

## **CONSTITUTION OF GRAFTON PUBLIC SCHOOL**

### **ARTICLE 1: NAME**

The organization shall be known as the Grafton Public School Council.

### **ARTICLE 2: RATIONALE**

Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board School Council Policy B-6.1 will be the umbrella for this Constitution. Much of this Policy comes directly from Ministry of Education Regulation 612 and thus is mandatory and straightforward in nature. The focus of this Constitution is on the very precise procedures used to conduct meetings and business of Council as a whole.

### **ARTICLE 3: PURPOSE**

The Council's purpose is to foster and promote effective education in accordance with Ministry Regulation 612 representing and communicating the views of the school community and providing a forum for parents, students staff and other community members to participate in decisions and recommendations for action. The Council operates within the policies of the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board.

### **ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP**

#### **4.1 NUMBER**

The Council shall consist of a number of elected and appointed members to be determined by Council prior to each annual election provided; however, that such numbers shall comply with the requirements outlined in Board Policy B-6.1.

#### **4.2 CONSTITUENCIES REPRESENTED**

Members of the school council shall include: parent(s)/guardian(s) of students enrolled in the school; community representatives; a student (mandatory in secondary schools, strongly recommended for Grade 7 or 8 students, and at the discretion of the principal in elementary schools in consultation with other members of the school council); the school principal; a teacher; a support staff member; and one person appointed by an association that is a member of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations if the association is established in the school.

Membership in a school council shall be determined in the following ways: parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be elected at a general meeting by parent(s)/ guardian(s) of students enrolled in the school; the student representative shall be appointed by the student council, or, in the case of elementary schools, by the principal; the teacher representative shall be elected by members of the teaching staff; the support staff member shall be elected by members of the support staff; the school principal shall be a designated member; and community representatives shall be appointed by a school council, and every effort should be made to reflect the socio-economic diversity, business affiliations, and demographic makeup of the community.

#### **4.3 QUALIFICATIONS**

Parent and Guardian members of Council shall be elected by parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school. Teacher members of Council shall be elected by the teaching staff. Non-teaching staff members of Council shall be elected by the non-teaching staff. The Principal shall be a designated member of Council. Student members of Council shall be elected by students enrolled in the school. Community representatives shall be appointed by the Council.

#### **4.4 ELECTIONS AND TERM**

Elections for Council shall be held in accordance with procedures outlined in Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board Policy B-6.1. The term of office for elected members of Council shall not be more than two years.

#### **4.5 DISQUALIFICATION**

The Council may, by special resolution<sup>1</sup> duly passed in accordance with Board Policy, disqualify a member from sitting on Council for:

- a) Being absent from three consecutive meetings without communication
- b) Knowingly contravening Board Policy, the Grafton Public School Council Constitution, or other applicable regulations

The Chair shall notify the disqualified member, in writing.

#### **4.6 VACANCIES**

Provided a quorum of Council remains in office, vacancies among members of Council shall be filled by Council. In the absence of a quorum, vacancies shall be filled by a vote held in accordance with the procedures established by Council for election to Council.

#### **4.7 VACATION OF OFFICE**

The office of a member of Council shall be vacated if he/she dies, if he/she no longer meets the qualifications set out in Section 4.3, or if he/she resigns from office.

#### **4.8 REMUNERATION**

Membership in Council is voluntary and no honorarium shall be paid to members of Council.

#### **4.9 CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Under Board Policy BA-5.1, Purchasing Procedures, "No participant shall engage in any activity that may create, or appear to create, a conflict of interest such as accepting gifts or favours, providing preferential treatment or publicly endorsing suppliers or products."

#### **4.10 COMMITTEES**

Council shall establish committees, as it considers appropriate and appoint members of Council to serve on such committees. Council members shall serve on at least one committee or subcommittee per school calendar year. All committees are expected to self-organize, operate independently, and shall report to Council as requested.

#### **4.11 AUTHORIZATION**

No members of Council shall take any action on behalf of Council that has not been authorized by Council.

#### **4.12 CODE OF CONDUCT/PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE**

Members shall conduct themselves according to the Code of Conduct (Appendix A). Meetings will be conducted in accordance with Parliamentary Procedure (Appendix B).

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<sup>1</sup>For the purposes of the Code of Conduct, a “special resolution” is interpreted as a motion duly moved, seconded and adopted by a two-thirds majority of members of the total Council.

### **ARTICLE 5: MEETINGS**

#### **5.1 NUMBER**

Meetings of Council shall be held from time to time at the discretion of the chair/co-chairs in consultation with the principal, but not less than four times per year.

#### **5.2 NOTICE**

Notice of every meeting shall be received by each member of Council not less than 48 hours before the time the meeting is to be held. If meetings are to occur virtually, hyperlink invitations to the meeting will be sent out in advance of the meeting.

#### **5.3 PLACE**

Meetings of Council shall be held in the School or other appropriate location designated by the chair and principal. Meetings may also occur virtually using electronic platforms such as Microsoft Teams or Web-Ex. The decision for in-person or virtual meetings of Council will be made at the discretion of the chair and principal.

#### **5.4 OPEN TO PUBLIC**

All meetings of Council, excluding meetings of the executive or any committee of Council shall be open to the school community and shall be so declared. Members of the school community, if recognized by the chair or assigned time on the agenda, may take part in the discussions of Council.

#### **5.5 DECISION MAKING**

Council shall attempt to reach consensus among members on issues before it. In the event, however, of an inability to reach consensus, resolution shall be decided by a majority of the votes cast. Only elected or appointed members of Council are eligible to vote. General rules of Parliamentary Procedure (Appendix B) shall be followed at all times. In the event of virtual meetings of Council and an open vote, members may vote online within the electronic platform.

#### **5.6 QUORUM**

At any meeting of Council, a majority of members shall constitute a quorum. Parents/Guardians shall form the quorum at all times. The Council Chair and Principal, or their designates, must be in attendance at each Council meeting.

## **5.7 AGENDA**

The agenda shall be prepared by the chair/co-chairs in collaboration with the Principal. Council members shall receive the agenda not less than 48 hours prior to the meeting. Council members are responsible for ensuring receipt of the agenda.

Members requesting placement of items on the agenda must make their request to the chair or Principal two weeks prior to the meeting.

## **5.8 VOTE BY PROXY**

Members unable to attend a meeting, but still wishing to vote, shall do so by completing a proxy voting form available from the school. This shall be sealed and forwarded to the chair prior to the meeting. The intent of the proxy and the identity of the member shall be made known if the vote is open.

## **5.9 CANCELLATION**

A meeting may be canceled at the discretion of the Chair and/or Principal should a weather advisory be forecast. Notification shall be given to council members as soon as possible following the decision.

## **5.10 PRIVACY**

Meetings of Council that occur virtually through electronic platform, or in-person, shall not be audio or video recorded.

# **ARTICLE 6: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS**

## **6.1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

- i) The Principal/Vice-Principal will: facilitate the establishment of the Council and assist in its operation; support and promote the Council's activities; seek input from Council in areas for which it has been assigned advisory responsibility; act as a resource on laws, regulations, Board Policies, and collective agreements; try to obtain and provide information required by the Council to enable it to make informed decisions; maintain ongoing communication with the Chair/Co-chairs of the Council; ensure that copies of the minutes of the Council's meetings are kept at the school; assist the Council in communicating with the school community; encourage the participation of trustees and parents from all groups and of other people within the school community; monitor that Board Policies and Procedures are adhered to by the School Council and make concerns known to the chair; communicate the need for parent-generated funds/support for school projects.
- ii) The Chair/Co-Chairs will: assist in the development of the calendar of meetings; work with the Principal to prepare the agenda for School Council meetings; chair Council meetings; ensure that minutes of Council meetings are recorded and maintained; participate in information and training programs; maintain ongoing communication with the school Principal; ensure that there is regular communication with the school community; consult with senior Board staff and trustees as outlined in

Board Policy No. 915; encourage community representation; ensure representation of the Council at Regional Council meetings; provide the opportunity for an annual review of the Constitution; assist as a member of the nominating committee for the following year; assist with the completion of the “School Report on the Annual Operation of School Councils”; monitor members’ attendance.

- iii) The Secretary of Council will: record minutes of all school council meetings, noting the presence of members, decisions arrived at, and tasks assigned; arrange for minutes to be posted on the School Council bulletin board; arrange for copy and distribution of all relevant materials to school council members.
- iv) School Council Members will: participate in Council meetings, participate in information and training programs; act as a link between the School Council and the community; encourage the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the school community, follow Board Policies and Procedures; are encouraged not to miss more than 2 consecutive meetings per year.

## **6.2 EXECUTIVE**

The executive shall include the Chairs/Co-chairs, Secretary and Principal.

## **6.3 ELECTION AND TERM OF EXECUTIVE**

Members of the Executive shall be elected by Council not later than the second meeting of Council following the election of Council, and shall serve a term of one year. Members of Council are eligible to stand for election to the executive for additional terms. Members may serve as Chair for only two consecutive terms. No more than one member of a family shall hold an Executive position in the same term of office. Council shall fill vacancies among the Executive.

## **6.4 CODE OF CONDUCT**

Members of Council are required to follow the Code of Conduct as outlined in Appendix A.

## **ARTICLE 7: LIABILITY**

The Board’s liability insurance extends to volunteers who are working within the scope of their duties on behalf of the school board. Members of Council may be personally liable if they go beyond the advisory role or do not follow Ministry or Board policies and are not acting in good faith.

## **ARTICLE 8: ANNUAL MEETING**

### **8.1 NOTICE**

An annual meeting of the school community shall be held within thirty (30) calendar days of the start of the School Year. At this time the election/acclamation of Parent/Guardian

representatives to Council for the upcoming school year shall take place in accordance with Board Policy B-6.1.

## **8.2 REPORT**

The annual report of Council shall be available at the annual meeting.

## **ARTICLE 9: RECORDS**

### **9.1 RECORDS REQUIRED**

Council shall maintain minutes of all meetings of the Council and the executive, and proper financial records of its activities. As well, the Principal in collaboration with the Chair(s) will complete an Annual School Council Reporting Form in June of each year.

### **9.2 WHERE KEPT**

Records of Council shall be kept at the school and made available to members of Council or the school community.

### **9.3 DISTRIBUTION**

The agenda and minutes of each meeting of Council must be distributed to the Superintendent and School Trustee and all members of Council in a timely fashion, and shall be available for examination at the school by members of the school community during normal school hours and at such times as Council may determine. Distribution of Council information will also be made available online through Edsby for the school community to access. The Annual School Council Reporting Form will be submitted to the Board.

## **ARTICLE 10: FINANCIAL POLICY**

### **10.1 SIGNATORIES**

The School Council does not have cheques. Payments will be made by the school for items approved in the minutes. Copies of the minutes and financial activities of a school council are kept at the school and made accessible to the school community.

### **10.2 LIMITATIONS**

Any expenditure requires approval of School Council.

## **ARTICLE 11: AMENDMENTS**

### **11.1 ANNUAL REVIEW**

Council shall review the Constitution annually to determine its continuing applicability to the goals and objectives of Council. The Constitution shall be distributed to all members at the first regular meeting of Council to new members.

## **11.2 NOTICE**

Notice of any proposed amendments shall be given in writing to Council members not less than 48 hours prior to the date of such vote.

## **11.3 APPROVAL**

Proposed amendments shall be approved upon the favorable vote of at least two-thirds of the votes cast on the amendment.

Dated: October 22, 2015

## **APPENDIX A: Code of Conduct**

Members of the School Council are required to act at all times in the best interests of the students, the staff, the School, the Board and the Council; and to demonstrate leadership within the school community. Members shall therefore adhere to the following expectations in accomplishing their responsibilities.

Council Members shall, at all times, act with decorum and shall be respectful of other Council members, and members of staff, as well as the public.

Council Members shall comply with Board Policies and practices, as well as the provisions of the Education Act, Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, and any other relevant legislation. They shall not disclose names or events that could identify particular students, staff members, or their families or discuss matters pertaining to such individuals.

A Council member may comment on, or disagree with, a decision taken by the Council. He/She may not make disparaging remarks about other Council members in expressing such comment or disagreement or speculate on the motives of others.

Any member who resists the rules of the Council, uses offensive language, disobeys the decision of the Chairperson/Acting Chairperson or the Council on points of order, or making any disorderly noise or disturbance may, unless an apology is offered, be ordered by the Chairperson/Acting Chairperson to leave for the remainder of the Meeting, and in the case of refusal to do so, may, on the order of the Chairperson/Acting Chairperson, be removed from the meeting. (Such removal is to be recorded in the Minutes of the Meeting.)

The Council may, by special resolution<sup>2</sup> duly passed in accordance with Board Policy, declare the office of the Chairperson and or Co-chairperson to be vacant effective as of the date of passage of the resolution, where such person:

- a) deliberately breaches any relevant legislation;
- b) deliberately breaches any Board Policy or practice; and/or
- c) acts in such a manner as to lose the confidence of the Council.

If such resolution is passed, the Council shall, at the same meeting, elect a new Chairperson and or Co-chairperson respectively as the case may be.

The Council may, by special resolution<sup>2</sup> duly passed in accordance with Board Policy, remove a Council member from a Committee. If such resolution is passed, the Council shall, at the same meeting, elect a new member to fill the vacancy on the Committee.

The Council may, by special resolution<sup>2</sup> duly passed in accordance with Board Policy, censure a member for:

- a) breach of Council Policy
- b) breach of any relevant legislation; and/or
- c) conduct unbecoming a Council Member

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<sup>2</sup>For the purposes of the Code of Conduct, a “special resolution” is interpreted as a motion duly moved, seconded and adopted by a two-thirds majority of members of the total Council

## **APPENDIX B: General Rules of Parliamentary Procedure Regarding Decision-Making**

Decisions that endure are best formed by consensus.

If broad agreement on an issue is not possible, the rules of Parliamentary Procedure provide a formal process for making decisions. They rest upon four basic principles:

Justice and courtesy to all;  
One matter at a time;  
The right of the majority to carry a decision; and  
The right of the minority to be heard.

In the event that a vote formulating a recommendation is taken, the decision will be made through the use of a motion:

The Chair opens the matter to discussion.  
All remarks are addressed to the Chair of the meeting.  
Each member speaks once on the motion.  
The proposer is allowed to conclude debate.  
The Chair determines that the meeting is ready to vote.  
The motion is repeated before voting takes place.  
The Chair announces the result of the vote.

All members of the School Council will be eligible to vote. The Principal as the school administrator is a non-voting member.