

M.J. Hobbs School Council Constitution

Article 1. Name

1. The organization shall be known as M.J. Hobbs Public School Council. Hereafter, it will be referred to as the Council.

Article 2. Purpose and Scope of Council

- 2.2 The council will support student success and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents by making recommendations to the Principal and the school board.
- 2.2 As an advisory group, Council may advise on the following:
 - School and learning environment
 - Curriculum and program goals & priorities
 - Communication and promotion of school activities
 - School code of conduct
 - School improvement plan
 - School dress code
 - Fundraising activities
 - School leadership
 - School-community communication strategies
 - Extra-curricular activities
 - School-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational and nutritional programs
 - Community use of school facilities
 - Board policies
- 2.3 School Council shall focus on programs, policies and procedures – not individual student or staff issues.

Article 3. Membership

- 3.1 Members of the School Council shall include:
 - Parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school
 - Community representatives
 - A student to act as a link between School Council & students
 - A teacher to act as a link between School Council & teachers
 - A support staff member to act as a link between School Council & the support staff
- 3.2 Parents and guardians shall form the majority of the Council.
- 3.3 The Council should be composed of a minimum of 11 members and a maximum of 20. If these numbers are not possible, Council may continue to function so long as parents form the majority of the membership.

Article 4. Roles

4.1 The Principal Shall:

- Attend all meetings unless unable to do so by reason of illness or other cause
- Assist in the establishment and operation of School Council
- Support and promote School Council activities
- Distribute and post information from the school, the Board, and the Ministry of Education
- See input from Council on school policies and guidelines, new initiatives, improvement plans and communication
- Consider recommendations made by Council and advise Council of actions taken
- Act as a resource and provide, where reasonable, information requested by Council
- Maintain on-going communication with the Chairperson.

4.2 The Chairperson Shall:

- Call School Council meetings
- Prepare the agenda for meetings in collaboration with the Principal
- Chair the School Council meetings
- Ensure that minutes and financial records are recorded and maintained
- Maintain on-going communication with the Principal
- encourage community representation
- facilitate communications with parents and the community
- ensure representation at Regional School Council meetings
- be informed of all activities of all Sub-Committees of Council
- Agree to return as Past Chair and act as a mentor in the transition of the new Council

4.3 The Vice-Chairperson Shall:

- Fulfil duties of the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson
- Aid the Chair
- In the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the Chair, fulfil the Chair's responsibilities

4.4 The Secretary/Treasurer Shall:

- Record and report, without prejudice, the proceedings of the Council including the presence of members, decisions arrived at and tasks assigned
- Distribute the minutes and agenda to Council member prior to the meetings
- Prepare correspondence on behalf of the Council
- Receive and bank monies owed to the Council
- Keep full and accurate accounts of monies received/disbursed on behalf of the Council.
- Present a completed financial statement at the final School Council meeting of a school year
- Act in accordance with the *Guidelines for School Generated Funds* document

4.5 No person may hold more that one (1) office at any time with the exception of the position of the Secretary/Treasurer, if necessary

4.6 All Members Shall:

- Attend and participate in Council meetings
- Participate in information and training programs as needed
- Act as a link between the Council and the community
- Welcome the participation of parents/guardians from all groups and of other people in the community
- Follow Board policies and procedures and comply with applicable legislation
- Act in good faith and in the best interest of the school & students
- Act in accordance with the Constitution
- Submit items to be considered for meeting agendas, to the Chair of the Council at least 10 days prior to the next Council meeting

•

Article 5. Election Procedures

- 5.1 Elections shall occur within the first thirty days of the start of each school year and the notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be distributed at least 14 days in advance of the date set for the Annual General Meeting
- 5.2 Each parent/guardian seeking election must be nominated or self-nominated in writing, must have a child registered at the school, and must declare if he or she is employed with the school board.
- 5.3 Each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school and in attendance at the Annual General Meeting shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent/guardian membership position of the Council
- 5.4 An Election Committee composed of the School Council Chair, the school Principal & at least one other parent member will help plan the election process, the gathering of nominations, and the running of the election. All nominated parents must be present at the Annual General Meeting
- 5.5 The Election Committee Shall:
- Provide nomination forms
 - Ensure that the school community is notified of election procedures and election date, location and time at least fourteen days in advance of the election
 - Ensure no individual campaign literature for School Council election is distributed or posted in the school
 - Request a profile from candidates and make these available to voters
 - Accept nominations from the floor at the annual general meeting providing the person being nominated is present and agrees to accept & share a profile for voters
 - Accept elections by acclamation
 - Conduct the elections by secret ballot
 - Help the Principal notify all candidates of results
 - Keep all results and related information confidential
- 5.6 Only the names of the successful candidates shall be made public. A list of candidates and the vote results will be kept on file by the Council for use in the event of a vacancy

- 5.7 All individuals standing for election shall be notified of the results before the results are released to the school community
- 5.8 The School Council shall help the Principal ensure that the names of the new members are publicized to the school community within thirty days of the election
- 5.9 At the first meeting of the new School Council at the beginning of the year, the Council shall set dates, time and locations for its meetings throughout the year and shall notify the School Community of these dates. The School Council shall hold a minimum of four (4) meetings per year.

Article 6. Filling Vacancies

- 6.1 Should an elected parent/guardian Council position become vacant before the next election, the Council shall fill the vacancy by appointment from the non - elected candidates from the previous election
- 6.2 If none of the previous candidates remain interested in becoming a Council member, the Council may request that interested parents/guardians from the school community submit their names for consideration. The Council shall then appoint one of those who indicate an interest
- 6.3 When a vacant spot on Council is filled, the new member's term shall expire at the time of the next election

Article 7. Meeting Agenda

- 7.1 The agenda for any meeting of the School Council shall be set by the Chair and the Principal
- 7.2 Any member wishing to have a matter of new business placed on the agenda for a meeting of the School Council shall deliver to the Chair a summary of the matter that the member wishes to place on the agenda for the next meeting at least ten (10) days prior to the date of the meeting at which the member wishes the matter to be raised. A meeting of the School Council may consider any matter as new business at a meeting of the School Council whether or not notice of the matter has been given, provided however, that if no notice has been given such matter may be tabled to the next meeting of School council if the Chair and/or Principal believes more time is required to consider the matter.

Article 8 Conflict of Interest

- 8.1 Members of the Council shall declare a conflict of interest in matters that they, members of their families, or business entities in which they may have a vested interest, stand to benefit either directly or indirectly from decisions of the Council
- 8.2 A member shall exclude him or herself from discussions and resolutions in which:
 - A conflict of interest is likely to result
 - The member's ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities as a member of the Council may be jeopardized

- The Council member, his or her relatives, or a business entity in with the member may have an interest, may gain or benefit directly or indirectly as a result of actions that may be taken by the Principal or Board in response to advice that the Council provides to the Principal or to the Board
- 8.3 A member shall not accept favors or economic benefits from any individuals, organizations or entities known to be seeking business contracts with the school

Article 9. Conflict Resolution

- 9.1 Every Council member will be given an opportunity to express his or her concern or opinion about the issue at dispute
- 9.2 Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times
- 9.3 Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption
- 9.4 The Chair's responsibility is to clarify the statements made by all speakers, to identify common ground among the points of view raised, and to set ou the joint interest of all members
- 9.5 If all attempts at resolving the conflict have been exhausted without success, the Chair shall request the intervention of a superintendent or other Board administrator to facilitate a resolution to the conflict

Article 10. Quorum

- 10.1 A quorum shall consist of 50 percent of the voting members plus one
- 10.2 In the absence of a quorum, any business requiring decisions either by consensus or vote can be deferred to the next meeting or in cases of urgency, proposed via email vote to the voting members. For email votes the monetary request must not exceed \$1000.00 and a quorum of 50% of the voting members plus one must be met

Article 11. Governance

- 11.1 The Council shall act in a transparent manner
- 11.2 The Council will always endeavour to consider the needs and best interests of students before making decisions.

Article 12. Decision Making

- 12.1 The Council shall make every attempt to reach decisions by consensus
- 12.2 If a consensus is impossible, Roberts Rules of Order will be used for decisions requiring a vote. All School Council members/designates present at the meeting will be eligible to vote

- 12.3 If a committee is given delegate authority to make decisions on behalf of the Council and in the event a contentious matter, issue, or discussion shall arise with a committee, such matter, issue, or discussion shall be referred to the Council for final determination
- 12.4 The Chair may request an adjournment at any time if the Chair feels the meeting is out of order and to continue would be detrimental to the Council

Article 13. Communications and Records

- 13.1 Within 30 days of election of a new Council, the new Council will create and follow a communications plan to raise awareness of Council activities and increase parental involvement
- 13.2 Records containing the minutes of all meetings, resolutions and correspondence of the School Council shall be maintained by Council and Principal and be available to an member of the School Community for four years.

Article 14. Financial Accountability

- 14.1 The Council shall become familiar with and act in a manner consistent with the Ontario Association of School Business Officials Finance Committee *Guidelines for School Generated Funds* document
- 14.2 School Council cheques must include a Principal and at least one member of Council's signature as per guidelines above

Article 15. Making Amendments

- 15.1 From time to time, amendments may be necessary to the Council's constitution. Any amendments to the Council's Constitution must have a minimum of two-thirds (2/3) of the Council in favour of the amendment. Notice of the intent to amend the Constitution along with specific details of the amendment must be provided at least one meeting prior to any vote