

Date of Issue February 2018

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Subject **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

References [Ontario Regulation 612/00 - School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees](#)
[Ontario Regulation 330/10 - School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees](#)
[Policy 4310 - School Councils](#)
[APM A7630 - Code of Conduct](#)

Contact School Services

1. Election Committee

In consultation with the current school council, the principal shall establish an Election Committee.

2. Election of Parent/Guardian Representatives

- 2.1 In consultation with the Election Committee, the principal shall file the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) Summary of Election Procedures (FORM A7200 - 1) with the superintendent of education by the end of the day on the first Monday of the school year.
- 2.2 Elections for school council shall be held within thirty (30) calendar days of the start of the school year.
- 2.3 Elections for school council shall be conducted by secret ballot (FORM A7200 - 2). Neither proxy nor absentee voting is permitted. Voters must be present at the school on the election day(s), during the pre-set hours and must vote in person.
- 2.4 All parents/guardians of a student enrolled at the school are eligible to vote for parent/guardian representatives.
- 2.5 Parents/guardians of a student enrolled at the school are eligible to run as parent/guardian representatives (except when specifically prohibited in Policy 4310). Board employees are not eligible to run as a parent/guardian representative at their child's school if they are employed at that school. If they are employed elsewhere in the board, they may run as a parent/guardian representative providing they inform the parent/guardian community of their employment prior to the election.

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- 2.6 Parent/Guardian Candidate Nomination forms (FORM A7200 - 3) shall be filed by all candidates for elected positions on the school council. The deadline for the submission of nominations forms will be determined annually by the school principal.
 - 2.7 The principal shall conduct a lottery to determine the ballot position for each candidate on the election ballot.
 - 2.8 All eligible voters shall be entitled to cast one vote for each of the candidate positions available at their school. Casting more than the maximum number of votes permitted in the category spoils the ballot.
 - 2.9 Council members are elected based on the highest tally of votes received. If there is a tie for the final position, and two or more nominees are tied, respecting the fewest votes, those nominees shall draw lots (numbers) to determine which name(s) shall be dropped from the ballot. The nominee(s) who draw the lowest number(s) will be dropped from the ballot.
 - 2.10 No individual campaign literature for school council elections may be distributed or posted in the school. The exception to this ruling will be made for the candidate forum.
 - 2.11 School resources, both human and material, may not be used to support particular candidates or groups of candidates.
 - 2.12 The election proceedings shall be supervised by the school principal.
 - 2.13 Appeals related to the school council election shall be resolved by the Election Committee. If the situation is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, the school principal shall make a ruling.
 - 2.14 If all elected positions have not been filled at the end of the election process, and vacancies exist, an election will be held at a later date and/or the newly constituted school council shall appoint the necessary number of eligible persons to serve for the balance of the term of office. If appointments fail to fill all positions, the school council shall proceed to operate as long as a parent/guardian majority exists.
 - 2.15 All appointments to the school council are by majority vote of the members at the meeting then serving on the school council. Appointments shall be made at a public meeting with appropriate public notice of the meeting.
 - 2.16 The principal in consultation with the Election Committee shall call the first meeting of the school council within thirty-five (35) calendar days of the start of the school year.
 - 2.17 Election of a School Council Chairperson
 - 2.17.1 The school council shall elect a chair or co-chairs. The chair (co-chairs) must be a parent/guardian member, who is not employed by the board.

2.18 Appointment of Community Representatives

- 2.18.1 The school council shall appoint a community representative(s). A person is not eligible to be a community representative if they're employed at the school. If employed by the board, they must inform the council of their employment prior their appointment.

3. Election of Staff Representatives

- 3.1 The principal will make the necessary arrangements for school council staff representatives to be elected.
- 3.2 Anyone assigned to the staff of the school (full or part-time) may be a candidate.
- 3.3 Part-time employees who are assigned to more than one location may only hold one school council position.

4. Election/Appointment of Student Representatives

- 4.1 In secondary schools:
- 4.1.1 a student, or students, enrolled in the school who is/are appointed by the student council, if the school has a student council; or,
- 4.1.2 a student, or students, enrolled in the school who is/are elected by students registered at the school, if the school does not have a student council.
- 4.2 In elementary schools:
- 4.2.1 a student, or students, enrolled in the school who is/are appointed by the principal of the school, if the principal determines, after consulting with the other members of the school council, that the council should include a student.

5. Election Results

The principal shall make the names of the members of the school council known to the parents/guardians within 30 calendar days following the election of parent/guardian members.

6. Procedures at School Council Meetings

- 6.1 Standards of Behaviour
All council members shall conduct themselves in accordance with the board, school and school council Code of Conduct (APM A7630 - Code of Conduct).
- 6.2 Absence of Chair
In the absence of the chair, the council will choose, by majority vote of members present, an acting chair for the meeting.

- 6.3 Quorum
The quorum for any meeting will be a majority of the members present and a majority of those present must be parent/guardian members.

- 6.4 Absence of Quorum
 - 6.4.1 In the absence of a quorum, no motions may be considered or approved.
 - 6.4.2 If a majority of parents/guardians wish the meeting to proceed in the absence of a quorum, the council will continue the meeting for purposes of discussions of issues, but item 6.4.1 will continue to apply.

- 6.5 Motions
 - 6.5.1 Any member of the council may make a motion at any meeting, with no seconder required.
 - 6.5.2 Any parent/guardian may propose a motion for the council to consider at any meeting. If another parent/guardian seconds the motion, the chair will put the motion before the council.
 - 6.5.3 If a majority of the council approves consideration of a motion proposed under item 6.5.2, the motion will be considered by the council in the same manner as any other motion.

- 6.6 Voting on Motions
 - 6.6.1 Each member of the council will have one vote on every motion (except when specifically prohibited under Policy 4310 - School Councils).
 - 6.6.2 A member of the council may abstain from voting on any motion.
 - 6.6.3 A motion is approved if a majority of the council members present at the meeting vote in favour of it.
 - 6.6.4 The council may at any time approve a motion allowing parents/guardians to vote on a particular motion at a particular meeting.
 - 6.6.5 If a motion is approved under item 6.6.4, each parent/guardian present at the meeting will have one vote, and the motion will be approved if a majority of those voting vote in favour of the motion.

7. School Council By-laws

School Council By-laws must be developed by using FORM A7200 - 4 as a template. Additional roles and responsibilities of school council members are included as APPENDIX A.

8. Resolution of Conflicts

Occasionally, a dispute may develop among school council members. It is expected that members and the principal will make every effort to resolve the dispute themselves.

- 8.1 Resolving disputes internally
 - 8.1.1 Council members will demonstrate respect for other council members at all times.
 - 8.1.2 Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption.

- 8.1.3 The chair will ensure all members of the council have the opportunity to speak.
 - 8.1.4 Speakers will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.
 - 8.1.5 The chair will focus the discussion on council issues.
 - 8.1.6 The chair will clarify speaker statements, identify common points of view and attempt to achieve a consensus among council members.
 - 8.1.7 The chair may request disputing members of council to meet privately to find a mutually acceptable solution to the issue.
 - 8.1.8 Adhere to the Standards of Behaviour outlined in APM A7630 - Code of Conduct.
- 8.2 Handling disruptive behaviour
- 8.2.1 If a council member or members becomes disruptive during a meeting, the chair shall call for order.
 - 8.2.2 If the disruptive behaviour continues, or order cannot be restored, the chair may ask for the removal of the disruptive individual(s). The reasons for the removal should be documented in the minutes.
 - 8.2.3 Removing a member or members from a council meeting may not prevent those members from participating in future council meetings.
- 8.3 Resolving disputes through mediation
- If it is apparent that a dispute cannot be resolved internally, the chair may ask the superintendent of education to help through a mediation process.

9. School Council Communication

- 9.1 To facilitate communication with the school community, other school council chairs, board staff, and the Parent Involvement Committee (PIC), the school council chair shall use the council email address as provided by the board.
- 9.2 Council shall act in accordance with board Appropriate Use Guidelines when communicating, subject to principal approval.

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Roles and Responsibilities of School Council Members

Council members are to maintain a school-wide focus on all issues. Council meetings are not a forum for discussion about individual parents/guardians, students, staff, trustees or other council members.

1. Chair/Co-Chair
 - 1.1 communicate with the school principal
 - 1.2 prepare the agenda for school council meetings in consultation with the school principal
 - 1.3 chair school council meetings
 - 1.4 ensure that the minutes of school council meetings and records of all financial transactions are recorded and maintained
 - 1.5 participate in information and training programs
 - 1.6 ensure that there is regular communication with the school community
 - 1.7 consult with senior board staff and trustees, when requested
 - 1.8 participate in establishing by-laws
 - 1.9 act in accordance with the school and board Code of Conduct
 - 1.10 shall abide by board policies and procedures
2. Council Members
 - 2.1 participate in council meetings
 - 2.2 participate in information and training programs
 - 2.3 act as a link between the school council and the community
 - 2.4 participate in establishing and following by-laws
 - 2.5 act in accordance with the school and board Code of Conduct
 - 2.6 shall abide by board policies and procedures

3. The Principal
 - 3.1 facilitates the establishment of the school council and assists in its operation
 - 3.2 supports and promotes the council's activities
 - 3.3 consults with the school council on the development and implementation of school action plans
 - 3.4 consults with the council in any areas identified by the council as a priority
 - 3.5 acts as a resource regarding the *Education Act*, regulations and board policies relevant to the functions of the council
 - 3.6 obtains and provides information required by the council to enable it to make informed decisions
 - 3.7 communicates with the chair of the council, as required
 - 3.8 ensures that copies of the financial records and minutes of the council's meetings are kept at the school and available for examination
 - 3.9 encourages the participation of parents/guardians from all groups and other individuals within the school community
 - 3.10 provides for prompt distribution to school council members any materials received from the Ministry of Education identified for council members and posts same
 - 3.11 attends (or designates a replacement) every school council meeting
 - 3.12 does not vote in votes taken by the school council or council committees
 - 3.13 participates in establishing the by-laws

SUMMARY OF ELECTION PROCEDURES

SCHOOL COUNCIL

School _____ Area _____
Principal _____ Date _____

1. The total number of positions on our school council will be _____.
2. The school council will include _____ parents/guardians who will represent a majority of the membership on the council.
3. The number of seats in each category are as follows:

<u>Category</u>	<u># of Positions</u>
School Principal	_____
Parents/Guardians	_____
Student(s)	_____
Teacher(s)	_____
Non-teaching Employee(s)	_____
Community Representative(s)	_____

4. The principal will inform all parents/guardians in writing of the school council election at least 14 calendar days before the election date. Information will be shared on _____ (date).
5. The nomination period for parent/guardian candidates will be from _____ to _____ (dates).
6. The principal will issue an invitation to all parents/guardians to attend a candidates' forum to hear presentations. The candidates' forum will be held on _____ (date) at _____ (time) in the school.
7. Election day for parent/guardian membership on the school council is scheduled for _____ (date) from _____ (time) to _____ (time) which is within 30 calendar days of the start of the school year.
8. The election process and ballot counting will be supervised by the school principal _____ and _____ (parent/guardian).
9. Complete (a) and (b):
 - (a) The school principal, or designate, will supervise the election of teacher representative(s) to the school council. Elections will be held on _____ (date).
 - (b) The school principal, or designate, will supervise the election of non-teaching employee representative(s) to the school council. Elections will be held on _____ (date).

10. Complete (a), (b) or (c):
- (a) The secondary school principal, or designate, will supervise the appointment of student representative(s) to the school council from the student council, _____ (date of appointment); or,
 - (b) The secondary school principal, or designate, will supervise the election of student representative(s) by students registered at the school if the school does not have a student council. Elections will be held on _____ (date).
 - (c) The elementary school principal, or designate, will supervise the appointment of student representative(s) to the school council at the elementary level if the principal decides after consultation with the school council that the council should include a student _____ (yes/no) _____ (date of appointment if applicable).
11. The community representatives will be selected by the newly elected school council within thirty (30) calendar days of the first meeting. The first meeting of the school council is tentatively scheduled for _____ (date) which is within thirty-five (35) calendar days of the start of the year.

The decisions reported above were determined by the principal in co-operation with the school council election committee members. The committee was composed of the following members:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>Parent/ Guardian</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Non-teaching Employee</u>	<u>Community Representative</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

SCHOOL COUNCIL OFFICIAL BALLOT
For Parent/Guardian Representatives

_____ School Name

VOTE FOR NO MORE THAN _____ CANDIDATES ON THIS BALLOT.

Please mark an "X" in the box before the name(s) of the candidate(s) of your choice.

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

- Please note this candidate is an employee of the SCDSB but is not employed at _____
(name of school)

SCHOOL COUNCIL PARENT/GUARDIAN CANDIDATE NOMINATION FORM

_____ School Name

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Business Phone _____

I am the parent/guardian of _____ (name and date of birth) who is currently registered at this school.

I wish to declare my candidacy for an elected position as a parent/guardian representative on the school council. I understand the role and responsibilities of a member of the school council as described on the reverse side of this form.

I understand that as a school council member, my contact information including email address will be shared with school council members for the sole purpose of open and transparent communication amongst council members and that it shall not be used for any other purpose.

I understand that employees of the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) cannot run as parent/guardian representatives for school councils if they are employed at the school. If they are employed elsewhere in the board, they can run providing they inform their school community of their employment.

Candidate's Signature _____ Date _____

Received by _____ Time _____ Date _____

Nomination Form Receipt

The nomination form for parent/guardian representative on the School Council for

_____ has been received.

School

School Official

Date

SCHOOL COUNCILS – BY-LAWS**(Name of School)****All By-laws contained in this constitution must adhere to
School Council Policy A4310; APM A7200; APM A7630 and Regulation 612****Article 1 – Mandate**

As per Regulation 612, our school council will work together in an advisory role to engage community partners for the improvement of student achievement and well-being, while promoting a caring, safe and nurturing learning environment.

Article 2 – Objectives and Goals

Our goals reflect the *Simcoe County District School Board Strategic Priorities*.

Article 3 – (School Name) Mission Statement

We will work to increase parent/guardian involvement in our school to help our students achieve their fullest potential academically, socially and emotionally.

Article 4 – Membership

Parents/guardians of a student enrolled at our school are eligible to run as parent/guardian representatives on school council. Parents/guardians will comprise the majority of our council membership. Refer to APM A7200, section 2, for eligibility details and exceptions.

The maximum number of voting positions on our school council will be 17. Voting members include: parent/guardian representatives, a teaching representative, a non-teaching representative, student representative(s) and a community representative.

The school principal is a non-voting council member.

From the elected membership the committee will determine a chair, vice-chair, and a recording secretary.

Article 5 – Voting/Decision-making Procedures

All decisions and recommendations made to school administration will be the result of a vote by voting members of council on a motion presented by a member of council. Refer to APM A7200, section 6.

In the absence of quorum (a majority of voting members) no motions may be considered or approved. The council may continue the meeting for purposes of discussion of issues.

Each member of the council will have one vote on every motion and a motion is approved if a majority of the council members present at the meeting vote in favour of the motion.

Refer to *Ministry of Education, School Councils: A Guide for Members*, section 8.9, for additional information.

Article 6 – Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for school council members are defined in APM A7200, APPENDIX A, as per Policy 4310 - School Council.

Council members participate in council meetings and act as a link between the school council and the community. Council members shall act in accordance with *school and board Code of Conduct* and shall abide by board policies and procedures.

Council members are to maintain a school-wide focus on all issues. School council meetings are not a forum for discussion about individual parents/guardians, students, staff, trustees or other council members.

Refer to APM A7200, APPENDIX A, for additional information.

Article 7 – Term of Office

A person elected, or appointed as a member of school council holds office for the current school year. A member may be re-elected for a maximum of three consecutive years to any executive position. A person may continue for a fourth year in an executive position if no other member of council is willing to assume the role.

Term of Office by-law may be exempt if, after an election, council meetings cannot proceed due to lack of quorum. Refer to Regulation 612.

Article 8 – Election Procedures and Vacancies

Election procedures will follow those outlined in APM A7200, sections 1 and 2, under the supervision of the school principal.

Article 9 – Operating Procedures

School council will meet on the first Monday of each month in the school library from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. No meetings will be held during December and March.

Agenda items must be approved by the chair and the principal. All agenda items are due to the chair no later than the 25th of the month prior to the school council meeting.

The school council secretary will be responsible for recording the minutes of every meeting and providing the minutes to the chair no later than the 25th of the month prior to the school council meeting.

If time does not permit completion of the agenda, item(s) may be moved to the following meeting.

Refer to APM A7200, section 6, for additional information.

Article 10 – Conflict of Interest

Any time school council does business with the potential for monetary gain/loss with any person, agency, or company, and a member of the school 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 resolution pertaining to the matter.

Article 11 – Conflict Resolution Procedures

All members of council will, in accordance with *School and Board Codes of Conduct*, demonstrate respect for members of council, staff and guests, in attendance at council meetings.

Should a dispute arise, members of council and the principal will make every effort to resolve the dispute by following APM A7200, section 8.

Article 12 – Code of Conduct

School council recognizes that all members of the school community have the right to be safe and to feel safe in their school community. With this right comes the responsibility to contribute to a positive school climate. Expectations for behaviour are outlined in APM A7630 - Code of Conduct.

Article 13 – Amendments to the By-laws.

All amendments must adhere with Regulation 612, Policy 4310 - School Councils, APM A7200 and APM A7630.

Article 14 - Administrative Requirements

School council must record and maintain records of all financial transactions, council meeting minutes, and prepare an annual year-end report each June. These documents will be maintained in the school office in the *School Council Continuity Binder*. These documents will be made available to any member of the school community upon request.