

# Credit Meadows Elementary School

## School Council By-Laws

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Credit Meadows  
Elementary School

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### **Mission Statement**

*The CMES school council is an active partner that supports and encourages all members of the school community and promotes the inclusion of parents and their area of expertise. The school council is committed to helping create a well balanced approach to academics, arts and athletics and seeks insight from the school community to further enrich the students' experience that will lead to them developing skills to become proud contributors to the community.*

The name of the council will be named **Credit Meadows School Council**, to be referred to as Council.

Council shall operate in accordance with the **Education Act, Ontario Regulation 612-00 – School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees**, and **Upper Grand District School Board policy #201 – School Councils**, and under the protection of these by-laws.

Council is a non-profit organization and shall operate without financial gain for itself or its members.

These by-laws can be found in the school office as well as on the schools website within the School Council's page.

### **PURPOSE**

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- To improve student achievement and enhance the accountability of the education systems to parents, through active parent participation;
- To place the overall interests of the school and the students first;
- To work co-operatively with school administration, teaching staff, and the parent community and make recommendations in accordance with the regulations above;
- To encourage the parent community to actively participate within Council;
- Council will organize parent/community volunteer activities in support of the school and promote a safe and enjoyable learning environment;
- To gather parent volunteers to provide the opportunity to come together and share;
- Council will work together to improve their financial resources to provide items that may not be funded by the school budget, in support of the overall education experience of the students.

### **BY-LAW REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS**

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- These by-laws will be provided to Council members at the first meeting of the school year;

- These by-laws may be amended at any school council meeting by a majority (50% +1) vote of the Council, providing the majority of council is in attendance. Any proposed amendments are to be circulated in writing and/or electronically to council members no less than 14 days prior to the meeting;
- These by-laws will be reviewed and revised as necessary every three (3) years.

## COMPOSITION OF COUNCIL

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School Council shall be composed of the following people:

- The number of parent members as specified under Parent Members;
- The Principal or Vice-Principal;
- One teacher who is employed at the school, other than the principal or vice-principal ( Teacher Representative);
- May include, one person who employed at the school, other than the principal, vice-principal, or any other teacher ( Non-Teaching Staff );
- May include, one student council representative;
- May include, one community member who doesn't have a student in the school, but lives in the community, as appointed by council (Community Member).

## MEMBERSHIP

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Membership in School Council shall be open to any parent/guardian of a student registered in the school. The minimum attendance requirement for the Executive and Parent members is seven (7) meetings. The number of voting parent members, including executive, will not be less than five (5) or more than twenty one (21), and if possible must form the majority of members of the school council. This is to be reviewed and revised as necessary.

There are three (3) types of membership:

**1) Executive Member** – all members have the right to hold a position within the executive. The executive consists of: Chair, Co-Chair (may include), Secretary and Treasurer. Board employees may not serve as the chair or co-chair of Council. Executive members must also be voting parent members.

-The executive members shall be voted in by secret ballot by all voting and general parent members in attendance. The outcome will be determined by a majority (50% + 1) vote,

**2) Voting Parent Member** – all voting parent members are welcome to attend meetings and have the right to share their ideas and discussion. Voting parent members make up the

remaining School council members. Voting parent members have voting rights as long as they meet the minimum attendance criteria.

- If a decision cannot be reached by consensus on the voting parent members, the membership will determine the outcome by holding a secret ballot vote (Majority 50%+1)

**3) General Parent Member** – all general parent members are welcome to attend meetings and have the right to share their ideas and participate in discussion. However to avoid sweeping directional changes that may not be in the best interest of Ministry Guidelines, Board Policy or Administration, general parent members are only able to provide input and feedback to the Council but will not be able to vote officially if required. General parent members can vote on executive member positions without having to meet the minimum attendance criteria.

## **PARENT MEMBERS**

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If a person is a full-time or part time employee of the school he/she must declare their role within the school to the other members. They would be permitted to be member with the understanding that they will have to abstain from votes with a conflicting nature. If a person is an employee of the Board which governs the Council he/she must declare to the parents (voters) their employment role.

## **NOMINATIONS**

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- On the first day of school a nomination form will be sent home;
- Council may establish an election committee to plan, gather nominations and run the election;
- Nominations may be sponsored or self nominated. Sponsored nominations must be accepted by the nominee;
- All nominations are to be made in writing using the Self-Nomination Form and will receive a Receipt of Nomination Form;
- Executive nominated positions that are not contested, are acclaimed;
- All nominees shall provide a profile of them self to be made available to electorate and be willing to speak about why they would like to hold the position nominated for;
- Nominees must be a parent/guardian of a student currently enrolled at the school;
- A deadline will be set for submission of nominations;
- A nomination ceremony will be held which may or may not be followed by a council meeting;
- At any point within the school year a parent may join the school council, however in order to vote they must meet the eligibility criteria;
- Elections shall occur within 30 days of the start of school, each school year;

- The principal shall count ballots (with witness present), notify candidates of results and keep all results and related information confidential;
- The principal shall inform the nominees before the school community of the outcome of the vote, with the votes kept on file in the event of a vacancy on the council occurs.

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#### **ELECTION PROCEDURES for EXECUTIVE and PARENT MEMBERS**

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- A person is qualified to be an executive if he/she is a parent/guardian of a student currently enrolled in the school;
- A person is qualified to be a voting parent member if he/she is a parent/guardian of a student currently enrolled in the school;
- A person is qualified to vote in an election of executive or voting parent member to Council if he/she is a parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school;
- An elected member shall serve a term of one (1) school year, starting at the first meeting of the current school year;
- An election of voting parent members to school council shall be held on or before the first meeting of the school year, on a date set by the chair or co-chair of the Council. Voting parent members not able to attend the first meeting may be elected on the second meeting as set by the chair or co-chair;
- The chair holds his/her position until the chair for the next school year has been elected, with the chair attending the first meeting of the next Council;
- The principal of the school shall, at least 14 days prior to the date set for election, give written notice of the date, time and location of the election to every parent of a student, enrolled in the school on the date the notice is given. This notice can be delivered to the parent by way of their child, posted in the school in a location that is accessible to parents or electronically;
- Parents/Guardians will be elected by secret ballot and are to be made in person at the school during pre-set hours for voting;
- Each parent/Guardian is entitled to 1 vote;
- The school council will collaborate with the principal to ensure the names of the new members of council are communicated to the school community within 30 days of the election;
- Parents/Guardians may be acclaimed to a position on Council;
- At the first meeting of the year, the new school council shall set dates, times and location(s) for the meetings throughout the year.

## **ELECTION PROCEDURES for ALL OTHER MEMBERS of SCHOOL COUNCIL**

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The election of all other members of council shall be held within the first 30 days of school.

The Principal shall hold an election to determine the teacher representative. A person is qualified to vote in an election for the teacher representative if he/she is a teacher, other than the Principal or Vice-Principal, who is employed at the school.

The Principal may solicit, and hold if necessary, an election to determine the "non-staff" member. If there is a need for an election, a person is qualified to vote in an election for the non-teaching staff person if he/she is a person or any other teacher who is employed at the school, other than the Principal or Vice-Principal.

Board employees cannot be appointed as community representatives if they are employed at the school. They may be appointed as a community representative in a school where they are not employed with the understanding they are to declare to the Council their employment within the Board.

## **TERM of OFFICE**

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- A person elected or appointed as a member of school council holds office upon election until the next Council elections;
- A member of a school council may be re-elected or re-appointed;

## **VACANCIES**

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- A vacancy within the executive of Council shall be filled by election or appointment at the earliest possible meeting, preferably the meeting following the vacancy. Existing non-elected parent members will have the first opportunity to submit their name for consideration for the vacant position. If the position cannot be filled, the nominations will be opened up to the general parent members ;
- A vacancy within the parent members shall be filled if the quota for a quorum is not met. When the vacancy is filled, the new members term shall expire at the time of the next election;
- The school community shall be informed that the vacancy had been filled and by whom;
- A vacancy in the membership of the Council does not prevent the Council from exercising its authority.

## **MEETINGS AND QUORUM**

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- A quorum of Council shall be five (5) members of Council with a majority of voting parent members present, including at least one member of the executive and

teacher representative and/or principal. If the quorum is not met, meetings can be held but no voting can take place;

- There shall be no less than seven (7) meetings during the school year;
- The Council shall meet either on the date of the election or within the first 30 days of the school year;
- All meetings of the Council shall be open to the public;
- The Council meetings shall be held at Credit Meadows Elementary School on the day and time as set by the council;
- The Principal shall, on behalf of the Council, give written notice of the dates, times and locations of the meetings of the Council to every parent of a currently enrolled student. The notice may be given by:
  - Providing a notice to the student for delivery to the parent(s) and/or
  - Provide a notice electronically and/or
  - Posting a notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parents;
- A meeting of the Council cannot be held unless:
  - A majority of the current members of the council are present at the meeting and
  - A majority if the members of the Council who are present at the meeting are parent members.

#### **VOTING / DECISION MAKING**

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- Decisions are made through voting. A motion must be made and seconded to go to a vote. The decision/result with the majority ( 50% +1 ) of votes will pass;
- A majority of parent members must be present;
- Principal, Vice-Principal, Teacher Representative and the Non-Staff members are not entitled to vote in votes taken by the school council or by a committee of school council.

#### **SUB-COMMITTEES**

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- The Council may establish committees to make recommendations, and perform tasks for the council;
- Sub-Committees must be headed by a voting parent member of Council. Participation in sub-committees is not restricted to members of the Council.
- The committees may include persons who are not members of the council;
- Every committee shall report to Council as requested by Council;

The following sub-committees, but not limited to, may be formed annually:

- Executive Committee
  - Prepare for meetings, Future Planning, etc.



- Food Days Committee
- Special Events Committee
  - Walk to school day, Meet the teacher, Christmas Fair, Family Game Night, etc.
- Fundraising Committee
  - Foundation fundraising, Food days, etc.

## **FINANCIAL POLICY**

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- No amount exceeding the limit of twenty five (25) dollars shall be spent without the prior consent of voting parent members, and any expenditure shall be discussed with voting parent members. Any amount spent under twenty five (25) dollars shall be declared to all Council members and included on the financial statement;
- Treasurer may spend funds for bank related items such as cheques, bank fees etc without prior approval from Council.

## **MINUTES and FINANCIAL RECORDS**

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- Council shall keep minutes of all its meetings and records of all its financial transactions;
- Minutes and all financial records shall be passed on to the new school council representatives on or before the first meeting;
- The minutes and records shall be made available at the school upon request for examination, without charge, by any person;
- Having the minutes and records made available does not apply to any records more than four (4) years old;
- Council shall submit an annual written financial report on its activities to the principal of the school and to the Upper Grand District School board;
- The annual report shall include a financial to the end of the fiscal year ( August 30) and a report on the fundraising activities;
- The annual report will be made available to every parent of a student, enrolled in the school, upon request.

## **REMUNERATION**

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- A person shall not receive any remuneration for serving as an executive member or parent member of school council;
- Members of school council shall be reimbursed for any out of pocket expenses they may incur on behalf of the school council in accordance with policies established by the UGDSB.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

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- A conflict of interest must be declared;
- Any parent council member who has a material interest in any matter brought before the council shall refrain from voting on the matter. The parent member shall not participate in the discussion. The member may be asked to excuse themselves from the room during the discussion.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

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- The council supports the majority model for reaching important decisions;
- Every school council member will be given an opportunity to express his/her concern or opinion about the issue at dispute and how the dispute has affected him/her;
- Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times. Speakers will be able to speak without interruption;
- The chairs responsibility is to clarify the statements made by all speakers, to identify common ground among the points of view raised 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 registered members before proceeding further. A vote could be called at this point;
- 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.

## **INTERNAL SCHOOL COUNCIL DISPUTES**

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- Internal school council disputes shall be resolved in accordance with the applicable policies established by the Upper Grand District School Board.

## **ROLES**

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**Chair** (must be a parent member of school council and have attended at least 6 meetings before being elected chair)

- Prepare agenda in consultation with principal and council members;
- Chair school council meetings;
- Lead and/or assist sub-committee chairs with projects and documentation;
- Oversee and lead council initiatives and activities;
- Responsible for volunteer recruitment and parent/guardian communication;

- Responsible for overseeing executive and ultimately responsible to assume roles that are not filled on the executive;
- Attend and participate in information and train programs and consult with board staff and trustees as required.

**Co-Chair** (must be a parent member of school council)

- Assume duties of the chair in his/her absence;
- Assist chair in executing responsibilities.

**Secretary** (must be a parent member of school council)

- Record minutes at the school council meetings and distribute to council members;
- Assist with development and execution of all council correspondence;
- Place master copy of all council minutes in school council binder;
- Arrange for an executive member to record minutes in his/her absence at a meeting;
- Assist with web communication and updates.

**Treasurer** (must be a parent member of school council)

- Prepare a preliminary budget with executive for the earliest council meeting possible;
- Responsible for providing "revenue" project results to council and executive;
- Responsible for monthly presentations outlining income and expenses;
- Responsible for collecting, counting and depositing all money made through fundraising;
- Place a master copy of all financial reports in the school council binder;
- Responsible for paying all bills/invoices related to council expenses and balance the bank statement;
- The signing officers shall be any one of the following: Principal, and one of three of the following: Treasurer, Chair & Co-Chair.

**Parent Member**

- Maximum of twenty one (21) members;
- Required to attend a minimum of 6 meetings;
- Eligible to vote if necessary;
- Encouraged to join a sub-committee;
- Volunteer time and ideas;
- Participate in school council meetings.

**General Parent Member**

- Unlimited members;
- Volunteer time and ideas;
- Non-voting member;
- Participate in school council meetings.

**Community Representative, shall:**

- Be the liaison between school and corporate, private and commercial enterprises;
- Promote communication between schools in community;
- Promote, endorse, and enhance school profile in the community;
- Support communication to teachers, parents, and other council members.

**Teacher Representative, shall:**

- Be selected by members of the teaching staff as their representative;
- Be liaison between teaching staff and school council to voice concerns and ideas as well as feedback;
- Provide input and advise school council through a teacher's perspective and encourage open communication.

The Teacher Representative shall be a designated non-voting member of school council.

**Non-Teaching Representative, shall:**

- Serve on school council to be a voice for non-teaching staff;
- Be a liaison between school council and non-teaching staff;
- Give input to school council.

The Non-Teaching Representative shall be a designated non-voting member of school council.

**Student Council Representative, shall:**

- Be selected by the students to represent them;
- Be a liaison between students and school council to voice concerns and ideas as well as feedback;
- Provide input and advise school council through a student's perspective and encourage open communication.

The Student Representative shall be a designated non-voting member of school council.

**Principal/Vice-Principal, shall:**

- Ensure that the teacher representative, non-teaching representative and student council representative positions are filled and communicated to the chair'
- Be present at all school council meetings;
- If not able to attend, he/she must arrange for the vice-principal or suitable replacement to be present;
- Provide guidance to school council on issues to be decided;
- Provide input and advise school council through an administrative perspective;
- Act as a resource to the council on laws, regulations, and Board policies;
- Work with school council to improve learning potential and environment for students and support for teaching staff;
- Maintain regular communication with the Chair;
- Provide opportunities and channels for the Chair to speak with staff and parents through communication vehicles already used by the school and community;
- Consider each recommendation made by school council and provide feedback to council about action taken;
- Solicit the views of the school council on any matter when he/she deems appropriate;
- Solicit views on matters pertaining to the establishment/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.

The Principal/Vice-Principal shall be a designated non-voting member of school council.

#### **CODE of ETHICS**

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- Each member shall consider the best interests of all students,
- Each member shall be guided by the school's and the school board's mission statement,
- Each 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 Ontario Ministry of Education,
- Each member shall become familiar with the school's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them,
- Each member shall maintain the highest standards of integrity and recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community,
- Each member shall treat other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption,
- Each member shall encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued,

- Each member shall acknowledge democratic principles and accept the decision of the council,
- Each member shall respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the school council,
- Each member shall not disclose confidential information,
- Each member shall limit discussion at school council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole,
- Each member shall use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise,
- Each member shall promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community,
- Each member shall be willing to consult with parents who are not on the executive or a voting parent member about matters they are concerned about and under consideration by the council,
- Each member shall respect and surrender to standard meeting procedures,
- Each member shall declare any conflict of interest that may arise,
- Each member shall be encouraged to actively participate in school council activities outside of council meetings,
- Each member shall not accept any payment or benefit financially through school council involvement.

CMES By-Laws were adapted from – Existing Credit Meadows By-Laws, School Councils: A Guide for Members, 2001 and Aberfoyle School Council By-Laws, 2010

## Appendix A - Upper Grand District School Board – Vision Statement

Vision Statement can be found at <http://www.ugdsb.on.ca/article.aspx?id=23157>

### **Vision Statement**

Students will attain individual excellence through dynamic programming provided by an effective staff and supported by a committed community. We will meet our students' diverse needs through the provision of equitable and accessible resources. Our learning environment will be characterized by empowered administrators, effective communication and mutual compassionate respect.

### **Guiding Principles**

We believe that:

- Student learning is our focus
- The learning process is open-ended
- Education is a community responsibility
- Embracing diversity contributes to community
- Teachers make a significant difference
- Leaders must focus on students
- Continuous professional development supports life-long learning
- A commitment to values guides activities
- A safe physical environment needs to be sustained
- A respectful learning environment fosters personal growth
- Opportunities and resources need to be equitably distributed
- Everyone should be treated with respect

# CMES School Council Parent Self-Nomination Form

## Executive and Parent Member Positions

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to declare my candidacy for an elected executive position as a parent/guardian representative on the school council.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

I am the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, who is currently registered at Credit Meadows Elementary School.

I have read the CMES School Council By-Laws

☐ Yes ☐ No

I qualify to hold an executive position as outlined in the CMES School Council By-Laws.

☐ Yes ☐ No

I am an employee of the Upper Grand District School Board.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Position: circle one

Chair      Co-Chair      Treasurer      Secretary      Parent Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidates' signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

A copy of the CMES School Council By-Laws are available in the school office.

*Please include a brief autobiography on the back of this form.*

You will be notified when your nomination is received.



## Nomination Form Receipt

The nomination form for parent/guardian as representative on the school council for

\_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_  
(parent nominee's name ) ( school name )

For the position of:

Positions available: Chair, Co-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Parent Member

has been received by: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominated Position

\_\_\_\_\_ Guarantor \_\_\_\_\_ Date

# School Council Election Ballot

Executive member ballot

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Vote for no More than 1 candidates for each position on this ballot.

Place an X in the box before the name(s) of the candidate of your choice. Note that persons whose names are marked with an asterisk are employees of the school board.

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

☐☐☐☐

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

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Position: \_\_\_\_\_

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Position: \_\_\_\_\_

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# CMES School Council

## Elected Executive Members

School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

### Chair

Nominees:	_____	# of Votes	_____
	_____	# of Votes	_____
	_____	# of Votes	_____
	_____	# of Votes	_____

### Co-Chair

Nominees:	_____	# of Votes	_____
	_____	# of Votes	_____
	_____	# of Votes	_____
	_____	# of Votes	_____

### Treasurer

Nominees:	_____	# of Votes	_____
	_____	# of Votes	_____
	_____	# of Votes	_____
	_____	# of Votes	_____

### Secretary

Nominees:	_____	# of Votes	_____
	_____	# of Votes	_____
	_____	# of Votes	_____
	_____	# of Votes	_____

# School Council Election Ballot

Parent member ballot

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: Voting parent member

Vote for no More than 21 candidates on this ballot.

Place an X in the box before the name (s) of the candidate of your choice. Note that persons whose names are marked with an asterisk are employees of the school board.

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
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CMES School Council  
Elected Parent Members

School Year: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	# of Votes
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