

Terry Fox Elementary School

School Council

Constitution

Simcoe County District School Board

First Issue: April 2010

Revised Dates: September 2012, May 2015, April 2018

Terry Fox Elementary School Council Constitution

Article 1 – Name and Address

The name of the organization is Terry Fox Elementary School Council (herein referred to as the “Council”). The address is:

Terry Fox Elementary School
100 Livingstone Street East
Barrie, ON
L4M 6X9

The phone number is (705) 727-4267

The e-mail is councilchairter@scdsb.on.ca

Article 2 – Terry Fox Mission Statement

To support and encourage shared responsibility for student learning among students, parents, teachers and administration.

Article 3 – Purpose and Objectives

Terry Fox Elementary School Council will:

- Collaborate positively and innovatively with the school administration and staff
- Provide input to Terry Fox administration
- Develop an increased sense of shared accountability for public education
- Present educational and informative material to the school community
- Provide a means of regular communication and dialogue between all partners in education
- Fundraise to support the school and students
- Promote and maintain contact with other school advisory councils

Article 4 – Procedures and Operating Guidelines

The School Council will provide community input. It is a partnership of school and community representatives. They provide a forum through which parents and other members of our community can contribute to improving student achievement and school performance. The school council encourages, promotes and supports open communication between the school and community.

Confidential personal matters and/or individual parental matters may not be addressed by the Council. Nor are Councils to discuss confidential information on individual students.

If confidential information is divulged at a meeting, the chair and/or co-chair would interject to stop the sharing of information and will instruct Council members to keep the information confidential, request that members of the public keep the information confidential, ensure that the minutes do not refer to the indiscretion, and determine if further action needs to be taken.

The operation procedures of the Council comply with the procedures (Procedures and Policies Memo 4310 in accordance with Ontario Regulation 612/00) outlined in the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB). All recommendations and activities of the School Council shall comply with all Ministry of Education Acts, SCDSB Policies and Procedures and Staff Collective Agreements.

Article 5 – Definitions

When we use the term “parent” in this document, we mean it to include any person who is the parent and/or legal guardian of a student attending Terry Fox Elementary School. The term “voting member” refers to a school council member with voting privileges, established through the election procedures of the school council during the first 30 days of the current school year. Voting members must attend the first meeting of the year.

Article 6 – Membership

Members of the Terry Fox Elementary School Council shall be elected or appointed (refer to **APM 7200**) Members include:

- Parents/guardians will comprise the majority of our council membership. Refer to **APM 7200, section 2, for eligibility details and exceptions.**
- The principal or vice-principal of the school (the principal may delegate membership responsibility to the VP) – this is a non-voting council member
- A teaching representative, a non-teaching representative, student representative(s), and a community representative (Voting)

There shall be no more than one parent who is a voting member on the School Council from any one household. School Council will be responsible for stipulating the number of voting parent members on the Council, in accordance with **Ontario Regulation 612/00**.

School Council will have a minimum of 7 voting members, with a maximum of 11 voting members (which includes the four members on the Executive Proper). The Executive Proper will consist of the Chair, the Co-Chair, the Secretary and the Treasurer. Any other parent or staff members are welcome to attend and provide input to discussions, but do not have voting privileges, in accordance with **SCDSB policy 4310**.

Article 7 – Decision Making

Comments and opinions from all meeting attendees are welcome, regardless of membership status. Decisions will be made by putting forth a motion. Votes will be held at School Council meetings whenever possible. If a vote is required but quorum is not reached, a discussion will be

held. Upon distribution of the meeting minutes outlining the discussion, a vote may be held by email. The email must be distributed to all voting members and may only include the motion and required response deadline. All email motions and vote results must be noted in the following meeting's minutes.

In the case where a decision cannot be reached through consensus, the chair/co-chair may decide to either

- Decision would be determined by vote (majority of council votes in favor of motion)
- Defer the issue to an established subcommittee for continued deliberation
- If a vote is tied the tie would be broken by the principal or Principal's designate, if the Principal is absent.

Article 8 – Roles and Responsibilities

Chair/Co-Chair – An employee of the Board cannot be chair

- Communicate with the school principal
- Prepare the agenda for meetings in consultation with other council members and the principal
- Chair the school council meetings
- Ensure that the minutes of school council meetings and records of all financial transactions are recorded and maintained
- Ensure that there is regular communication with the school community
- Consult with senior board staff and trustees, when requested
- Ensure that the Council Constitution is reviewed each year
- Prepare the Council Annual Report as required by the Board
- Act in accordance with the school and board Code of Conduct
- Shall abide by board policies and procedures

Secretary

- Record attendance and the minutes of the meetings at council
- Post the minutes in the Continuity Binder, available in the school office
- Distribute the minutes by email to all council members
- Ensure that all records are kept in a safe place
- Will notify chair/co-chair when a voting member missed two meetings

Treasurer

- Distribute annual financial report

Council Members

- Participate in council meetings
- Participate in information and training programs

- Act as a link between the school council and the community
- Participate in establishing and following the constitution
- Act in accordance with the school and board Code of Conduct
- Shall abide by board policies and procedures

The Principal

- Facilitates the establishment of the school council and assists in its operation
- Supports and promotes the council's activities
- Consults with the school council on the development and implementation of school action plans
- Consults with the council in any areas identified by the council as a priority
- Acts as a resource regarding the Education Act, regulations and board policies relevant to the functions of the council
- Obtains and provides information required by the council to enable it to make informed decisions
- Communicates with the chair/co-chair of the council, as required
- Ensures that copies of the financial records and minutes of the council's meetings are kept at the school and available for examination
- Encourages the participation of parents/guardians from all groups and other individuals within the school community
- Provides for prompt distribution to school council members any materials received from the Ministry of Education identified for council members and posts same
- Attends (or designates a replacement) every school council meeting
- Does not vote in votes taken by the school council or council committees
- Participates in establishing the Constitution

Article 9 – Code of Ethics

- A member shall consider the best interests of all students
- A member shall be guided by the school's and the school board's mission statements
- A member shall act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of a school council, as identified by the school's operating guidelines the school board, and the Ontario Ministry of Education
- A member shall become familiar with the school's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them
- A member shall maintain the highest standards of integrity of each member of the school community
- A member shall treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption
- A member shall encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued
- A member shall acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the council

- A member shall respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation for the school council
- A member shall not disclose confidential information
- A member shall limit discussions at school council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole
- A member shall use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise
- A member shall promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community
- A member shall declare and conflict of interest
- A member shall not accept any payment or benefit financially through school council involvement

Article 10 – Operating Procedures

10.1 - Meetings

At a meeting in May, School Council will establish a schedule of dates for the entire school year to follow. The Council will hold a minimum of 7 meetings per the school year. In the first meeting in September the schedule will be handed out to attendees and included in the meeting minutes.

10.2 - Attendance

Voting Members of the Council must either send regrets to the chair directly or via another Council member if they are going to be absent from a meeting.

10.3 - Quorum

A meeting will have quorum if

- The amount of voting members present is half plus one
- The majority of those present are parents

If the majority of voting members are not present, an information meeting will be held. No votes will occur. Any items requiring a vote will be discussed and the vote will be postponed. A follow-up vote may be held by email.

10.4 - Structure of the Agenda

When necessary, the Council will use Robert’s Rule of Order.

Council meetings will cover the following in a flexible order.

- Welcome and Introduction
- Review of minutes of preceding meeting and acceptance by motion and vote
- Acceptance of current agenda by motion and vote
- Principal’s Report
- Treasurer’s Report and acceptance by motion and vote

- Old business items
- New business items
- Subcommittee updates, including next meeting date, time and location
- Meeting adjourned

Article 11 – Elections Procedures and Vacancies

According to Ontario Regulation 612/00 elections must take place at the same time each year – within the first thirty days of each school year.

11.1 – Election Subcommittee

The committee must ensure that a new council is in place within 30 days of the start of the school year in September. Election will take place prior to the end of the month of September.

At the May meeting of the Council, the Principal will discuss the potential for needing an election committee for September. The Election committee will consist of the Principal, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, community representative and/or parents. No one standing for election or the spouse of anyone standing for election shall be a member of the election committee. The election subcommittee will assist the Principal in setting up the election procedures, running the election, and counting the ballots.

The Election subcommittee shall

- Provide nomination forms
- Ensure that the school community is notified of and election date(s), location, and time, at least fourteen days in advance of election
- Conduct the elections by secret ballot
- Count the ballots
- Help the principal notify all candidates of the results
- Keep all the results and related information confidential
- Release only the names of successful candidate
- Notify all individual standing for election of the results before the results are released to the school community

11.2 - Date

Elections for Council membership shall take place annually, no later than the end of September.

11.3 - Election Procedures for Parent Members

Each family of a student enrolled at Terry Fox Elementary School shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent member position on the Council.

- Nomination forms will be made available in June
- During the first week of school a note will be distributed to all school parents, giving them the opportunity to complete a form to become a School Council voting member, or a member of the School Council Executive.

- Nomination forms would be accepted up until the end of the first week of school.
- Receipt of nomination forms will determine the format of the first School Council meeting of the year, and recognition of those who want to be considered to be an executive or a voting member
- In addition, if of the eleven voting members, openings still remain, ballots will be handed out to all attendees at the first School Council meeting of the year.
- The vote will be held during the first School Council meeting to determine the remainder of the eleven voting members if there are more interested parties than available voting member positions.

11.4 - Acclamation

Parent elections shall be by acclamation when the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of parent member positions on the Council.

11.5 - Election of the Executive

Once the parent members are elected, the newly elected Council votes on it's Executive for the year.

- Chair/Co-Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer

11.6 - Terms of Office

Council members serve a one-year term of office. There are no restrictions to the number of times a member can be re-elected.

11.7 - Resignations

Anyone who is a Council member, except the principal, may resign his or her position by writing a letter of resignation to the chair or co-chair(s). If someone resigns, the Council will fill the position according to Article 10.9: Vacancies.

11.8 - Removal

The Council will choose to remove from the Council any voting member who misses three (3) meetings and shall undertake to replace that person according to Article 10.9: Vacancies.

The council member will receive a notification of possible removal after missing two meetings unless extenuation circumstances exist and are taken into consideration by council.

11.9 - Vacancies

A vacancy in the membership of Council does not prevent the Council from exercising its authority.

The Council should fill positions that become vacant due to resignation or removal as soon as possible:

- At an open meeting (the next meeting in the sequence).
- Make parents/attendees aware of the vacancies
- Ask for volunteers to serve the remaining term

The Council will fill vacancies only until May of the current school year, after which time Council will fill the vacant positions through the annual September election.

Article 12 – Conflict of Interest

Any time school council does business with the potential for monetary gain/loss with any person, agency, or company, and a member of the school council has a vested interest in any way with that particular person, agency, or company, that member shall declare a conflict of interest and shall not discuss, or vote, on any such resolution pertaining to the matter. The minutes of the meeting will reflect this declaration.

Article 13 – Conflict Resolution

All members of council will, in accordance with *School and Board Codes of Conduct*, demonstrate respect for members of council, staff and guests, in attendance at council meetings.

Should a dispute arise, members of council and the principal will make every effort to resolve the dispute by following **APM A7200, section 8**.

Article 14 – Code of Conduct

School council recognizes that all members of the school community have the right to be safe and to feel safe in their school community. With this right come the responsibility to contribute to a positive school climate. Expectations for behavior are outline in **APM A7630 – Code of Conduct**.

Article 15 – Protection of Advisory Council Members

The Simcoe County District School Board holds liability insurance on behalf of all Councils and, as such, member of the Terry Fox Elementary School Council are not personally liable for decisions and activities undertaken in relation to the council, with the exception of any willful, destructive or dishonest act or neglect, performed by a particular Council member for which that person will be held accountable.

Article 16 – Administrative Requirements

School council must record and maintain records of all financial transactions, council meeting minutes, and prepare an annual year-end report each June. These documents will be maintained in the school office in the *School Council Continuity Binder*. These documents will be made available to any member of the school community upon request.