

CONSTITUTION OF THE MACLEOD SCHOOL COUNCIL

Revised February 19, 2008

SECTION I - NAME

The name of the organization shall be the MacLeod School Council.

SECTION II - MISSION STATEMENT

The Macleod School Council is an advisory body which will work collaboratively within the school community to enhance the development and educational experiences of all students.

SECTION III - GOALS

The goals of the MacLeod School Council shall reflect the mission of the council.

1. To provide advice to the principal and school board on matters affecting the education of the students at MacLeod School.
2. To promote, maintain and support a positive environment for all at MacLeod School.
3. To enhance the lines of communication among parents and/or guardians, administrators, teachers and students in the school community.
4. To provide a forum for input into educational matters for members of the school community.
5. To provide a vehicle for transmitting ideas, recommendations, and concerns to any or all administrative levels.

SECTION IV - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. School councils are advisory bodies. The MacLeod School Council WILL, as necessary, provide advice to the school board in the following areas:
 - all initiatives that relate to the improvement of student achievement or enhance the accountability of the system to parents;
 - the provincial code of conduct;
 - a policy on reimbursement of expenses incurred by school council members;
 - a policy or process for resolving internal school council disputes;
 - the board's action plans for improvement based on E.Q.A.O. test results;
 - the development of communication plans regarding the action plans for improvement;
 - the criteria and process for the selection of and transfer of principals and vice-principals and any new education initiatives;

- any new education initiatives at the board level;
 - the board policy regarding the code of conduct for students;
 - the board policy regarding appropriate dress
 - the development of a plan for co-instructional activities.
2. The school council MAY provide advice to the school board in the following areas:
- the local school year calendar;
 - board policies regarding field trips for students;
 - the list of approved activities to fulfil the mandatory community involvement requirement;
 - the review of the board's safe arrival policy and implementation plan;
 - the use of volunteers in the school;
 - school closures;
 - twinning schools;
 - the review of school boundaries;
 - the naming of new schools and other board property;
 - busing and the transportation of students;
 - capital improvement plans for schools;
 - the purchase of textbooks and other learning materials;
 - developing principal profiles;
 - student homework policies;
 - providing additional funds to school councils according to their local priorities.
3. The school council WILL, as necessary, provide advice to the principal in the following areas:
- all initiatives that relate to the improvement of student achievement or enhance the accountability of the system to parents;
 - the school policy regarding code of conduct;
 - the school policy regarding appropriate dress for students;
 - the school's action plan for improvement based on reports of E.Q.A.O. test results;
 - the development of communication plans regarding the school's plan for improvement;
 - any new education initiatives at the school level;
 - the school policy regarding the board policy on the code of conduct for students;
 - the school implementation plan for the board policy regarding appropriate dress;
 - the annual review of the decision to recite the pledge of citizenship on a daily basis;
 - the sharing (i.e. at least once a year) of the school plan for providing co-instructional activities.
4. The school council MAY provide advice to the principal in the following areas:
- scheduling school events;
 - school policies regarding field trips for students;

- the review of the school's safe-arrival policy and implementation plan;
 - the use of volunteers in schools;
 - the review of school boundaries;
 - capital improvement plans for schools;
 - developing school profiles;
 - student homework policies;
 - school and classroom organization;
 - school budget priorities.
5. The school council will develop a yearly plan with goals, priorities and procedures.
 6. The school council may organize information and training sessions to enable members of the council to develop their skills as council members.

SECTION V - AUTHORITY

The MacLeod School Council shall not be involved in the day-to-day management of the school, but shall act in an advisory capacity while respecting the management rights and responsibilities of the principal and the school board.

SECTION VI - MEMBERSHIP

1. Parents and guardians will form the majority of the school council.
2. The MacLeod School Council shall consist of:
 - a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 16 parents and/or guardians of students enrolled in the school, elected by parents and guardians;
 - the principal or vice principal;
 - at least one teacher elected by members of the teaching staff;
 - at least 1 non-teaching school staff member elected by members of the non-teaching staff;
 - 1 student representative appointed at the discretion of the principal;
 - 1 or more community representatives appointed by the school council.
3. The Chair, Vice-chair and Secretary of the school council shall be members who are also parents and shall be elected by the council.
4. Membership on the council shall be a 1 year period.
5. Members of the council may seek additional terms on the council.
6. If a member does not attend 3 consecutive regular meetings without a reason acceptable to the council, the position may be deemed to be vacant by the council.
7. If any member resigns during a term of office or if any office is not filled at the time of elections, the council may appoint a replacement to serve until the next election. Where possible, unsuccessful candidates in the last election shall be appointed to fill such vacancies in accordance with votes received.

8. The term of office for executive positions (i.e. Chair, Vice-chair and Secretary) shall be 1 year.
9. Members may not hold an executive position for more than 2 consecutive years.
10. No honorarium shall be paid to members of the school council.

SECTION VII- ELECTION PROCEDURES

1. An election committee of 2 to 5 members plus the school principal shall be struck by the school council in May to plan and supervise the process for election of the parent/guardian members of council. The committee may include retiring members of council, parents/guardians of any student enrolled at the school who will not be standing for election, and teaching staff.
2. Each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school is entitled to stand for election to school council and to one vote in the election of parent/guardian council members.
3. The election of parent/guardian members of school council shall take place before the end of September of each school year.
4. The election committee shall solicit written nominations and self nominations at least 14 days before the date of the election through a notice sent home through students to all families. This notice shall include details of the date of the election and method of voting. Nominations shall include the consent of the nominee to stand and a brief biography of the candidate that shall appear on the election ballot.
5. The election shall be by way of secret ballot in accordance with a process to be determined by the election committee.
6. The school community shall be provided with the list of successful candidates within seven days of the election, but the number of votes per candidate shall remain confidential. The vote results shall be kept on file for one year for use in the event that a vacancy occurs on the council.
7. If the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of positions, the candidates shall be acclaimed.

SECTION VIII - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

1. The **Chair and Vice-chair** of the MacLeod School Council:
 - establishes school council meeting dates and times as approved by the council;
 - calls council meetings;
 - prepares agendas for council meetings;
 - chairs council meetings;
 - ensures that minutes of council meetings are recorded and maintained;
 - communicates with the school principal;
 - ensures that there is regular communication with the school community;

- consults with senior staff members of the school board and trustees as required;;
 - participates as ex-officio member of all committees established by the school council;
 - facilitates the resolution of conflict (i.e. to be done by the Chair).
2. The **Secretary** of the MacLeod School Council:
- ensures that the minutes of the school council meetings are recorded and maintained;
 - issues and receives correspondence on behalf of the school council;
 - maintains all official documents of the school council including policy manuals and the constitution;
 - prepares the annual report of the school council with input from the Chair and committee chairs.
3. The **Members** of the MacLeod Council:
- participate in council meetings and information and training programs;
 - act as a link between the school council and the community;
 - are responsible for encouraging parents and others within the community to participate in education in MacLeod School;
 - may be members of committees of the school council;
 - shall observe the code of ethics of the council and its constitution.
4. The **Principal** of MacLeod Public School:
- helps to establish the school council and assists in its operation;
 - supports and promotes the activities of the school council;
 - asks for advice from the council in the areas within its jurisdiction;
 - encourages the participation of parents and other people within the school community
 - helps the council communicate with the school community;
 - provides facilities for the school council meetings;
 - may provide materials and personnel resources for the maintenance of the school council;
 - distributes promptly to each council member material identified by the Ministry of Education for distribution to school council members and posts the material in a school location accessible to parents;
 - attends all school council meetings unless the responsibility has been delegated to the Vice-Principal;
 - considers each recommendation made by the school council to the principal and returns to the school council with the action taken in response to the recommendation;
 - may participate on any committees established by the school council;
 - observes the code of ethics and constitution established by the school council;
 - solicits views on matters pertaining to the establishment or amendment of school policies and guidelines relating to the student achievement, accountability of the education system to parents, and the communication of those policies and guidelines to the public.

SECTION IX - MEETINGS

1. A minimum of 4 meetings of the MacLeod School Council will be held yearly. One of these 4 meetings may consist of an Annual general Meeting. During the last meeting of the year (i.e. prior to June 30th), a meeting schedule will be set for the upcoming year.
2. School council meetings are to be open to the public and the meeting locations must be convenient to all members of the school community, including those with disabilities.
3. A formal agenda is to be prepared for all school council meetings. The agenda must clearly identify:
 - the time, place and location of the meeting;
 - guests and new members attending the meeting;
 - old business and new business that should come before the school council;
 - the time allocated to each agenda item as well as the purpose of each agenda item (i.e. whether the item is for information sharing purposes, or whether it requires that a decision be made by the school council).

The agenda, along with necessary background information and the minutes for the previous meeting are to be posted in the school and issued to invitees at least a week prior to the meeting. The Council should establish a deadline for submitting agenda items.

4. Formal minutes are to be prepared for all school council meetings. These minutes are to:
 - be recorded by the school council Secretary;
 - identify the date, time and location of the meeting;
 - be available at the school for examination by anyone without charge;
 - be kept at the school for a minimum of 4 years;
 - provide a brief but accurate record of discussions that took place at the meeting (i.e. not discussions themselves but a note that discussions took place), decisions made at the meeting and who is responsible for what;
 - identify who was present at the meeting and who was absent.
5. All school council meetings are to have a Chair, who is responsible for the following:
 - ensuring that the meeting starts and ends on time;
 - introducing meeting guests;
 - reviewing the meeting agenda, outlining what is to be accomplished at the meeting;
 - remaining neutral, and maintaining order and focus on priorities;
 - ensuring that meeting minutes are being kept;
 - soliciting contributions from all meeting attendees;
 - confirming that all school council members have the same understanding of any decisions;

- summarizing the key actions and decisions agreed to at the end of the meeting;
 - reminding school council members of the date, time and location of the next meeting.
6. Parties wishing to make a presentation to the school council shall submit a written brief to either the school office or the Chair of the council, at least 1 week before the meeting at which the presentation is to be delivered.
 7. Decisions at school council meetings are to be made based on consensus.
 8. School council meetings are to be no longer than 2 hours. A maximum of two 15 minute extensions may be approved by a majority of those council members in attendance.

SECTION X - COMMITTEES

1. In addition to the Election Committee constituted under Section VII, school council may establish ad hoc committees from time to time as deemed necessary by council.
2. Each of the committees of the MacLeod School Council shall be chaired by a member of the council.
3. Committees are responsible to the MacLeod School Council.
4. Committees must include at least one member of the school council and may include persons who are not members of council.
5. Committee members shall serve for the life of the committee or until the first meeting of the newly elected Council in the fall, whichever is shorter.
6. A simple majority of members of a committee shall constitute a quorum.
7. The Chair of the MacLeod School Council shall be an ex-officio member without a vote on all committees.

SECTION XI - CODE OF CONDUCT

1. A member shall consider the best interest of all students.
2. A member shall be guided by the school's and the school board's mission statement.
3. 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.
4. A member shall become familiar with the school's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.
5. A member shall maintain the highest standards of integrity.
6. A member shall recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.

7. A member shall treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.
8. A member shall encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
9. A member shall acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the council.
10. A member shall respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the school council.
11. A member shall not disclose confidential information.
12. A member shall limit discussions at school council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.
13. A member shall use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise.
14. A members shall promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community.
15. A member shall declare any conflict of interest.
16. A member shall not accept any payment or benefit financially through school council involvement.

SECTION XII– CONFLICT OF INTEREST

1. Any member of Council must declare a conflict of interest if the business being considered may result in a financial gain for that member or if the member has a personal or vested interest in any way with the subject under discussion.
2. A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential.
3. Where a “conflict of interest” is made known, the Council member must refrain from discussion and voting on the issue.

SECTION XIII – CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1. In order to avoid unnecessary conflict, Council shall:

- a) Adhere to defined roles and responsibilities.
- b) Refrain from discussion of students, parent/guardians, staff members, trustees, or other Council members (as per Freedom of Information Legislation).
- c) Have no involvement in selection of teaching and non-teaching staff.

2. Where issues requiring resolution are concerned, the following procedures and steps may be used, if required.

- i. **Amongst Council Members:** to be resolved by the Chair.
- ii. **Council Member versus Chair:** to be resolved by majority vote of Council.

3. If all attempts at resolving a conflict have been exhausted without success, the chair shall request the intervention of a superintendent or other senior administrator to facilitate a resolution to the conflict.

SECTION XIV- AMENDMENTS

Any proposed change or addition to the constitution must be submitted in writing to the Chair at least two weeks prior to a meeting and placed on the agenda. The change must be presented in motion form and passed by a 2/3 majority at a meeting with a quorum.