

## **Fred A. Hamilton School Council**

**Adopted: October 19, 2023**

**Revised:**

### **Mission Statement:**

To work as a collective group to provide open communication to the school, parents, and the community to enable and enhance our children's learning experience at **Fred A. Hamilton Public School**.

### **Name**

The name of the School Council shall be **Fred A. Hamilton Public School Council**, also called the School Council

### **Terms of Reference**

The School Council shall operate in accordance with Ontario Regulation 612100-School Councils and Upper Grand District School Board Policy #201-School Council

The School Council will operate within the parameters of the Education Act and Regulations, other relevant legislation, Board Policies and Collective Agreements. The School Council is a non-profit organization and shall operate without financial gain for itself or its members.

The School Council meets no less than four times per school year. In regular years, the School Council generally meets in September, October, November, January, February, April and May.

### **Purpose**

- The School Council will work cooperatively with the school administration, teaching staff and parent community to support student learning.
- The School Council's goal is to support and improve student achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents through their active participation.
- The School Council will place the overall interests of the school and students first.
- The School Council will work cooperatively to improve the financial resources of the school to support the Ontario curriculum and to promote a safe, enjoyable learning environment for our students.

### **By-Law Review and Amendments**

These By-Laws will be provided to School Council Members at the first meetings of the school year. These By-Laws may be amended by a majority vote of the Council. Any proposed amendments will be circulated in writing to School Council members not less than fourteen days prior to the meeting.

## **Membership & Composition**

The School Council must include:

- A maximum of 25 (minimum of 5) parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school which consists of Executive Members and Parent Members.
- One Principal of the school
- One teacher from school staff

Other members might include:

- One person who is employed at the school, other than school administrators or another teacher (i.e., Non-Teaching Staff)
- One Grade 6 student may be appointed by the school administrator
- One community member who doesn't have a student in the school but who lives in the catchment area (i.e., Community Member)

There are two types of membership in the School Council. Membership in the School Council shall be open to any parent/guardian of a student registered in the school. A person is qualified to be a parent member if they are a parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school. If a person is an employee of the school, they are not eligible to be a parent member. If a person is not an employee of the school, but of the UGDSB, they must inform parent voters of that employment.

### **Executive Members**

- Executive Members have the right to hold office and vote
- are elected to the position
- consist of: two Co-Chairs, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Lead
- the Past-Chair might also provide transition support to the incoming Co-Chair

Please see Appendix B, for roles and responsibilities of executive members.

### **Parent Members**

- Parent Members are welcome to attend meetings and share their ideas and participate in the discussion pertaining to the agenda

The School Council may, as required, establish committees to make recommendations to the School Council on specific areas of interest. Committees will report to the School Council as required.

Committees must include at least one Executive Member of the School Council. All parents and/or guardians are encouraged to attend School Council meetings and to participate on committees.

Please see Appendix B, for roles and responsibilities of School Council members.

### **Quorum**

Quorum refers to the number of persons required to hold a meeting or a vote. For meeting quorum, a minimum of five members of the School Council must be present, with a minimum of three members from the School Council Executive Committee. The remaining two individuals present could be Parent Members.

Quorum for voting purposes must include a minimum of three members of the School Council, not including the Principal or school staff.

### **Election Procedures**

A person is qualified to vote in an election of Executive Members to the School Council if they are a parent of a student enrolled in the school.

Elections and appointments will be held at the first School Council meeting of the year. This meeting will be held within 30 days of the first day of school. Information regarding the election (i.e., process, procedures, dates, time lines) will be sent to parents by the Principal during the first fourteen days of the school year. This information can be shared with parents/guardians via email in the regular school update to families, posted on the School Council page of the website and/or posted in the school in a location that is accessible to families.

Parents and guardians will make up the majority of the School Council members. If the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of positions, the candidates shall be acclaimed. Voting, if required, will be conducted by secret ballot. Parents/guardians present at the meeting will vote by secret ballot and the outcome shall be determined by majority (50% +1) of voters.

The term of office for Executive Member positions is one year.

The names of the new School Council members will be shared with the school community on the School Council webpage of the school website within thirty days of the election, as are the dates, times, and locations of future meetings.

### **Filling Vacancies**

Should an elected parent/guardian School Council position become vacant before the next election, the Co-Chairs and Principal shall fill the vacancy by appointment from the non-elected candidates from the previous election.

If none of the previous candidates remains interested in filling the vacancy, the School Council may request that interested candidates from the school community submit their names for consideration. The Co-Chairs and Principal shall then appoint one of the individuals who has indicated interest.

When a vacant position on the School Council is filled, the new member's term shall expire at the time of the next election.

The school community shall be informed that the vacancy has been filled and by whom, via regular means of communication (e.g., School Council Meeting Minutes, School Council page on the school website, etc.).

### **Conflict of Interest**

Each School Council member shall avoid situations that could result in an inconsistency between the overall goals and vision of the School Council and a personal or vested interest that arise in connection with their duties as a School Council member. Should an issue or agenda item arise during a School Council meeting where a School Council member is in a conflict of interest situation, they shall declare a conflict of interest immediately and decline from the discussion and resolution.

### **Conflict Resolution Process**

The School Council supports the consensus model for reaching important decisions. Consensus is a form of group decision making based on the willingness to consent and support, rather than having a winning and losing side by voting. Consensus is reached when all members of the School Council are willing to accept and support an idea or concept as the best choice for students. It allows ownership of ideas by all School Council members.

Every Executive School Council member shall be given an opportunity to express their opinion about the issue at dispute. Parent members shall also be provided with the opportunity to express their opinion.

Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.

The Co-Chair's 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 Co-Chairs will seek to clarify the preferences among all registered members prior to proceeding. A vote could be called at this point. Each Executive School Council member and General Parent member present at the meeting shall have one vote in votes taken by the School Council or in committees of the School Council. The Principal is not entitled to vote in votes taken by the School Council or a School Council Committee.

If all attempts to resolve the conflict have been exhausted without success, the Co-Chair shall request the intervention of a Superintendent or other senior administrator, via the Principal, to facilitate a resolution to the conflict.

**Fundraising**

All Fundraising activities of the School Council will be conducted in accordance with Board Policy #102. "School generated Funds – Fundraising and Accounting".

All funds raised by the School Council will be used in accordance with Board Policy.

Fundraising revenues will be used for the benefit of all students.

## **Appendix**

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the School Council members**

#### **Co-Chair**

- Work with Principal and School Council Executive Member to plan and set agenda for meetings
- Chair School Council meetings
- Identify fundraising opportunities
- Oversee School Council initiatives and activities
- Manage School Council email communication and lists, including advertising School Council event
- Promote volunteer recruitment
- Plan, organize and facilitate events that encourage community involvement as time permits

#### **Secretary**

- Record minutes at School Council meetings, circulate the minutes for review and share with Principal to post on the School Council webpage of the school website
- Ensure a copy of all School Council correspondence, meeting agendas, meeting minutes, etc. is added to the FAH School Council Shared Drive
- Contribute to discussion and decision-making at each meeting
- Participate at School Council events, as time permits

#### **Treasurer**

- Collaborate with Office Coordinator to manage School Council finances, including bill payment and invoicing
- Prepare a preliminary budget for the school year in consultation with School Council Executive members and the school Principal
- Provide a financial report to the School Council at each meeting
- Prepare an annual financial report in early June to share with the school Principal, school community and the board
- Collect and count money raised at Council initiatives which will be deposited by the Office Coordinator on the next school day following the event
- Prepare/organize that a float is available for school events
- Contribute to discussion and decision-making at each meeting
- Participate at Council events, as time permits

#### **Communications Lead**

- With the support of, and In consultation with, the school Principal, update the school website
- Confirm event dates with the Principal and Office Coordinator. The Office Coordinator will add the dates to the school calendar.

- Prepare the School Council communications, invitations, flyers and share the with school Principal and School Council Co-Chairs
- Support the virtual meeting by admitting guests, sharing the slideshow, adding a brief overview in the chat and posting questions to the group from the chat
- Contribute to discussion and decision-making at each meeting
- Participate at Council events, as time permits

#### **Past-Chair**

- Filled by the outgoing co-chair
- Assist with transition of incoming co-Chair
- Provide guidance to current Co-Chairs as requested
- Provide insight regarding previous decisions

#### **General Parent Member**

- participate in School Council meetings
- volunteer time to support School Council activities and events