

Sunnyside Elementary School Council Constitution

April, 1996

A. Basic Principals

The sunnyside Elementary School Council (hereafter referred to as “the council”) is a council representing the interest of parents/legal guardians (hereafter referred to as “parents”) of the students of Sunnyside School (hereafter referred to as “the students”), all the staff of Sunnyside School (hereafter referred to as the “staff”), and the community members who are the public school supporters (hereafter referred to as “the community”). Input into the operation of the school may be achieved by

- i. Attending the annual general meeting or
- ii. Submitting a written request to be placed on the agenda of a regular meeting council.

1. School Council Mission

The mission of the Sunnyside Elementary School Council is to foster the well-being and effectiveness of our school community and to enhance student learning.

2. School Council Objectives

The objectives of the sunnyside School Council are to

- A. provide advice on the management of the school;
- B. act as an advisory structure to the principal and staff, presenting parental and community concerns and perspectives on issues related to programs, school planning and budgeting;
- C. provide financial support;
- D. Promote a sense of community;
- E. encourage parent involvement;
- F. act jointly in an advisory and collaborative role in decision making. The council will work in cooperation with the school staff, all parents and community members to enable the school and students to be the best they can be;
- G. assist in distributing information about the school and about parental priorities and in promoting community understanding and involvement in the school;
- H. act as a liaison between the school, parents, community and other school support organizations for the purpose of information-sharing and cooperation;
- I. act as an advisory structure to the school board on matters relating to Palliser Regional Schools; and
- J. work in partnership with stakeholders in the process of achieving school goals.

3. School Council Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the Sunnyside School Council are to

- A. advise the principal on school matters as the pertain to school improvement, policies, organization and activities, including but not limited to the following:
 - i. Curriculum and programs;
 - ii. Cultural and extra-curricular activities; and
 - iii. Health and safety issues.
- B. Provide recommendations to the school board with respect to transportation, school closure and other board policies if requested;
- C. provide advice as needed, in the development of the school budget proposal, prior to submission to the school board;
- D. Participate in school reviews and to receive feedback an actions taken;
- E. initiate surveys pertaining to school issues and/or performance.

4. School Council Authority and Ethics

- A. School personnel competency matters are the responsibility of the administration. Board policy outlines protocol in handling concerns in this area.
- B. all concerns regarding the decisions and actions affecting the management of the school are to be presented to the school administration. All school staff take their direction from the school administration.
- C. The authority of the school council is defined by legislation, regulations, board policy, and the sunnyside Elementary School community.
- D. The school council cannot change or amend any council bylaws except at the annual meeting or an emergent general parent meeting with quorum present.
- E. Outside of a legally called council meeting, no council member other than the principal has decision making or administrative authority conferred by office on the council.
- F. The school council should reach all decisions collaboratively;
- G. Once consensus has been reached, all members will support the direction provided by the council. All decisions must be in accordance with guidelines set out by the Department of Education and Palliser Regional School Board.

- H. Members will respect the need for confidentiality and conduct themselves accordingly with respect to those matters discussed at the school council level which are of a sensitive nature.

B. Structure of the Council

1. Composition

The council will consist of a minimum of 7 members including 4 parents, (one of whom could be the past chair), the past chair, 1 teacher, 1 community member, and the principal as ex-officio member.

2. Terms of office

All members are elected to one year of office. Members may be re-elected to a maximum of three consecutive terms except for the chairperson who can sit for one additional year as past chair

3. Elections and Appointments

- A. Parent members- 4 parents will be elected at the annual general meeting. The past chair will also be a parent member of the council.
- B. Staff members - 1 will be chosen by peers.
- C. Community members - 1 community member will be appointed by the council. Recommendations will be solicited from the floor of the annual general meeting.
- D. Administration team (principal)- ex-officio (by virtue of position), but with one voice.

4. Vacancies

In the event a position becomes vacant, the council may appoint a replacement to complete the remainder of the term of the departing member.

5. Quorum

- A. A quorum for the school council meetings will consist of 5 members comprised of a minimum of 3 parents, 1 administrator and 1 other.

- B. if a quorum is not attained after 3 notices of the meeting, the school board may suspend the school council and assign the school council duties to the principal.
- C. A quorum for the annual organization meeting will consist of representation of 20 percent of the families with children registered in the school. Any parent or guardian of a child in the school will have a vote.
- D. If a quorum is not attained during the first and second attempts to hold the annual general meeting, the powers and duties of the school council will revert to the principal for the balance of the year.
- E. A quorum for the annual general meetings, and emergent general meeting will consist of representation of a minimum of 20 percent of the families with children registered in the school, in addition to a quorum of the school council.

6. Executive Structure

- A. Elections of the parent members of council will occur at the annual organizational meeting.
- B. All elected council members are eligible to become officers.
- C. The council will have the following slate of officers: chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, and past chair. All positions, except for the past chair, will be determined at the first meeting of the council.
- D. The chair and vice-chair must be parents of students attending the school.

7. Duties of the officers

- A. The chair shall
 - i. Convene and preside at all meetings of the council;
 - ii. Ensure that all decisions of the council are carried out;
 - iii. Represent the council to the school board; and
 - iv. Prepare and submit an annual report to the council and school board if requested.
- B. The Vice-Chair shall
 - i. Assist the chair in carrying out his/her duties;
 - ii. Assume the responsibilities if the chair in the absence of the chair;
 - iii. Assume other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the council; and
 - iv. Chair the council nomination committee.

- C. The Secretary shall
 - i. Take, keep and arrange for the distribution of the minutes of the council meetings;
 - ii. Look after the correspondence of the council; and
 - iii. Assume other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the council.
- D. The Treasurer shall
 - i. Ensure that accurate account, receipts and disbursements of the council finances are maintained;
 - ii. Prepare and submit an annual financial report to the council and the board if requested; and
 - iii. Assume other suits and responsibilities as assigned by the council.
- E. Members of the council shall
 - i. Participate in meetings of the council;
 - ii. Communicate information about the activities of the council to students, teachers, support staff, parents and community members;
 - iii. Communicate regularly with the groups they are representing, with parents and with the community members to obtain their views on education and related issues; and
 - iv. Perform other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the council or by the parents at the annual general meeting.
- 8. Subcommittees
 - A. The Kindergarten Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) and the Sunnyside Community Association (which includes the hot lunch committee) will act as independent subcommittees of the council.
 - B. The nominating committee will be organized by the Vice-chair of the council.
 - C. To encourage productivity, subcommittees may be utilized to involve as many staff/parents as possible who are not serving on the council and to assist in accomplishing the task of the council.

C. Council Bylaws

The actions of the council shall be subject to, and not contravene the laws and regulations of the province, the policies of the school board, and the collective agreements between the school board and the ATA local, and the school board and the existing support staff organization.

1. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments can only occur at the annual general meeting or at an emergent general meeting of the parents using the following procedure:

- A. The Council will pass a Notice of Motion and publish it in the school newsletter prior to the annual organizational meeting or an emergent general meeting.
- B. A parent council member will present and second the motion at the appropriate meeting. This will be followed by a discussion and vote by all the parents present.
- C. A simple majority vote carries / defeats the motion.

2. Meetings

- A. The council shall decide at the organizational meeting called by the principal, the dates and times of the meetings for that year. Meetings will be held in the school, and will not exceed a 90 minute time limit without unanimous consent of members present.
- B. The council shall meet a minimum of 5 times each year, excluding the organization and annual meetings.

3. Agenda

- A. A proposed agenda for the upcoming meeting, will be discussed at the end of each meeting. Members of the council may suggest additional items to be added to the proposed agenda.
- B. The agenda will be prepared by the chair and the principal and will be published and circulated by the school office to all members of the executive prior to the next scheduled Meeting.
- C. The agenda package will include
 - i. Copies of communications and responses as authorized or requested by council; and
 - ii. Background information necessary for decision making.
- D. Every meeting except the organizational meeting will have the first 15 minutes designated as 'open chair'. Any parent, staff or board member may address the council to state briefly their opinions or concerns.
- E. Any parent, staff member, board member or community member who wishes to present an issue to the council on which they are requesting action to be taken is asked to submit a written request to the chair at least 8 days prior to the meeting. The request must clearly state the issue(s) and the reason(s) for the concern. This will allow the

presentation to be out on the agenda.

4. Decision Making

- A. All decisions relating to or providing advice to the management of the school shall be based on a consensus model.
 - i. Once consensus has been reached, all members will support the direction provided by the council. All decisions must be in accordance with guidelines set out by the Department of Education and Palliser Regional School Board.
 - ii. In those instances where pure consensus can not be achieved within a stipulated time frame, the council at its discretion may refer the decision to the school administration for a decision.
- B. Decisions affecting the operations and structure of the council may be determined by Vote.

5. Remuneration

No member of the council shall receive any remuneration for services rendered for the council.

6. Financial Support

Financial support for the operation of the council will be allocated for council funds to pay for meeting costs, communications, support services, in-service training for council members and any other reasonable costs.

7. Appeals and Resolutions of Conflict

- A. Any recommendations made by parents to the school administration for change in the established policies, procedures, and programs can be referred to the school council for Review.
- B. All decisions made by the council may be appealed to the superintendent to be handled according to policy.
 - i. Should a conflict escalate to the point where it cannot be resolved by the school council, it shall be referred to the superintendent, and if necessary the school board, to be handled under the established policies.
 - ii. Conflicts between the council and administration, council and the school community, council and school that cannot be resolved will be referred to the superintendent under clause 8- b - i.

- C. Any decision made by the administration in areas the council has a mandate to advise upon can be appealed to the school board.