



# **Bessborough School Council**

## **Bylaws**

As at [November] 2020

### **Name**

The name of this association shall be Bessborough School Council, representing Bessborough Elementary & Middle School, hereafter referred to as the Council.

### **Objectives**

In accordance with the regulations, policies and guidelines of the Ministry of Education and Toronto District School Board (TDSB) concerning school councils, the objectives of the Council shall be to:

- contribute to the improvement of student achievement and school performance and enhance accountability of the education system to parents
- enhance parent involvement in the school
- to provide a forum for dialogue and collaboration on topics of interest to parents and teachers to promote effective consultation and communication between home and school
- act as an advisory body and resource to the school principal and, when appropriate, to the board

### **School Council Membership**

The Council shall be composed of:

- Ten (10) parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school
- the school principal
- one teacher designated by the principal
- one support (non-teaching) staff member designated by the principal
- if and as deemed appropriate by the other members of the Council, one or more community representatives appointed by the other members of the Council



- one person appointed by the association in the school that is a member of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, if applicable

Parents/guardians shall form the majority of the Council. It is expected that the membership of the Council will reflect the diversity of the school community.

### **Elections of School Council Members**

#### ***Process for Parent/Guardian School Council Members***

Elections shall occur within the first 30 days of the start of each school year.

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 by the school board.

Elections for the Council will be conducted by secret ballot. All eligible voters may cast one vote for each of the candidate positions.

If there is a tie for a position on Council, the vote will be decided by drawing lots.

If the number of candidates is less than, or equal to, the number of positions available, the candidates will be acclaimed.

Only the names of the successful candidates shall be made public.

#### ***Process for Other School Council Members***

The principal will make arrangements for the election of all non-parent/guardian members of the Council.

### ***Vacancies***

A vacancy in the Council can be filled by holding an election or the Council can choose to appoint an eligible member. The Council may continue to operate with a vacancy.

### **Term of office**

The term of office for elected and appointed positions is one school year. Any member may seek re-election or re-appointment.

### **School Council Executive**

Council Executive shall include the following positions which are elected annually at the first meeting of the Council:



- Chair(s)
- Secretary
- Treasurer

A vacancy in an Executive position will be filled by election of another Council member.

### **Role of Council Members**

#### ***Principal***

- Attend Council meetings, as feasible
- Distribute Council information and give notice of Council meetings (date, time, location) to the school community
- Seek parent input on matters affecting student achievement
- Facilitate and support the operation of the Council including arranging for the provision of school and/or board resources

#### ***Chair(s)***

- Arrange, prepare agendas for and chair Council meetings
- Communicate with the principal on behalf of the Council
- Consult with senior board staff and trustees as required on behalf of the Council

#### ***Secretary***

- Ensure that minutes of Council meetings are recorded and maintained
- Assist the Chair in the distribution of minutes to all Council members, and make them available (once approved) to the parent body

#### ***Treasurer***

- Oversee receipt and disbursement of Council monies
- Keep proper records of all financial transactions
- Sign expense reports in connection with expenses incurred by the Council



### ***Other Elected Council Members***

- Represent the views and opinions of the parent community and are encouraged to attend and participate in Council meetings
- Facilitate and participate as appropriate in events that the Council holds during the school year

### **Meetings**

A minimum of four meetings will be held during the school year. Additional meetings may be scheduled at the discretion of the Chair.

The Council must meet within the first 35 days of the school year on a date chosen by the school principal.

All Council meetings will be advertised in the school newsletter and on the school website, including the dates, times and locations of Council meetings.

Meetings must be open to the public and held at a location accessible to the public and may be held at the school.

### ***Voting***

Council issues shall be resolved through a formal vote. The vote may be by secret ballot or a show of hands. The vote will be decided by a majority of 50 percent of the Council members plus one person. Only elected or appointed members have a vote. The principal does not have a vote in any Council decisions.

### ***Minutes and Financial Records***

Minutes will be taken at all Council meetings. A copy of Council meeting minutes and financial transaction records must be made available at the school for examination by any person.

### ***Quorum***

A meeting of the Council cannot be held unless:

- a majority of the current Council members is present at the meeting; and
- a majority of Council members who are present at the meeting are parent/guardian members.



## **Committees**

Committees may be appointed as required to make recommendations to the Council and to carry out projects of the Council.

Every Council committee must include at least one parent member of the Council and are open to parents/guardians of the school (who need not be Council members).

## **Finances**

All Council expenditures require prior approval of the Council.

The principal shall maintain a bank account to which Council funds shall be deposited and from which payments by the Council shall be made. The Council will complete expense reports that will serve as authorization for the school to draw cheques on the bank account.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

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.

In the event that a member has a conflict of interest with respect to a matter under consideration at a meeting of the Council, the member shall:

- a. declare the conflict of interest at the beginning of the meeting and before the matter is discussed;
- b. refrain from voting on the matter and participating in discussion of the matter; and
- c. refrain from attempting to influence another member of the Council before, during or after the consideration of the matter.

The declaration of the conflict of interest shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

## **Conflict Resolution**

Every Council member will be given an opportunity to express concerns or opinions about any issue or item being considered by the Council. Speakers will be allowed to speak for a reasonable period of time without interruption.



The Chair's responsibility is to clarify the statements made by all speakers, identify common ground among the points of view raised, if possible, and to set out the joint interests of all members.

If no common ground can be identified, the Chair will seek to clarify preferences among all members before proceeding further and may defer to a future meeting while more information is collected.

If all attempts at resolving the 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.

### **Annual Reporting**

The Council shall annually:

- Prepare and submit to the principal and the TDSB a written report of its activities. If the Council engages in fundraising activities, the annual report shall include a report of those activities. It is the responsibility of the principal to distribute the report to all parents of the school, which can be done by including in the school newsletter and/or on the school website.
- Prior to the end of October and in consultation with the principal, prepare and submit to the TDSB a School Council Financial Plan and School Needs Assessment Form listing expected expenditures and fundraising events for the year with anticipated incomes.
- Prior to the end of October, prepare and submit to the Superintendent a School Statement of Needs outlining the parent/community priorities for the school to be used to identify a principal of one needs to be appointed.

### **Amendments to By-laws**

These By-laws may be amended by submitting a proposed amendment to a Council meeting and having such proposed amendment approved by a majority vote of all members present.