report format.

Discussing financial information at each meeting of the school council helps ensure that fundraising initiatives remain on track.

Quick Reference

1. The treasurer must prepare and present a financial report at each meeting of school council.
2. The report should be in summary form and not present personal information that should be held in confidence.
3. The report should summarize the opening balances, receipts, expenses, and closing balances for each fundraising activity undertaken by school council.
4. Opening balances must match the closing balance shown on the previous report. The opening balance plus receipts minus expenses must equal the closing balance.
5. The report should be posted on the school's bulletin board (and ideally its website) to inform the broader school community of school council activities.
6. In addition to regular reporting to school council, the treasurer must prepare a year end financial report for inclusion in the school council's annual report of activities for the year. The requirement for an annual report is established by Ontario Regulation 612/00.
7. A copy of the year end financial report must be provided to the Finance Department's School Support Unit. A memorandum will be sent to school councils near the end of each school year to remind them of the requirement.
8. A sample financial report is provided in the Sample Forms and Templates section of the School Council Funds Management Guide.



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SCHOOL COUNCIL OVERSIGHT

One of the best financial controls is an informed school community. The treasurer should proactively share financial information with the school council and be ready to respond to questions from council members. The importance of maintaining timely and detailed financial records is reinforced by the school council's desire to review its financial position.

Quick Reference

School council members are encouraged to ask questions and review the financial information. Some questions to ask are:

1. Are those responsible for presenting financial information or managing financial transactions attending school council meetings?
2. Is a financial report and bank reconciliation presented at each meeting of school council?
3. Are bank reconciliations completed each month and approved by the council chair?
4. Are there unexplained or excessive adjustments on bank reconciliations?
5. Is the supporting information presented with the bank reconciliation? Supporting information includes the bank statement, a list of banking transactions from the school council records, a list of outstanding cheques and actual cleared cheques (or bank provided images (front and back)).
6. Are all cheques issued by the school council accounted for, including those that are cancelled after issuance?



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7. Are stop payments being issued on stale-dated cheques and supported by a reversing entry in the register?
8. Are cheques ever signed without being fully completed and supported by backup documentation?
9. Are deposit envelopes entered into the register in a timely manner? Do the entries correspond with the entries shown on the bank statement?
10. Are suppliers calling regarding unpaid invoices or commenting about invoices that are paid after they are due?
11. Are refunds of overpayments supported by detailed information from suppliers (e.g. credit note)?
12. Are refunds being issued to the same individual/company on a regular basis?
13. Are excessive amounts of supplies purchased relative to needs?

SCHOOL COUNCIL TRANSITION

The membership of school councils will change over time. A challenge for every council will be the continuity of operations as incumbent members leave and new ones join. Councils are encouraged to discuss and prepare for transition as part of an ongoing planning process.

The treasurer performs a key role on school council. The procedure for the management of school council funds requires that the outgoing treasurer facilitate the transfer of responsibilities to the incoming treasurer. Some key steps involved in the process are provided to assist councils and treasurers with the transition.

Quick Reference

1. The outgoing treasurer will facilitate the transfer of responsibilities to an incoming treasurer. A transfer includes the transfer of cash and cheques not yet deposited, physical and electronic records, software and equipment used to maintain electronic records and, as necessary, knowledge regarding past transactions.
2. The transfer is preferably made directly to the incoming treasurer and formalized in writing. If this is not possible, the transfer should be made to the school council chair or school principal.
3. If possible, the outgoing treasurer would be available to respond to questions from the incoming treasurer for several months following the transfer of responsibilities.
4. The incoming treasurer should:
 - » Review the banking arrangements and update the bank account signing officers on file at the financial institution. It is good practice to revoke all authorizations on file at the bank and to establish new ones for the current signing officers.
 - » Ensure that the list of authorized signing officers for school council transactions is updated by school council. The list can be used to verify approval signatures.

- » Update access and passwords to systems, email accounts and other accounts.
- » Review physical records to familiarize oneself with the type of transactions encountered and to get a sense of the internal controls that have been used to manage financial activities.
- » Prepare a general ledger trial balance as at the date of transfer. Doing so ensures that all debit balances equal all credit balances. Accounting software often has a report that readily generates this list.
- » Confirm that the bank account balance as at the date of transfer agrees with the balance shown in the school council's financial records.
- » Review bank reconciliations to identify reconciling items that may affect future bank reconciliations.
- » Count and document money that has not yet been deposited into the bank or money that is used as petty cash. Both the outgoing and incoming treasurer should sign for the accuracy of money transferred.
- » Review cheque sequence numbers to ensure that there are no missing cheques.
- » Inquire and verify where records for prior years are located. The practice of storing records at the school is a recent recommendation.
- » Advise suppliers of changes in contacts (name, address, phone number).



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DISPUTE RESOLUTION

At times, there may be differences of opinion between a principal and the school council on the use and management of school council funds. In such circumstances, both parties are encouraged to review the original intent of its fundraising activities as this may help resolve the issue. In addition, the school's superintendent of instruction (SOI) may be able to assist in resolving the issue.

The District's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) can, either directly or through other District staff, provide guidance to resolve issues. Provision is also included in the policy to allow the CFO to temporarily assume control of a school council's funds when an investigation of alleged financial irregularity indicates that such action is warranted. The intent of temporary control is simply to safeguard the school council's money for ultimate release back to the school council. The majority of comments shown below are stated in Board policy P.133.FIN.

Quick Reference

1. A school council and the principal are encouraged to work collaboratively to resolve disagreements as to the appropriate use or management of school council funds.
2. Issues which cannot be resolved through discussion and consultation with the principal can be referred to the SOI who will provide guidance. The SOI may request other District staff to assist in resolving the issue.

CHAPTER 10

OCDSB POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Chapter 10: OCDSB Policies and Procedures

OCDSB POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policies and procedures are important tools to clarify the OCDSB’s practices and protocols for the students, staff and community members of the District. Maintaining the safety and well-being of all OCDSB students, staff and community members is supported by our policies and procedures.

Policies and procedures are updated on a regular basis to remain relevant and useful. The OCDSB has specifically designed policies and procedures to ensure the effective operation of school councils in every school within the District.

The following policies and procedures are included in this handbook:

- Policy P.104.SCO School Councils
- Procedure PR.509.SCO School Council Elections, Constitution, and By-laws
- Policy P.133.FIN Management of School Council Funds
- Procedure PR.580.FIN Management of School Council Funds

Your council may find other policies or procedures of the board relevant to carrying out your activities. All policies and procedures can be found online on the District website.



NOTES



TITLE: SCHOOL COUNCILS

Date issued: 12 March 1998

Last Revised: 25 November 2014

Authorization: Board: 25 November 2014

1.0 OBJECTIVE

- 1.1 To ensure the effective operation of school councils in every school within the District's jurisdiction, and, through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

In this policy:

Board refers to the Board of Trustees of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

District refers to the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

3.0 POLICY

- 3.1 The Board shall encourage mutually supportive links between schools and the communities they serve, to better serve the needs of the students. Strong parent/guardian participation through school councils and the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils reflects a commitment to further strengthening the involvement of parents/guardians and the community in Ottawa-Carleton schools and in Board decision-making.
- 3.2 The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board shall ensure the establishment and effective operation of school councils in every school within its jurisdiction. Parent/school associations may continue to co-exist along with the school council.

4.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

- 4.1 The school council shall act in an advisory capacity to the principal and to the Board and/or senior staff in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Board and of the *Education Act* and Regulations. The specific terms of reference of school councils are set out in Attachment 1 to this Policy.

- 4.2 The minimum composition of school councils is set out in Attachment 2 to this Policy. School councils may augment this basic composition to more accurately reflect the school community, provided that:
- a) parents/guardians hold the majority of seats;
 - b) no elementary council has fewer than nine members, and no secondary council has fewer than 11 members*.

Note: See Attachment 2, § C, 1.15 below regarding the filling of vacancies. A school council consisting of fewer than nine (elementary) or 11 (secondary) members shall be allowed to function provided every attempt has been made to fill all positions.

- 4.3 Elections/appointments of members of school councils, including teaching, non-teaching and student members shall be held annually within 30 calendar days of the beginning of each school year. An election of parent/guardian members shall be held on a date that is fixed by the chair or co-chairs of the school council, in consultation with the principal of the school. In a case where a new school is established, the first election of parent/guardian members to the school council shall be held within 30 calendar days of the beginning of the school year on a date established by the Board, in consultation with the school principal. See Procedure PR.509.SCO: School Council Elections, Constitution and By-laws, which sets out the process to be followed for the election of school council members.
- 4.4 Officers of the school council as shall be elected annually, in accordance with Procedure PR.509.SCO, by the new council as a whole, following the elections/appointments described in 3.3 above.
- 4.5 In accordance with Ontario Regulations 612/00 and 613/00, the school principal shall facilitate the operation and functions of the school council, as outlined in Attachment 2 of this policy.
- 4.6 As advisory bodies which may not be incorporated, school councils shall meet their responsibilities as outlined in Attachment 1, and shall ensure that their members are aware of the potential for school council liability as outlined in Attachment 3.
- 4.7 The Board supports a central organization representing all school councils, to act as the primary conduit between the District and local school councils for communications and input/advice in policy initiatives.
- 4.8 Within the resources available to it, the District shall provide training and development opportunities for members of school councils, to assist them in their roles and strengthen their ability to act as effective agents for change and improvement in the schools.
- 4.9 The Board shall solicit the views and consider the recommendations of school councils relating to student achievement and/or the accountability of the education system to parents/guardians, including:

- a) such policies and guidelines as may be established or amended with respect to the conduct of persons in schools within the District; appropriate student dress; allocation of funding to school councils; fund-raising activities of school councils; conflict resolution processes in case of internal school council disputes; and reimbursement for expenses incurred by members and officers of school councils;
 - b) the development of implementation plans for new education initiatives relating to student achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents/guardians, including implementation plans for such Board policies and guidelines that may be established or amended with respect to the conduct of persons in schools within the Board's jurisdiction and with respect to appropriate student dress;
 - c) District action plans for improvement based on the EQAO reports, on the results of tests of its students, on other measures of student achievement, and the communication of these plans to the public; and
 - d) the process and criteria applicable to the selection and placement of principals and vice-principals.
- 4.10 The District shall advise school councils of the action taken in response to such recommendations.
- 4.11 The Director of Education shall establish methods to assess the operation and to promote the effectiveness of school councils, and shall provide an annual report to the Board and the Ministry.
- 4.12 Nothing in this policy detracts from the statutory authority and duties of the Director of Education, superintendents and principals to implement the policies, programs and plans of the Board and to oversee and/or operate the schools in accordance with the *Education Act* and Regulations. All school staff remain under the jurisdiction of the principal at all times.
- 4.13 The Director of Education is authorized to issue such procedures as may be necessary in support of this policy.

5.0 APPENDICES

- Attachment 1: Responsibilities of School Councils
- Attachment 2: Composition and Operation of School Councils
- Attachment 3: School Council Liability

6.0 REFERENCES

- The Education Act*, 1998, § 170 (1), 17.1 and 170 (3)
- Ontario Regulation 612/00, School Council Regulation and Ontario Regulation 613/00, Regulation to Amend Regulation 298.
- Board Policy P.012.CON: Community Use of Schools

Board Policy P.046.SCO: School Communications: Distribution of Materials via Students
Board Policy P.052.SCO: Fund-raising in Schools
Board Policy P.104.SCO: Student Dress Code
Board Policy P.067.SCO: Volunteers
Board Procedure PR.536.SCO: School Communications: Distribution of Materials via Students
Board Procedure PR.509.SCO: School Council Elections, Constitution and By-Laws
Board Procedure PR.616.FIN: Accounting for School-Generated Funds
Board Procedure PR.540.SCO: Fund-raising in Schools
Board Procedure PR.555.SCO: Volunteers



RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL COUNCILS

1.0 Responsibilities of School Councils

1.1 School councils are advisory bodies. Subject to maintaining a school-wide focus as stipulated in 1.2 below, and within the policy parameters established by the District each school council may advise the school principal and, where appropriate, the school board, on any matter, including those listed below that the council has identified as priorities:

- (a) the local school-year calendar;
- (b) school code of student conduct;
- (c) curriculum and program goals and priorities;
- (d) the responses of the school or Board to achievement in provincial and Board assessment programs;
- (e) preparation of the school profile;
- (f) principal profile: provision of input as to the qualities, skills, attitudes and training/education for the board and administration to consider in the selection of school principals;
- (g) school budget priorities, including local capital-improvement plans;
- (h) school-community communication strategies;
- (i) methods of reporting to parents/guardians and the community;
- (j) extra-curricular activities in the school;
- (k) school-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational and nutrition programs;
- (l) community use of school facilities;
- (m) local co-ordination of services for children and youth;
- (n) development, implementation and review of Board policies at the local level.

1.2 Council members shall maintain a school-wide focus on all issues. Council meetings are not a forum for discussion about individual parents/guardians, students, staff, trustees or other council members. Under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and*

Protection of Privacy Act (1989), councils cannot access information on individual students and staff. Individual members of the school community shall deal directly with the staff members and/or the principal to resolve specific concerns.

- 1.3 In addition to its advisory responsibilities, the school council:
 - (a) shall establish its goals, priorities, and procedures;
 - (b) may organize information and training sessions to enable members of the council to develop their skills as council members; and
 - (c) shall promote the best interests of the school community as a whole.
- 1.4 There is an obligation on the part of the District and the school principal to:
 - (a) provide to the school council existing non-confidential information necessary to carry out its responsibilities;
 - (b) subject to the *Education Act* and Regulations, the policies and procedures of the District and in particular section 1.2 above, allow the school council to publish information about its activities;
 - (c) permit the school council, within the parameters and guidelines established by the Board, to raise funds to be used for the benefit of the council in carrying out its duties and/or to benefit the school it represents.
- 1.5 School council fund-raising activities shall be governed by Ottawa-Carleton District School Board policies and procedures, for example Policy P.052.SCO: Fund-raising in Schools and accompanying District Procedures PR.540.SCO: Fund-raising in Schools and PR.616.FIN: Accounting for School-Generated Funds, and Policy P.012.CON: Community Use of Schools.
- 1.6 Members of school councils, parents and volunteers shall be protected by the Board's liability insurance policy while they are acting within the scope of their duties on behalf of the Board, as sanctioned by the principal, (see Attachment 3).
- 1.7 School councils should be aware of the liability and insurance coverage issues outlined in Attachment 3 of this policy, and should review their activities annually based on this information.
- 1.8 School councils shall communicate regularly with parents/guardians and other members of the community to seek their views and preferences with regard to advice being provided by the council, and to report on the activities of the council to the school community.
- 1.9 A school council may provide advice to the principal, Board and/or senior staff. In cases where the advice is given in writing, if this advice is not accepted, the principal, Board or senior staff, as the case may be, will, within a reasonable period of time, provide the school council with the reasons in writing. If there will be a delay in providing a response, reasons for the delay will be provided in writing to the council.

COMPOSITION AND OPERATION OF SCHOOL COUNCILS

1.0 COMPOSITION AND OPERATION OF SCHOOL COUNCILS

Composition

- 1.1 Each school council shall be composed of the following people:
- (a) parents/guardians of students enrolled or registered in the school elected by the parents/guardians as determined under sections 1.2 and 1.7;
 - (b) one community representative appointed by the school council. Two or more representatives may be appointed if specified in the school council by-laws;
 - (c) one student for all secondary school councils, elected by the students;
 - (d) one student enrolled in an elementary school who is appointed by the principal of the school, if the principal determines, after consulting with other members of the school council, that the council should include a student;
 - (e) the school principal as a non-voting member;
 - (f) one teacher elected by the members of the teaching staff; and
 - (g) one administrative/support staff member elected by the administrative/support staff;
 - (h) if school membership is established in the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, a person appointed by this Association.
- 1.2 Parent/guardian members must form the majority of school council members. The minimum council size is nine (elementary) and 11 (secondary) members. At a minimum, the elementary school council shall have five parent/guardian and four staff/other members, while the secondary council shall have six parent/guardian and five staff/other members, including a student.
- 1.3 A school council may establish a maximum number of members through its school council constitution/by-laws.
- 1.4 The school council, in consultation with the principal, shall ensure that the annual election/appointment of teaching, non-teaching and secondary student representatives to the school council is carried out by each of these constituent groups within 30 calendar days of the beginning of the school year. A member of a school council may be re-elected or re-appointed unless otherwise specified in the constitution/by-laws of the council.
- 1.5 One or more community representatives shall be appointed annually by the members of the council as a whole.

- 1.6 School councils may expand membership on the council provided parents/guardians always hold the majority of seats by at least one, except in adult day schools where all "parent/guardian" positions will be held by students.

Eligibility

- 1.7 Board employees are eligible for election to a position as a parent/guardian representative on any school council at a school where their children are enrolled or registered unless they are employed in that school. Board employees who are eligible to run for election as parent/guardian representatives must take reasonable steps to inform people qualified to vote in the election of parent /guardian members of their employment. Election of Board employees who are eligible under this provision entitles them to express their views as any other parent/guardian on a school council.
- 1.8 A Board employee elected as a parent/guardian member of a school council may not serve as chair or co-chair of the council.
- 1.9 While trustees may attend school council meetings as observers, they are not eligible to be members of school councils in the Board in which they serve.
- 1.10 A Board employee may not be appointed as a community representative to a school council unless:
- (a) he/she is not employed at that school; and
 - (b) the other members of the school council have been informed of the person's employment prior to the appointment.
- 1.11 All members of a school council who are not staff members should be Ottawa-Carleton District School Board ratepayers. The community representative or representatives appointed to the council shall preferably be Ottawa-Carleton District School Board ratepayers who are currently neither parents/guardians of students attending the school or members of Board staff.
- 1.12 The composition of the school council should reflect the diversity of the community or communities served by the school. In defining a school community, considerations may include geography and/or school boundaries; language; and cultural, economic, business, demographic and socioeconomic considerations including representation for adult students, single parents/guardians, seniors.

Operations

- 1.13 To form a quorum as required for a meeting of the council:
- (a) a majority of the current members of the school council shall be present at the meeting; and
 - (b) a majority of the members present shall be parent/guardian members.
- 1.14 For any seats which remain unfilled or become vacant following the elections, the school council shall continue to seek qualified persons to fill such seats. The council will make all such appointments subsequent to an election as expeditiously as possible. A school council consisting of fewer than nine (elementary) or 11 (secondary) members shall be allowed to function provided every attempt has been made to fill all positions.

- 1.15 In the event that a duly constituted school council cannot be formed in a given school year, the principal shall so notify the Board through the Superintendent of Schools. The principal shall then make every effort to facilitate the establishment of a school council for the current school year.
- 1.16 Elections to school councils shall be held on an annual basis in accordance with Board Procedure PR.509.SCO: School Council Elections, Constitution and By-Laws.
- 1.17 School councils shall elect officers and assign duties to these officers in a manner broadly consistent with School Councils Procedure PR.509.SCO.
- 1.18 The Chair or co-chairs of a school council must be elected by the council from amongst the parent/guardian representatives.
- 1.19 Meetings of the school council shall be held at least four times each year, and shall be open to the general public. The first meeting each year shall be held within 35 calendar days of the beginning of the school year. Meetings shall normally be held at the school. If a meeting is to be held elsewhere, the location shall be accessible to the public.
- 1.20 School councils may, in accordance with their constitution/by-laws, establish committees to make recommendations to the council, subject to the following:
 - (a) each committee shall include at least one parent/guardian member of the council;
 - (b) such committees may include persons who are not members of the council;
 - (c) each committee meeting is held in public, and written notice of the dates, times and locations of such meetings is provided to the parents/guardians of all students enrolled in the school.
- 1.21 School councils may adopt such procedures for the conduct of meetings and of school council members as they deem appropriate, and which are consistent with Canadian principles of fairness and democracy as reflected in the Board's rules of conduct.
- 1.22 Each school council shall have the following roles and responsibilities fulfilled by:
 - (a) The School Council:
 - (i) ensures that the minutes of school council meetings are recorded and maintained*;
* N.B.: The minutes should include, or have attached to them, any advice provided in writing to the principal, Board and/or senior staff by the council, and the written response or responses in reply.
 - (ii) ensures that accurate minutes and records be retained on their website or otherwise for six years. Financial Records must be retained for seven years in accordance with District guidelines at the school for examination without charge by any person, and that an annual school council year-end report including, where applicable, a financial report, are prepared and presented to the council;
 - (iii) ensures that the minutes and records of the council during the council's tenure are passed on to the successor council;

- (iv) ensures that a current principal profile is on file with the District by 31 October of each year;
 - (v) may participate or assign an alternate to participate in information and training programs;
 - (vi) communicates with the school principal;
 - (vii) ensures that there is regular communication with the school community;
 - (viii) ensures that parents/guardians of all students enrolled in the school are consulted about matters under consideration by the council;
 - (ix) ensures that the constitution and by-laws of the council are maintained up to date and are reviewed annually by the council;
 - (x) consults with senior board staff and trustees, as required; and
 - (xi) prepares the annual report of the school council, including, if the council engages in fund-raising activities, a report on these activities, for submission to the school principal and the Director of Education.
- (b) The School Council Chair:
- (i) calls school council meetings;
 - (ii) prepares the agenda for school council meetings;
 - (iii) chairs school council meetings;
 - (iv) works collaboratively with school council members to assign and delegate the roles and responsibilities of the school council as outlined in 1.23 a) above.
- (c) Council Members:
- (i) participate in council meetings;
 - (ii) participate in information and training programs;
 - (iii) act as a link between the school council and the community;
 - (iv) encourage the participation of parents/guardians from all groups and of other people within the school community.
- (d) The Principal:
The principal shall:
- (i) facilitate the establishment of the school council and assist in its operation
 - (ii) on behalf of the school council, provide written notice of the dates, times and locations of annual elections and meetings of the council and of committees of the council to the parents/guardians of all students enrolled in the school, both by giving the notice to the student for delivery to his/her parent/guardian and by posting the notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parents/guardians;
 - (iii) support and promote the council's activities;
 - (iv) on behalf of the council, provide a copy of the annual school council report in the fall of each school year to:
 - A the parents/guardians of all students enrolled in the school, both by giving the report to the student for delivery to his/her parent/guardian and by posting the report in the school in a location that is accessible to parents/guardians; and
 - B the Director of Education;
 - (v) in accordance with the *Act* and Ontario regulations, seek input from the council by:

- A providing for the prompt distribution to each member of the school council, and for the posting in a location accessible to parents/guardians, of Ministry materials identified by the Ministry for such distribution;
 - B attending all meetings of the school council or, when unable to do so, designating a staff member to attend on his/her behalf;
 - C acting as a resource to the council, and assisting the council in obtaining information relevant to the functions of the council, such as information relating to relevant legislation, regulations and policies, and the budgets for the school and for school-generated funds, required by the council to enable it to provide informed advice;
 - D considering each recommendation made by the council to the principal and advising the council of the action taken in response to the recommendation;
 - E soliciting the views of the school council with respect to:
 - (I) the establishment or amendment of school policies and guidelines relating to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents/guardians, such as the Board and school code of conduct and dress code;
 - (II) the development of implementation plans for new education initiatives relating to student achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents/guardians, for example the Board and school code of conduct and dress code;
 - (III) school action plans for improvement based on EQAO reports, and the communication of these plans to the public; and
 - (IV) all Board policies on which consultation is required, and any other matter for which the Board has directed that school councils be consulted.
- (vi) act as a resource on laws, regulations, board policies, and collective agreements;
- (vii) communicate with the chair of the council, as required;
- (viii) ensure that copies of the minutes of the council's meetings are kept at the school and are available to the public on request;
- (ix) assist the council in communicating with the school community;
- (x) encourage the participation of parents/guardians from all groups and of other people within the school community in the life of the school and the activities of the school council.
- 1.23 Roles and responsibilities of other school council officers shall be specified in the constitutions/by-laws of individual school councils.
- 1.24 No remuneration or honorarium shall be paid to members of the school council.
- 1.25 The preferable decision-making model for the school council is consensus. However, it is recognized that voting may be required from time to time. When a vote is taken, each member of the council, excluding the principal who is a non-voting member, is entitled

to one vote. Similarly, each member of a committee of a school council, excluding the principal, is entitled to one vote when a vote is taken by the committee.

- 1.26 The school council should resolve disagreements collaboratively and through consensus or voting at the local level. In the event that a resolution is not attained at the local level, the Chair or principal will request the appropriate Superintendent of Schools to mediate the disagreement. If a resolution is not attained through the Superintendent of Schools, the Chair or principal will refer the matter to the Director of Education.



SCHOOL COUNCIL LIABILITY

1.0 School Council Liability [former section has been replaced with the Ontario School Boards' Insurance Exchange (OSBIE) Advisory (April 2001) below]:

SCHOOL COUNCILS / PARENT GROUPS

1. PARENT GROUPS

Parent groups play a significant role and contribute to the success of many school functions through their volunteer efforts. This contribution is recognized through the school board's liability policy which extends coverage to members of parent groups while they are acting within the scope of their duties on behalf of the school board. Duties are those assigned by any authorized employee or trustee. Coverage is extended to volunteer parents involved in activities which are approved and controlled by any authorized employee or member of the board. The person authorizing the activity must assume responsibility for it and the activity must be in accordance with board policies and procedures. Thus if a member of a parent group were sued because of alleged negligence arising out of their duties for the board, the OSBIE policy would provide protection.

The parent organizations require their own liability insurance as protection against being named in a lawsuit for activities of the group that are independent of a school and are not directed by a school employee or trustee. Activities such as conventions, social outings of the parent group, independent fund-raising events, etc., would not fall under the board's liability insurance.

The Ontario Home & School Association and the Federation of Catholic Parent-Teacher Associations of Ontario both have made liability insurance available to their membership. Parent groups should investigate the feasibility of obtaining liability insurance for their organizations for activities that are not under the jurisdiction of the school board.

2. SCHOOL COUNCILS

School councils are deemed to be formed for the sole purpose of providing advice to school staff. Members of school councils are protected by the boards' liability insurance for lawsuits while they are working within the scope of their mandated duties for the board.

Since the Ministry of Education and Training issued its Policy/Program Memorandum No. 122 on April 12, 1995, a mandate to form school council advisory organizations, the OSBIE office has received a number of questions regarding insurance coverage for School Councils.

To help to clarify the matter of insurance protection, the remainder of this bulletin is written in a question and answer format. It is recommended that this bulletin be copied and distributed to all interested parties

Q-1 Are school councils protected by the board's liability insurance while they are working within their mandate to provide advice to the principal?

A-1 Yes. School councils are mandated by the Ministry of Education & Training to provide advice to principals on a variety of issues. While the members of the council are performing their duties as outlined by the Ministry of Education and Training for the board, they are deemed to be working within the scope of their duties (to provide advice to the principal), and are insured as defined in the liability policy.

Q-2 What if school councils go beyond their mandate to provide advice? What if they become involved in some of the fund-raising activities that were previously run by parent groups? Does the board's liability insurance protect them in these circumstances?

A-2 It depends.

- i) YES, they are protected IF the school council members are "working within the scope of their duties for the board as assigned by an authorized board representative". For example, if a school principal organized a fund-raising activity and the school council members were asked to assist with the event, insurance protection would be provided to those members who volunteered.
- ii) NO, IF the school council members involve themselves in a fund-raising or other activity on their own and outside of the control of the school or board, the members are not protected by the board's liability insurance policy. For example, if a school council decided to hold a Christmas social, a family social event, conduct a craft sale, orchestrate programs not provided by schools, etc. on its own, coverage is not extended by the board's insurer.

Q-3 If my school council is willing to volunteer its time and energy to run a series of fund-raising events, why must we have the board's support and input on our plans? If my school council decides to run a program on school premises, after school for the benefit of children and families in the community, why does the board have to be involved in setting up the program and outlining the rules for operation in order for me to be covered by the board's insurance? The board is obstructing our creativity by imposing rules? Is it fair for the board to withhold insurance protection if we don't follow the board's rules?

A-3 Yes, it is fair. The board has a high onus to ensure that any activity in which it or its representatives are involved is conducted in a safe manner. A board develops procedures and policies with respect to various activities with safety in mind. Safety and security must have priority when it comes to any school activity. Matters such as accommodations, equipment, supervision, training, appropriateness of the activity, etc. must all be addressed before an activity is undertaken. School officials have developed policies and procedures to ensure safety for students and others. To disregard these policies and procedures may lead to injury and to losses.

A liability insurance policy issued to a school board provides protection to the school board and to other interests while they are acting within the scope of their duties on behalf of the board. The insurer protects the board and others for activities within the

control and jurisdiction of the school board. If the activity is outside of the jurisdiction of the school board, then coverage is not provided for that activity. A board is not obligated to assume responsibility for an activity independent of a school even if the school might be the beneficiary.

Therefore, it is fair for the board to advise school councils that if they run activities outside of the board's jurisdiction, they must purchase their own insurance that would respond to claims brought against them arising out of their events. They cannot be deemed to be working within the scope of duties for the board if they are not involved in a board controlled activity.

- Q-4** If the school council is given permission to use a school gymnasium for an after-school program that the parents are running, are the parents protected by the board's liability insurance?
- A-4** No. If the school council is simply using the school gym to operate a non-school activity, the group would require it's own liability insurance for the activity they are running. They would be in the same position as other users of school premises, and should provide liability insurance for their activities on the board's premises.
- Q-5** Do school councils require their own liability insurance?
- A-5** Yes, they do if they engage in any activities beyond their assigned duties. School councils will inevitably be involved in personal activities that are not under the jurisdiction of the school. Activities such as providing after-hours child care, running music programs, or organizing a Christmas party or other social activity for the council members would need to be insured by the school council's insurance.
- Q-6** Can school councils purchase liability insurance from OSBIE?
- A-6** No, not through OSBIE. OSBIE is a Reciprocal Exchange that is licensed to insure school boards only.
- Q-7** Where would school councils purchase liability insurance?
- A-7** We are aware of two possible sources of group insurance for school councils.
1. The Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations has a group liability insurance policy available to their members only. School councils members involved in fundraising and other activities independent of a school may wish to consider membership in this Association.
 2. The Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education will add School Councils who become members to their group liability policy. Information about membership and insurance can be obtained through the London Office at 519-432-5573.

Liability insurance protection is just one of the benefits of membership in either of these organizations.

These group liability insurance programs are designed to complement liability insurance policies provided by OSBIE or any other school board insurer.

Note: The Ontario Public School Boards Association (OPSBA) has arranged a special liability insurance package specifically designed for School Councils/Parent Groups of Member Boards. This package is available to any school council or home and school association of any schools whose board is an OPSBA member (*Note: The OCDSB is a member board*).



PROCEDURE PR.509.SCO

TITLE: SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS, CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

Date issued: 12 March 1998
Last revised: 20 June 2001
Authorization: Senior Staff: 18 February 1998

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To outline the responsibilities of school councils when conducting annual elections and carrying out its activities as a duly constituted school council.

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

2.1 School principals/school councils

3.0 PROCEDURES

ANNUAL ELECTIONS:

- 3.1 In accordance with School Councils Policy P.014.SCO, where elections are required to fill a seat or seats on the council, it is the responsibility of the school council to ensure that parent/guardian elections are conducted in a manner consistent with accepted principles of democratic elections (see also School Councils Policy P.014.SCO, Attachment 2).
The principal will ensure that elections of teaching and non-teaching staff and student representatives to the school council are carried out each fall by each of the constituent groups.
- 3.2 School councils may:
- a) appoint a nominating committee to be responsible for seeking parent nominations to the council for the following year. All persons nominated must indicate their acceptance.
 - b) require parent/guardian candidates to prepare and submit, on a legibly completed standard form, a brief summary of their experience and interest in the office to which they are seeking election. The council will assemble a list of candidates, which may include candidates' profiles, and distribute it prior to the election to the school community, along with notice of the election date and process.
- 3.3 Notice of the elections will be given to the various electoral groups (parents/guardians, teaching staff, administrative and support staff and students) at least two weeks in advance of the election. In accordance with Policy P.014.SCO, Attachment 2, section

- 1.23 (d) (ii), the principal is responsible for giving notice of the date, time and location of the parent/guardian election to the parents/guardians of all students enrolled in the school, both by giving the notice to the student for delivery to his/her parent/guardian and by posting the notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parents/guardians.
- 3.4 Elections for each electoral group will be held at the school on a date publicized in advance, as required under 3.3 above.
 - 3.5 Where a school council chooses to hold the parent election at a meeting, nominations will be accepted until the time voting begins, provided the person nominated is present and agrees, or if the person is not present his/her written consent is delivered to the Chair of the election meeting. Alternatively, where a school council opts to hold the election through all or part of the day, advance notice of the time and date for the closing of nominations will be distributed in advance of the list and election notice described in 3.3 above.
 - 3.6 For any positions for which the exact number of candidates required, or fewer, are nominated, the election will be declared to be by acclamation.
 - 3.7 In the case of a tie vote, the tied candidates will draw lots to determine the election.
 - 3.8 All elections will be conducted by secret ballot, and only the name of the successful candidate and the total number of votes cast will be announced.
 - 3.9 Voting in an election shall be open to all members of the representative groups. Voting by proxy is not allowed.
 - 3.10 A vacancy in the membership of a school council during the year will be filled by election or appointment in accordance with this procedure and with the council's constitution/by-laws. In exceptional circumstances, after every reasonable attempt has been made to hold an election, a principal, in consultation with the appropriate Superintendent of Schools and interested parents/guardians, may develop an interim structure for a school council for the current school year, until such time as a school council can be elected/appointed in keeping with this procedure.

SCHOOL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION/BY-LAWS

- 3.11 Each school council will have a constitution and by-laws governing the conduct of its affairs that complies with Board Policy P.014.SCO: School Councils, and with this procedure.
- 3.12 Every school council's constitution/by-laws will include, at a minimum, the following:
 - a) the name, purpose and objectives of the council;
 - b) the membership and officers of the council;
 - c) the responsibilities of the officers and members of the council;
 - d) provisions with respect to council meetings, quorum and the voting rights of members;

- e) provisions for deciding on any affiliations of the council with other organizations such as the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC);
- f) any committees of the council* and their composition;

*N.B.: Written notice of the dates, times and locations of the meetings of the council and of meetings of all committees of the council is to be provided to the parents/guardians of all students enrolled in the school, both by giving the notice to the student for delivery to his/her parent/guardian and by posting the notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parents/guardians;
- g) rules for the conduct of meetings and for amendments to the constitution/by-laws of the council
- h) provisions governing annual election procedures and the method for filling vacancies in the membership of the council which occur during the year, for example through election, rotation or by seeking volunteers;
- i) a provision with respect to participation in school council proceedings in cases of conflict of interest;
- j) a conflict resolution process for internal school council disputes;

- 3.13 School councils wishing to specify a number of parent/guardian members beyond the required minimum under Policy P.014.SCO, Attachment 2, section 1.2 will specify this number in the council's constitution/by-laws.
- 3.14 For school councils that do not specify the number of parent/guardian members, the minimum numbers of five (elementary) and six (secondary) established in Policy P.014.SCO: School Councils, Attachment 2, section 1.2 will apply.
- 3.15 School councils wishing to select/appoint more than one community representative to the council must so specify in their constitution/by-laws. Eligibility for community representatives as set out in Policy P.014.SCO, Attachment 2, section 1.11 will apply.
- 3.16 School councils may specify in their constitution/by-laws that there may be a chair or two co-chairs of the council, and may limit the number of annual terms of office to which a council member may be elected.

4.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The Education Act, 1998, s. 170 (1), 17.1 and 170 (3)
Ontario Regulation 612/00, School Council Regulation and Ontario Regulation 613/00, Regulation to Amend Regulation 298.
OCDSB School Council Welcome Package
Sample School Council Constitutions/By-laws (posted electronically)
Board Policy P.014.SCO: School Councils
Board Policy P.012.CON: Community Use of Schools
Board Policy P.052.SCO: Fund-raising in Schools
Board Policy P.104.SCO: Student Dress Code
Board Policy P.067.SCO: Volunteers
Board Procedure PR.616.FIN: Accounting for School-Generated Funds

Board Procedure PR.540.SCO: Fund-raising in Schools
Board Procedure PR.555.SCO: Volunteers

POLICY P.133.FIN

TITLE: MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL COUNCIL FUNDS

Date issued: 24 September 2013

Last revised:

Authorization: Board: 24 September 2013

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To govern the management and accounting of school council funds in a consistent, transparent and financially sound manner.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

In this policy,

2.1 **Board** means the Board of Trustees.

2.2 **District** means the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB).

2.3 **School Council** means an advisory body representing the parent community within a school which provides advice to the school principal in accordance with P.014.SCO School Councils. A school council operates as a representative entity but may not be incorporated, and as such is permitted by the District and the school principal to raise funds for specified purposes.

3.0 POLICY

3.1 The District believes that sound financial management of school council funds is an essential component of effective governance. To ensure transparency and accountability, the District sets standards for the management, monitoring and use of school council funds.

3.2 The Chief Financial Officer of the District (CFO) shall be responsible for the oversight of school council funds.

3.3 School Councils must adhere to the principles of transparency, accountability, and sound financial practice in the management of school council funds by:

- a) adhering to District policies and procedures, legislation, associated directives and guidelines;
- b) appointing a treasurer;

- c) maintaining ongoing and effective oversight of the management of school council funds;
- d) establishing the segregation of duties and internal controls for the effective and transparent management of funds;
- e) ensuring financial records are kept and maintained properly in accordance with District practice;
- f) reporting, as required, monthly through school council meetings and annually through a report to the District; and
- g) being subject to audit by the District through internal review and/or an external auditor.

4.0 SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES

Appointments

- 4.1 Annually, every school council shall appoint a Treasurer and a minimum of two officers with signing authority for school council finances.

Determine Type of Account

- 4.2 Every school council shall maintain its funds in a designated account, used exclusively for school council purposes.
- 4.3 Prior to June 2014, and before every June thereafter if contemplating a change, every school council shall render a decision about whether the account used to maintain the school council funds will be held:
- a) In an special purpose account at the school managed through the school district's financial system; or
 - b) through a recognized financial institution.
- 4.4 Upon making this decision, the school council shall provide notice in writing of the decision to the CFO.
- 4.5 A school council, at the start of its term, may review its decision about the management of school council funds and if a decision to change the practice is made, the CFO of the District shall be notified.
- 4.6 Where the account(s) is held by the school, the principal shall be a designated signing officer.

Management and Monitoring

- 4.7 School councils which manage their funds through the District will adhere to established District financial accounting procedures.
- 4.8 In order to manage school council funds in an account at an authorized financial institution, the school council must annually, agree in writing to comply with the District's conditions and procedures which will include, but are not limited to the following:
- a) to maintain records and implement procedures in accordance with District guidelines;

- b) to make records available for review by the District's internal reviewers following District reporting procedures;
 - c) to submit to an internal review upon request and/or an external audit; and
 - d) to submit annual financial summaries and statements every school year, ending August 31, upon request.
- 4.9 Notwithstanding the type of account, the school council treasurer shall maintain detailed records of all financial transactions.

Compliance

- 4.10 Where any individual has reason to believe that the management of school council funds is not in accordance with this policy or may be subject to an irregularity, he or she shall bring his or her concern to the attention of the treasurer, the school council chair, the school principal, the Superintendent of Instruction (SOI) or the CFO, as appropriate.
- 4.11 The CFO of the District shall be authorized to initiate an investigation where there is reason to believe there is or has been financial irregularity.
- 4.12 In the event of a disagreement between the school principal and the school council as to the appropriate use and/or management of school council funds which cannot be resolved through discussion and consultation, the matter should be referred to the SOI and/or CFO of the District for further mediation.
- 4.13 Should the CFO of the District determine that allegations of financial irregularity of the results of an investigation warrant, the District may temporarily assume control of the school council's funds:
- a) The Director of Education shall inform the Board at the first available opportunity.
 - b) Within 90 days, the CFO would present to the Board a plan aimed at restoring control to the school council, including as necessary, conditions and a projected timeline.
 - c) The Director of Education shall authorize procedures under this policy to further enable compliance by school councils with this policy.

5.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Education Act and Regulations

Board Policy P.014.SCO: School Councils

Board Procedure PR.509.SCO: School Council Elections, Constitutions and By-laws

PROCEDURE PR.580.FIN

TITLE: MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL COUNCIL FUNDS

Date issued: 16 December 2014

Last revised:

Authorization: Senior Staff: 16 December 2014

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To provide a process for the management and accounting of school council funds in a consistent, transparent and financially sound manner.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

In this procedure,

- 2.1 **Board** refers to the Board of Trustees.
- 2.2 **District** refers to the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.
- 2.3 **Fundraising** refers to any activity permitted under District policy and approved by the school principal that raises money or other resources for the school. Fundraising activities are commonly determined in consultation with the school council. Activities may take place on or off school property.
- 2.4 **School Council** refers to an advisory body representing the parent community within a school which provides advice to the school principal in accordance with P.014.SCO School Councils. .
- 2.5 **School Generated Funds** refers to funds that are raised and collected by the school or broader community in the name of the school by school councils or other school or parent administered groups. School generated funds is a broad category which includes not only fundraising for school purposes, but also all funds that are collected and paid out through school accounts to support a variety of programs such as payments to charities or other third parties (e.g. tour operators, hot lunch programs).
- 2.6 **School Community** refers to students, parents/guardians, school councils, trustees, school administrators, District staff, volunteers, feeder schools/family of schools as well as the community of people and businesses that are served by or located in the greater neighbourhood of the school.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 Chief Financial Officer, School Principal, School Council and School Council Treasurer.

- 3.2 The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for:
- a) providing guidance and direction on financial matters;
 - b) developing guidelines and training programs for school councils relating to the management of school council funds; and
 - c) responding to inquiries and disputes escalated by school councils or District staff.
- 3.3 The School Principal is responsible for:
- a) overseeing and approving school council fundraising activities;
 - b) supporting the management of funds collected through fundraising activities and working with school council to ensure financial practices follow District policies and procedures and Ministry directives; and
 - c) advising the Superintendent of Instruction and/or Chief Financial Officer of concerns relating to the management of school council funds.
- 3.4 The School Council is responsible for:
- a) adhering to District policies and procedures, Ministry of Education directives and related legislation;
 - b) operating as a representative entity (but may not be incorporated or be registered as a charity);
 - c) determining, in consultation with the school principal, the banking arrangements for the school council;
 - d) ensuring that fundraising activities are developed in consultation with the school community and principal and that the principal approves the activities on behalf of the school and the District;
 - e) overseeing the effective management of school council funds; and
 - f) reporting at school council meetings, and through the Annual Report, on all the fundraising and financial activities.
- 3.5 The School Council Treasurer is responsible for:
- a) ensuring that school council funds are kept separate from personal funds;
 - b) ensuring that timely and accurate accounting records are maintained for all revenues, expenses, assets and liabilities;
 - c) ensuring that controls established for the management of funds are adhered to and that appropriate action is taken when controls are not followed;
 - d) reporting the school council's financial activities at each meeting of school council;
 - e) making financial records available for review by District staff or auditors; and

- f) ensuring the effective transition of treasurer responsibilities by transferring knowledge, resources and complete records to an incoming treasurer upon conclusion of the incumbent treasurer's term or resignation.

4.0 PROCEDURE

- 4.1 The school council is responsible for implementing effective internal control and accounting practices in accordance with the School Council Funds Management Guide. The internal controls and accounting practices implemented will ensure that:
 - a) banking administration practices are communicated to the District as required by policy;
 - b) a fundraising plan for each school council activity is prepared in consultation with, and initiated following approval by, the school principal;
 - c) transactions relating to the receipt and disbursement of funds are promptly recorded in the school council's financial records;
 - d) money received by school council is promptly deposited to the school council bank account or transferred to the school in accordance with agreed upon banking administration practices;
 - e) bank statements are reconciled each month with the school council's financial records and presented for review by the school council chairs or school council members;
 - f) records are managed in a manner that respects access to information and privacy requirements while providing for access to the records by staff authorized by Financial Services; and
 - g) records are transferred to the school office by 30 September following the end of the fiscal year to which they relate.
- 4.2 School council records transferred to the school will be retained for six years following the end of the fiscal year to which they relate. The fiscal year is the school year.
- 4.3 The school council will communicate its financial activities and financial assets to the school community and District at each meeting of school council and at the end of the school year.
- 4.4 The school council will make its records available for review or audit upon request and the school council treasurer or other school council member will respond to questions regarding the records.
- 4.5 The outgoing school council treasurer will facilitate the transfer of responsibilities to an incoming treasurer. This includes the transfer of cash and cheques not yet deposited, physical and electronic records, software used to maintain electronic records and, as necessary, knowledge regarding past transactions.

5.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Education Act

Ministry of Education Fees for Learning Material and Activities Guideline March 25, 2011

Board Policy P.133.FIN Management of School Council Funds

Board Policy P.014.SCO: School Councils

Board Policy P.052.SCO Fundraising in Schools

Board Procedure PR.509.SCO: School Council Elections, Constitution and By-laws

Board Guide - School Council Funds Management Guide

A COMMUNITY OF CHARACTER



The Ontario Ministry of Education has also created a handbook to assist parents participating in their school's council. This handbook could prove useful if councils are interested in the history of school councils in Ontario, an overview of the roles and responsibilities within the Ontario education system, and detailed examples of specific actions taken by school councils. A printer friendly version of this handbook, *School Councils: A Guide for Members*, can be found online at <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/council02.pdf>.



Characteristics and Skills We Want for Our Learners

CHARACTERISTICS



GOAL-ORIENTED

Students who are goal-oriented have self-motivation, diligence, initiative and a sense of responsibility.

RESILIENT

Students who are resilient face and overcome adversity and challenging situations. They take risks, learn from mistakes, persevere, and move forward confidently.



GLOBALLY AWARE

Students who are globally aware are empathetic and responsive in their contributions to the local and global community. They demonstrate cultural proficiency and act in a respectful, inclusive manner.

COLLABORATIVE

Students who are collaborative understand the importance of working cooperatively in a team setting. Collaboration values diverse perspectives and effectively utilizes each person's contributions.



INNOVATIVE/CREATIVE

Students who are innovative and creative have original thoughts and ideas that are of value and are acted upon. They understand that creativity is essential not only for solving problems, but also for improving where strengths already exist.

SKILLS



CRITICAL THINKERS

Students who are critical thinkers engage in reflective and independent thinking. They identify the relevance, validity and importance of ideas using rational and intuitive processes. They understand the logical connections between ideas. They construct and evaluate arguments using criteria. They generate solutions and create new ways of thinking.

ACADEMICALLY DIVERSE

Students who are academically diverse have strong literacy and numeracy skills; they will also have acquired a full spectrum of skills through exposure to a wide range of subjects including the arts, sciences, financial literacy, physical education, the trades and technology, in keeping with student needs.



DIGITALLY FLUENT

Students who are digitally fluent know how to engage with technology to enhance their learning; this includes interacting with, creating and sharing information (individually or collaboratively) in a responsible and ethical way to support their learning.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS

Students who are effective communicators are skilled at listening, speaking, questioning, and writing; they connect with people and know their audience.



ETHICAL DECISION-MAKERS

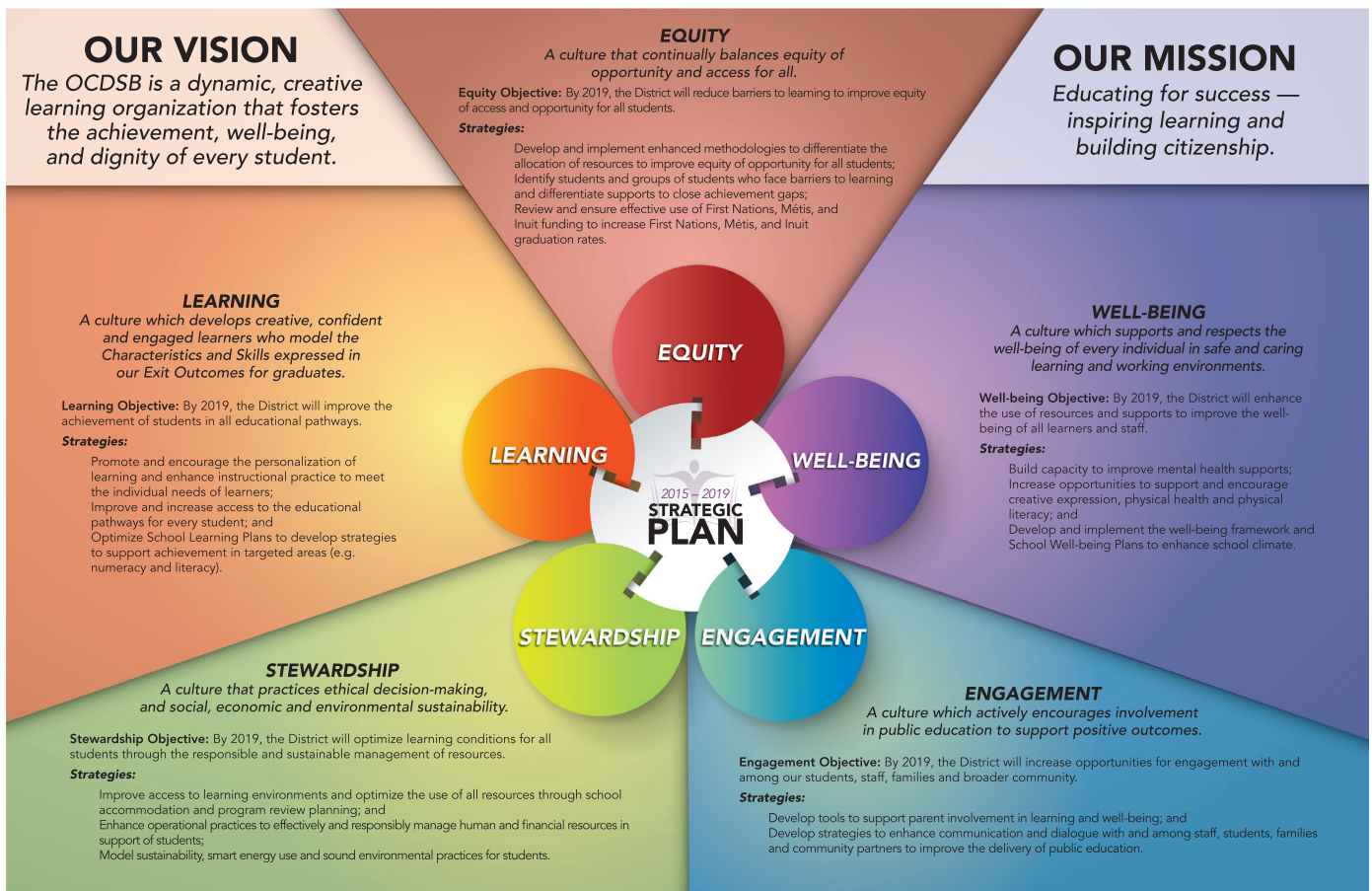
Students who are ethical decision makers model principles that govern their decisions through their actions. They embody honesty, respect and responsibility.

2015 – 2019

STRATEGIC PLAN

EVERY SCHOOL, EVERY VOICE:
MAKING PROGRESS TOGETHER

Committed to having every OCDSB student develop the Characteristics and Skills established in our Exit Outcomes.



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