

WEST MISSOURI PUBLIC SCHOOL ADVOSRY COUNCIL CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS

Mission

The West Nissouri Public School Advisory Council (the "Council") shall provide an opportunity for parents, educators, students and the community to actively participate in the improvement of learning and the learning environment.

Mandate

The Council must operate within the *Education Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.2 (the "*Education Act*") and may make recommendations to the Principal of West Nissouri Public School ("WNPS") and to the Thames Valley District School Board ("TVDSB") on any matter in accordance with O. Reg. 612/00, "School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees," of the *Education Act* (the "Regulation").

Council members shall maintain a general view and school-wide focus on all issues with the best interests of all students and staff at WNPS.

Objectives - "Why are we together?"

- To enhance the accountability of the education system;
- To promote and develop strategies for parental involvement in the education of their children; and
- To provide effective communication between stakeholders and to promote the educational activities at WNPS.

Membership

The following shall be members of the Council, elected or appointed, in accordance with the Regulation:

- Not less than 7 parents/guardians of pupils enrolled at WNPS – at least of one of which shall be the Chair Person (or Co-Chair Persons), elected by members of the Council;
- The Principal or Vice-Principal;
- One teacher employed by WNPS other than the Principal and Vice Principal;
- One or more non-teaching staff of WNPS;
- One or more community representatives with no pupils at the school; and
- One or more persons appointed by an association that is a member of another established organization (i.e. Home and School Association).

NOTE:

- Parents/guardians shall be the majority of Council members.
- A person is not qualified to be a parent member of the Council if he or she:
 - is employed at WNPS; or
 - is not employed at the school but is an employee of the TVDSB.

- Should a situation exist where there are not sufficient candidates to fill the vacancies, the Council will continue to operate and will attempt to find an individual(s) who will agree to an appointment.

Elections

Elections shall be held during the first 30 days of the school year, on a date that is fixed by the Chair (or Co-Chairs) in consultation with the Principal.

Term of Office

The term of Office shall be one year. A member may be re-elected/re-appointed indefinitely.

Officers and Duties

It is expected that all Council members:

1. Prepare for and attend Council meetings regularly;
2. Be committed to conduct Council business in a professional manner and in accordance with the Code of Conduct;
3. Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues;
4. Participate in information and training programs where appropriate;
5. Participate on sub-committees established by the Council; and
6. Solicit the views of other parents and members of the community to share with the Council.

a) Chair / Co-Chairs

The Chair/Co-Chairs are elected by the Council at the first Council meeting of the school year and must be a parent(s) who are not employed by the TVDSB. The Chair/Co-Chairs are voting members of the Council and his or her duties, in addition to the duties of the general membership of the Council, include:

- Preparing meeting agendas in partnership with the Principal;
- Chair Council meetings;
- Provide back-up support to minute taking if there is no Secretary;
- Be a signing authority, if required;
- Prepare monthly school newsletter releases;
- Participate in information and training programs;
- Regularly communicate with the Principal;
- Strive for diversity;
- Facilitate collaborative decision-making;
- Consult with the Superintendent and TVDSB Trustees as required; and
- Prepare and submit to TVDSB an annual report by June 15th of each school year.

b) Secretary

The Secretary position may or may not be filled each year depending on the number of members of the Council. If the Council decides to fill the position of Secretary, Council members at the first Council meeting of the school year will elect the Secretary and the duties of the Secretary, in addition to the duties of the general membership of the Council, include:

- Record minutes at all Council meetings and distribute these minutes to Council members within a reasonable time of the meetings; and
- Arranging for another member to take minutes in his or her absence.

NOTE: the Secretary position may be a voting or non-voting member depending on the membership status with the Council. If the Council elects not to fill the position of Secretary, the above-listed duties fall to the Chair or Co-Chairs.

c) Treasurer

The Treasurer position may or may not be filled each year depending on the number of members of the Council. If the Council decides to fill the position of Treasurer, Council members at the first Council meeting of the school will elect the Treasurer and the duties of the Treasurer, in addition to the duties of the general membership of the Council, include:

- Being guided by the TVDSB's fiscal policies;
- Collect, count and deposit all money made through fundraising (if applicable) or received through grants or any other means;
- Pay all bills and invoices and be a signing authority for the Council;
- Be responsible for providing post-project revenue results to the Council;
- Prepare monthly requisition statements to share with the Council at meetings;
- Assist in preparing the annual report; and
- Prepare a preliminary budget for the following year, to present at the last Council meeting of the year.

NOTE: the Treasurer position may be a voting or non-voting member depending on the membership status with the Council. If the Council elects not to fill the position of Treasurer, the above-listed duties fall to the Chair or Co-Chairs.

d) Principal

The Principal of WNPS is a member of the Council but is not a voting member. The Principal's duties, in addition to the duties of the general membership of the Council, include:

- Distributes promptly to the Chair/Co-Chair material identified by the Ontario Ministry of Education (the “Ministry”) for distribution to the Council members and posts material in a school location accessible to parents;
- Acts as a resource to the Council on laws, regulations and board policies;
- Attends all Council meetings;
- Considers each recommendation made by the Council to the Principal and returns to the Council with the action taken in response to the recommendation;
- Solicits views on matters pertaining to the establishment or amendment of school policies and guidelines relating to student achievement, accountability of the education system to parents and the communication of those plans to the public;
- May participate on any committees established by the Council; and
- May solicit the views of the Council on any matter.

e) School Staff Representative(s)

The School Staff members of the Council are not voting members. The School Staff member’s duties, in addition to the duties of the general membership of the Council, include:

- Solicit views from their staff groups to share with the Council;
- May participate on any sub-committees established by the Council; and
- Communicate information back to their staff groups.

f) Community Representative(s)

The Community members of the Council are voting members and his or her duties, in addition to the duties of the general membership of the Council, include representing the community’s perspective at Council meetings and discussions and helps to build partnerships and links between WNPS and the Community.

g) Home and School Representative(s)

The Home and School members of the Council are voting members and his or her duties, in addition to the duties of the general membership of the Council, include representing the views of the Home and School Association and communicates information back to the Home and School Association.

Vacancies

If a Council vacancy occurs before April 1st of the school year, an appointment of an alternative person may be made by consensus of the Council members until the end of the school year.

Meetings

- The Council shall have a minimum of 4 meetings per school year and may have others as required.
- A quorum shall consist of the parent members being in the majority at any meeting. A meeting of the Council cannot be held without quorum.
- All meetings of the Council are open to the public and shall be held in a public place, such as the WNPS Library.
- The Council shall meet within the first 35 days of the school year, on a date fixed by the Principal.
- The Principal shall, on behalf of the Council, give written notice of the date, time and location to all enrolled families by giving notice in the school newsletter and/or posting notice in the school at an accessible location.
- The Chair, Co-chair or Secretary shall take minutes at all Council meetings. The minutes shall be kept in the Council Resources Box for a period of 4 years.
- In the recommendation/decision making process, every effort will be made to make decisions by consensus. Consensus is reached when all of or more members of the Council are willing to accept and support an idea, concept or event as the best choice or option presented. In the event that a vote is required, every parent and community member is given 1 vote and the majority position shall prevail.

Sub-Committees

- The Council may establish sub-committees to make recommendations to the Council.
- Every sub-committee of the Council shall include at least 1 parent member of the Council.
- A Sub-Committee of the Council may include persons who are not members of the Council.
- Sub-Committee meetings must follow the same rules set out herein for Council meetings including being open to the public, held at WNPS and publicized by the Principal in the same way that regular Council meetings are.

Code of Ethics

1. A Council member shall consider the best interests of all students.
2. A Council member shall be guided by the school's and the school board's mission statements.
3. A Council 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 Ministry.
4. A Council member shall become familiar with the school's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.
5. A Council member shall maintain the highest standards of integrity.

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

Conflict of Interest

- Any time the Council does business with the potential for monetary gain/lose with any person, agency, or company, and a member of the 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 decision or resolution relating to the matter.
- A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived or potential.
- 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 an interest, stand to benefit either directly or indirectly by decisions of the Council.
- A member of the Council shall exclude him or herself from discussions in which:
 - A conflict of interest is likely to result; and/or
 - The member's ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities as a member of the Council may be jeopardized.
- A member shall not accept favours or economic benefit from any individuals, organizations, or entities known to be seeking business contracts with WNPS.

Conflict Resolution

In the event of an internal dispute, the Council will seek the advice of the Principal or the TVDSB Community Liaison. The Council will comply with the TVDSB Conflict Resolution Policy.

Annual Report

The Council shall prepare and submit a written annual report on its activities to the Principal, the TVDSB and to the school families. This annual report will also be available for viewing at the WNPS Main Office and filed in the Council Resources Box.

Fundraising

The Council may engage in fundraising activities as permitted by the Regulation.

Conflict with Regulation

This Constitution and By-laws may not conflict with the Regulation. In the event of a conflict with the Regulation, the provision in conflict may be severed and be of no force and effect but the remainder of the Constitution and By-laws will remain in effect.

Amendments

Any proposed change or addition to the constitution and by-laws must be submitted in writing to the Chair/Co-chair prior to the next scheduled Council meeting and be placed on the agenda.

The Change must be presented in motion form and passed by 2/3rds majority at a Council meeting with a minimum of ½ the membership in attendance.

This Constitution and By-laws shall be reviewed annually and when the Ministry or the TVDSB requires a change.

DATE PASSED: _____