

Clearmeadow School Council
Constitution
Amended March 2009

Article 1: NAME AND ADDRESS

The organization will be known as **Clearmeadow School Council**. The members of the School Council shall be responsible for maintaining the constitution.

CLEARMEADOW PUBLIC SCHOOL
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Article 2: MISSION STATEMENT

Clearmeadow School Council takes pride in uniting parents, school and community to enrich the learning environment of our students, and promote positive student learning.

Article 3: PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

1. Supporting and developing Parental and Community Involvement.
2. Promoting a safe environment and developing school initiatives to enhance student respect of self, peers, adults and property.
3. Participate in the school improvement planning process.
4. Provide input into decisions made by the school administration, the Board and the Ministry.
5. Provide a means for regular communication and dialogue between all partners in education.

Article 4: NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

Clearmeadow School Council will operate without financial gain for its members. Clearmeadow School Council will operate any fundraising activities in strict accordance with board policy and in co-operation with the school administrators.

Article 5: PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

The operational procedures of this council are outlined in YRDSB Procedure #262, available on the Board's website. All recommendations and activities of the Council shall comply with all Ministry of Education Acts, York District Region Board Policies and Procedures.

Article 6: MEMBERSHIP

All parents/guardians with children attending Clearmeadow Public School are welcome & eligible for School Council membership and will form the majority of the council. There shall be no more than one member on the school council from any one household.

6.1 Parent Members:

A minimum of Seven (7) to maximum of Twelve (12) elected **Parent members**, which consists of:
Chair/ Co-Chairpersons (1-2)
Secretary (1)
Treasurer (1)
Other Parent Members (7-8)

6.2 Student Representative:

Representatives from the Student Council elected by students

6.3 Other Members:

Past Chair/s – acclaimed

Principal/Vice-Principal

Teaching Representative - appointed by Principal on a rotating basis

Support Staff Representative - appointed by Principal on a rotating basis

Article 7: BY-LAWS

7.1 Acclamations:

Parent elections shall be by acclamation when the number of candidates is equal to, or less than the maximum number of parent member positions on the Council which is Twelve (12).

7.2 Election Procedures for Parent Members:

1. 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 York Region District School Board.
2. Each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent/membership position on the Council.
3. The School Council shall strike an election committee to help plan the election process, the gathering of nominations, and the running of the election. No one standing for election, or the spouse of anyone standing for election, shall be a member of the election committee.
4. There will be no canvassing or campaign literature distributed.
5. Working with the Principal, the election committee shall:
 - Book the School Council election within the first thirty (30) days of the school year
 - Provide nomination forms and ballots
 - Ensure that the school community is notified of election procedures and election date(s), location and time, at least fourteen (14) days in advance of election
 - Request a standardized profile from all candidates and make these available to the electorate
 - Conduct the elections by secret ballot
 - Count the ballots
 - Help the Principal notify all candidates of the results
 - Keep all the results and related information confidential. Only release the names of successful candidates. A list of candidates and the vote results will be kept on file for use in the event of vacancy on the Council
 - Shall notify all individuals standing for election of the results before the results are released to the school community

7.3 Terms of Office

- Council members will hold their position for 1 year but may run for re-election.
- Council members' position will be from September to September. If a Council member's term begins mid year the term will end in September.

7.4 Filling Vacancies:

Positions that remain vacant on the Council after the initial election, or that become vacant due to resignation or removal, shall be filled as soon as possible. A notice will be sent to all parents/guardians informing them of a vacancy(ies) and application by interested volunteers sought. In the event that there are more applications than positions, an election will be called to provide parents/guardians with an opportunity to elect members to the vacant position(s).

7.5 Resignations:

- Anyone who is a council member, except the Principal, may resign his or her position by writing a letter of resignation to the chair.
- If someone resigns, the position vacated will be filled according to the process of filling vacancies.

7.6 Removal of membership:

- The Council may choose to remove from Council any member who misses a total of two meetings per year without prior notification.
- The Council may choose to remove from Council, any member who does not fulfill the responsibilities of a Council member as specified in Article 10.
- Members can be replaced as outlined in Article 7.4.

7.7 Conflict of Interest:

- If individual council members perceive themselves to be in conflict of interest, they are honour bound to declare their conflict at the earliest possible opportunity during a council meeting so the minutes may reflect this declaration.
- Council members cannot receive any remuneration for their work as a member of council.

7.8 Conflict Resolution:

- All conflicts should be brought to the attention of the Chair or Co-Chairs of the School Council.
- The Chair/Co-Chairs will undertake to resolve all internal conflicts within its mandate in a timely manner.
- The council will abide by any conflict resolution policy issued by the York Region District School Board.

Article 8: VOTING ON EXECUTIVE POSITIONS

- The first School Council meeting must be held within the first 35 days of the school year.
- The Executive Officers are voted in by the new School Council members at the first meeting.
- The Principal, Vice Principal or a designated impartial individual, will be called upon to act as scrutineer for the tallying of votes for the Executive positions.
- The Chairperson(s) will be voted on first, followed by the Secretary and Treasurer. Each candidate will give a brief introduction of himself or herself.
- Each position will be voted on by secret ballot. In the event of a tie a re-vote will be taken.

8.1 Chair/Co-Chairs

At the first meeting after the elections, the new Council will elect either a Chair or two Co-Chairs. The position of Chair/Co-chair should preferably be assumed by a parent/guardian who has previously served on the School Council for a period of at least one year. An employee of the York Region District School Board cannot be Chair/Co-chair.

8.2 Other Officers

At the first meeting of the school year, the Council will elect or appoint the following officers: **Secretary and Treasurer.**

Article 9: SUB-COMMITTEES

9.1 Purpose

At the first meeting of the school year, sub-committees **may be** formed to:

- Conduct more detailed or in-depth work than is possible during Council meetings.
- Make recommendations to the Council.
- Keep the Council informed of issues and developments in its' particular area.

9.2 Establishment

Council reserves the right to form sub-committees as the need arises, such as:

- Volunteer Sub-Committee
- Fundraising Sub-Committee
- Nutrition Sub-Committee
- Community Communications Sub-Committee

9.3 Sub-Committee Membership

- Each elected parent member will be expected to sit on and make an active contribution to at least one sub-committee established by the school council.
- Each sub-committee must contain at least one parent member of Council.
- Persons, who are not members of Council, may be members of sub-committees, and have voting rights in the sub-committee on item/s that are to be brought forward to Council for approval. These voting rights do not extend to Council meetings.
- Each sub-committee will report, either orally or in writing, to the Council at meetings. Their report should contain a summary of its recommendations and findings.
- The Council, prior to implementation of any action or recommendation, must consider all recommendations from sub-committees.
- Final approval of any action or recommendation will be decided by Council vote.

Article 10: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL COUNCIL

10.1 The following roles and responsibilities apply to all positions:

- Advise and collaborate with the Principal through council on school issues and goals.
- Attend School Council meetings. At the discretion of Council, if more than 2 regularly scheduled meetings are missed, voting privileges may be revoked.
- Must come to each meeting prepared, including having read minutes of previous meetings and be ready to suggest changes or approve the document.
- Act as a link between the school, the School Council and the community.
- Promote the best interests of the whole school community.
- Abide by the Constitution and the School Council Handbook.
- Maintain a school wide perspective on issues.
- Collaborate with other School Council members and the Chairperson to assist in preparation of the Annual Report for the Board.
- Participate in the completion of an annual review of the Constitution and the By-laws.
- Encourage the participation of parents/guardians from all groups and other people within the school and community at large.
- Participate in School and School Council functions.
- Have all communications approved by the Chair/Co-chair and principal prior to distribution.
- At end of term, forward all documentation related to the position to the incoming person.
- Must have all expenditures pre-approved by council.
- Required to sit on and make an active contribution to at least one sub-committee established by the school council
- Support council wide initiatives by volunteering their time for at least one major School Council sponsored event.

10.2 Code of Ethics:

A MEMBER SHALL...

- Consider the best interests of all students.
- Be guided by the school and school board mission statements.
- Act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of a school council, as identified by the school operating guidelines, the council constitution, the school board, and the Ontario Ministry of Education.
- Become familiar with the school policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.
- Maintain the highest standards of integrity.
- Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.
- Treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.
- Encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
- Acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the council.
- Respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the school council.
- Not disclose confidential information.
- Limit discussions at school council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.
- Use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise.

10.3 The Chairperson or Co-Chairpersons shall:

- Preferably have held another position on School Council for a minimum of 1 year.
- Call School Council meetings.
- Prepare the agenda for School Council meetings in consultation with the School Council and Principal.
- Email the agenda and minutes from the previous meeting to each Council member at least 48 hours in advance of each meeting.
- Schedule School Council meetings in consultation with the School Council and Principal. (Minimum of four meetings per year).
- Chair School Council meetings.
- Ensure the School Council Members receive and adhere to the Constitution and the School Council Handbook.
- Ensure that the minutes of the School Council meetings are recorded and filed in an appropriate manner to ensure timely access.
- Ensure parents are consulted.
- Ensure fundraising meets Board policies.
- Ensure that there is regular communication with the school community.
- Communicate with the school Principal, senior Board staff and trustees, as required.
- Establish and monitor progress of sub-committees as required.
- Ensure correspondence is reviewed, responded to and filed.
- Ensure the Annual Report is completed and submitted to the Board by the end of the school year.
- Ensure that the School Council reviews the Constitution and the election process prior to the end of the year, to ensure that it is ready to meet the needs of the community in the upcoming year.
- Support and promote the activities of the School.
- Co-ordinate a regular newsletter with input from Council members.
- Help maintain the School Council bulletin Board.
- Receive all reports from sub-committee Chairs

10.4 Secretary

- Be responsible for minutes of all meetings, duplicate and distribute as follows:
 - File binder – to be kept in the school library
 - Principal
 - Council Members
 - Website
- Ensure that the agendas are copied and ready for each meeting.
- Ensure that minutes are typed and forwarded to Chair/Co-Chair and the principal within 2 weeks of each meeting date.
- Assist Chair/Co-Chair with correspondence when necessary.
- Help maintain the School Council bulletin board.
- Have lawn sign updated to reflect upcoming meeting dates, whenever possible.

10.5 Treasurer

- Receive and bank all monies due to Council.
- Work with Council to develop over/short policies.
- Keep full and accurate accounts of all monies; received by or expended on behalf of the Council.
- Ensure all banking documents are up-to-date.
- Pay approved expenditures wherever possible by cheques countersigned by the principal and other signing officer.
- Responsible for notifying the appropriate program coordinator of all NSF cheques, and trying to recover those monies.
- Provide a Treasurer's Report at School Council Meetings.
- Present and have available for distribution a complete financial statement at the first Council meeting of the next school year.
- The Chair/Co-Chairs or Treasurer has the authority to approve the disbursement of funds of \$50 or less.
- All disbursements must correspond to the approved budget and be authorized by the Chair/Co-Chair.

10.6 Volunteer Sub-Committee (if established)

- Work with Council members to recruit volunteers for events such as, lunch programs, nutrition programs, fundraising activities and other school events, as required.
- Liaise with staff and Student Council when looking for student volunteers.
- Be present for the duration of each fundraising event to coordinate volunteers, or will send a designate in their place, to perform those duties.
- Establish and maintain a confidential, school wide volunteer roster.

10.7 Fundraising Sub-Committee (if established)

- Design and implement all approved School Council fundraising events.
- Organize a fundraising committee and run regular meetings for the fundraising committee.
- Update School Council at each meeting regarding the activities of the fundraising committee.
- Work with the Volunteer Sub-Committee to arrange for volunteers as needed.

10.8 Nutrition Sub-Committee (if established)

- Be responsible for all Nutrition Program activities including;
 - Advertising
 - Grant Applications & Donations
 - Purchasing/Pick-up of food
 - Refilling/Distribution of buckets at least twice a week
 - Work with the Volunteer Sub-Committee to arrange for volunteers as needed
- Liaise with the lunch program providers and oversee the programs including advertising, food distribution, and revenue collection.
- Keeping accurate account of monies received in a timely fashion before giving to the Treasurer for deposit

10.9 Community Relations Sub-Committee (if established)

- Live within the school boundaries.
- Liaise with the community regarding school interests and concerns.
- Communicate community information and/or concerns to the School Council in a timely fashion.

10.10 Past Chairperson(s)

- The past Chairperson/s may be a parent whose child is no longer at the school.
- Provide continuity for incoming Council.
- Help in developing the objectives or strategic plan for the year for the Council.
- Holds a term of 1 year.
- Chair School Council meetings when the Chair/Co-Chair is absent.

10.11 Teaching Representative

- Be the liaison between the School Council and teaching staff.
- Update Council in a timely fashion, regarding staff suggestions and/or concerns as they relate to School Council.

10.12 Support Staff Representative

- Be the liaison between the School Council and support staff.
- Update Council in a timely fashion, regarding support staff suggestions and/or concerns as they relate to School Council.

10.13 Student Council Representative

- Is invited to attend School Council meetings.
- Is asked to be the liaison between the Student Council and the School Council.
- Is asked to keep the School Council informed of Student Council fundraising activities to avoid conflicts in date/time/resources.

Article 11: DUTIES OF THE PRINCIPAL:

As per the School Council Handbook, the Principal shall:

11.1 Communicate

- Give written notice of the dates, times and locations of the meetings to every parent.
- Give a copy of the annual report to every parent.
- Make known the names of members of the School Council by newsletter or other means.
- Distribute any materials received from the Ministry or Board to Council members.
- Ensure that copies of the minutes are kept at the school and are accessible to all parents.
- Ensure that the School Council constitution is readily available to the school community.
- Assist the Council in communicating with the school community.

11.2 Consult

- Seek input from council in areas, which have been identified as priorities, including, but not limited to:
 - a) School policies and guidelines on school code of conduct and appropriate dress for students,
 - b) The school's improvement plans.
- Consider recommendations made by Council and provide rationale for decisions made regarding these recommendations.
- Advise Council when they are not in compliance with Board policies and procedures.

11.3 Support

- Attend all School Council meetings, or will send a designate.
- Act as a resource person and assist Council in obtaining relevant information.
- Support and promote the School Council's operations and activities.
- Support school community organizations, which operate separately from Council.
- Be an effective liaison between Council and these organizations.

11.4 In addition, the Principal shall:

- Be one of the signing authorities on every cheque issued by School Council.
- Approve all School Council related communications prior to distribution.
- Consult with Council before distributing materials that reference School Council specific activities/information (ie. School Newsletter Content, flyers, brochures, and order forms).

Article 12: MEETINGS

- There will be at least four School Council meetings held within the school year.
- The first meeting must be held within the first 35 days of the school year.
- Everyone is welcome to attend the School Council meetings.
- Those wishing to add items to the agenda must contact the Chairperson a week prior to a scheduled meeting.
- Only elected positions will have the right to vote.
- The Principal does not have a vote.
- There must be a quorum in attendance to constitute a meeting. A quorum will be defined as 2/3 of the majority of elected parent/guardian positions with the Chairperson or designate present.
- Council members cannot receive any remuneration for their work as a member of council.
- The council will abide by any conflict resolution policy issued by the Board.

Article 13: FINANCES

- All fundraising done within the school year needs to be in support of the budget approved at the beginning of the school year. All funds raised will be spent before the end of that school year with a pre-determined amount being carried over to the next year's budget.
- The carried over amount must be for a designated purpose (i.e. classroom start-up fund)
- All cheques shall have two signatures, the Principal and one of the other designated signing officers: Vice Principal, Chair/Co-chair or Treasurer.
- All expenditures must be approved by council prior to funds distribution.

Article 14: AMENDMENTS

Any proposed changes or additions to the Constitution shall be submitted during a School Council meeting for consideration, with voting to take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting. All changes must be approved by 2/3 of the majority in attendance.