**MONTGOMERY VILLAGE PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**School Council By-laws and Constitution**

Version III

Approved \*

By-law Committee Membership
2018-2019

By-law Committee Members:

 Krystie Park

2018-2019 By-laws reviewed by:

 Krystie Park

 Stephany St. Luis

**STATEMENT OF ACCEPTANCE:**

The by-laws of the MVPS Council have been presented and passed by Council majority on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 2019, in the Town of Orangeville. The by-laws shall come into effect immediately.

**Signed and Accepted hereto by:**

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# Introduction

Welcome to the Montgomery Village Public School school council.

Our goal is to promote the involvement of parents/guardians in the education of our children. School Council intends to provide the support needed to achieve these ends by fostering a strong base for open communication between students, staff, parents/guardians and the community of MVPS.

The Council shall operate in accordance with the *Ontario Regulation 612-00 – School Councils*, and the *Upper Grand District School Board Policy #201 – School Councils*, and under the auspices of these by‑laws. The Council is operated under the general guidelines of the Ontario Ministry of Education, *School Councils: A Guide for* Members Handbook. The Council is a non-profit organization and shall operate without financial gain for itself or its members.

# Definitions

In these by-laws, including the premises hereto and this section, unless the context otherwise requires, the following terms shall have the following respective meanings:

“**Council**” means Montgomery Village Public School school council.

“**Fiscal Year**” for the purpose of these by-laws shall mean the school year and shall roll over after the Fiscal Year End.

“**Fiscal Year End**” shall be August 31 of each and every year.

“**Member**” means any or all of the four (4) Parent Officers, Parent Members, Principal and/or Vice-Principal, Teaching Representative, Community Representative, Non-Teaching Representative, and Student Representative

“**MVPS**” means Montgomery Village Public School.

“**Parent Member**” means any parent attending any Council meeting.

“**Parent Officers**” consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

“**Sub-Committee**” means a committee composed of some members of the Council for the purpose of addressing special projects (e.g. events).

“**UGDSB**” means Upper Grand District School Board

“**Voting Member**” means any Member who has attended 3 of the past 6 consecutive meetings, up to and including the meeting at which the vote is taking place, who is eligible to cast a vote in the event that consensus cannot be reached among the Council.

# Purpose

The purpose of the Council is to work co-operatively with the school administration, teaching staff, and parent community to improve student learning. The purpose of the Council is to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents through the active participation of parents/guardians. The Council will organize parent/community volunteer activities in support of the school and promote a safe, enjoyable learning environment for our students. The Council will work together to improve the financial resources of our school to support the Ontario Curriculum.

# Code Of Ethics

All Members of the Council must abide by the following:

* A Member shall consider the best interests of all students.
* A Member shall be guided by the school’s and the board’s mission statements.
* A 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.
* A Member shall become familiar with the school’s policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.
* A Member shall recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.
* A Member shall treat other Members with respect and allow diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.
* A Member shall encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
* A Member shall acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the Council.
* A Member shall respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the Council.
* A Member shall not disclose confidential information.
* A Member shall limit discussions at Council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.
* A Member shall use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise.
* A Member shall promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community.
* A Member shall declare any conflict of interest.
* A Member shall not accept any payment or benefit financially through school council involvement.

Failure to comply with the Code of Ethics can result in a Member to be removed from the Council. Code of Ethics was adapted from *School Councils: A Guide for Members, 2001*

# By-law review and amendments

These by-laws will be available to Council at the first meeting of the school year. By-laws are to be reviewed and amended, where necessary, every 3 years or at an earlier time if necessary and at the discretion of School Council. These By-laws may be amended by majority (2/3) vote of the Council. Notice of proposed by-law changes must be circulated with the notice of meeting at least twenty one (21) days in advance to the meeting.

# Composition Of Council

School Council shall be composed of the following:

1. A minimum of five Parent Officers
2. Parent Members as defined in Article 2.
3. The Principal or Vice-Principal (Non-Voting)
4. One teacher who is employed at the school, other than the Principal or Vice-Principal (Teacher Representative – Non-Voting)
5. One person who is employed at the school, other than the Principal, the Vice-Principal or any other teacher. (Non-Teaching Staff – Non-Voting)
6. One student may be appointed by the Principal
7. One community member who doesn’t have a student in the school but lives in the catchment area. (Community Member – Non-Voting)

# Parent Officers PrerequisiTES, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Any candidate (parent/guardian) seeking election for a position of Parent Officer must:

1. Have a child registered at MVPS;
2. Must not be employed at MVPS (as per *Ontario Regulation 612/00, Section 1(a))*
3. Have attended at least three (3) prior Council meetings in the previous school year
4. After being elected, Parent Officers must attend a minimum of six (6) Council meetings for the school year which that Parent Officer is acting

***Chair***

* Prepare meeting agendas in consultation with the Principal or designate
* Facilitate and lead Council meetings
* Contribute to and maintain a positive climate within the school council and between the school council and the school and local community at large
* Consult regularly with the principal
* Assist with and provide leadership to school council events and initiatives
* Consult with and assist Sub Committee chairs with projects as needed
* Attend and participate in school council training and information programs offered by the school board
* Participate in joint council associations where available
* Complete an annual report to the school community and any other documentation required by the school board

***Vice-Chair***

* Assumes duties of the Chair in his/her absence
* Assist Chair in executing responsibilities
* Takes part in sub-committess as required

***Secretary***

* Collect and maintain attendance for school council meetings
* Record minutes for all school council meetings or appoint a designate in their absence
* Distribute draft copies of all minutes to council members for approval and correct where necessary
* Ensure that copies of all approved minutes are provided to the school principal and filed in the school council binder
* Collaborate with the chair and principal to provide information for the school newsletter
* Collect and maintain an email list of council members, and distribute emails to the list for approved council matters including volunteer requests, email votes etc. as required
* Assist in the preparation of any written communication and offer final approval for any written communication distributed to the school community
* Assist other executive members in preparing annual reports
* Takes part in sub-committess as required

***Treasurer***

* Maintain an accurate, ongoing summary of current council funds in addition to the bank records kept by the school administrative staff
* Prepare and present a written monthly financial report at School Council meetings which highlights the month’s debits and credits and current bank balance
* Communicate regularly with school administrative staff to ensure that banking information is accurate and up to date
* Receive all receipts or invoices for reimbursement from council members and ensure that they meet the requirements outlined in the Financial Policies for reimbursement
* Collect a financial summary of income and expenses for each event or initiative sponsored by school council, from the council member responsible for that particular event and share those results as part of their monthly report
* Collect, count and deposit all monies collected by council
* Prepare an annual financial report for the school community
* Takes part in sub-committess as required

***Member-at-Large***

* Assists in Council duties as reqired
* Takes part in sub-committess as required

# Other Council Titles and Responsibilities

***Member***

* Unlimited Members permitted
* Participate (generate and share ideas) in Council meetings
* Volunteer time

***Community Representative***

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

***Teacher Representative***

* Be elected by members of the teaching staff as their representative.
* Be a liaison between teaching staff and school council to voice concerns and ideas as well as to provide feedback

***Non-Teaching Representative***

* Serve on Council and be a voice for non-teaching staff
* Be a liaison between school council and non-teaching staff

***Student Representative***

* Be selected by the principal or vice-principal as their representative
* 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

***Principal/Vice-Principal***

* Ensure that the Teacher Representative, Non-Teaching Representative and Student Representative positions are filled by the first meeting in September for the new school year and communicated to the Chair
* Be present at all school council meetings or arrange for a representative
* Provide guidance to school council on issues to be decided
* Act as a resource to the council by-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 through scheduled monthly meetings
* Provide opportunities and channels for the Chair to speak with Staff and Parents.
* Consider each recommendation made by the Council and provide feedback to the Council about action taken
* Solicit the views of the 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

# Election Procedures

This by-law sets forth the conditions for the Council nominations, elections and subsequent presentation of successful candidates to the Council.

1. The Parent Officers shall be elected each year at the first meeting in September. This meeting must be held within the first thirty days of the new school year, but no sooner than 16 days.
2. The Executive members shall serve a term of a minimum one year.
3. The Principal and Chair must indicate in writing to the entire school community that elections are being held a minimum of three (3) months before the date of the election. The Principal and Chair must inform the entire school community that parents are welcome to volunteer or be nominated to fill positions. The entire school community must be informed of prerequisites, roles and responsibilities of each Parent Officer role being filled.
4. If vacancies are not filled at the beginning of the school year, the Principal and Chair shall indicate in writing to the entire school community that there are vacancies and that parents are welcome to volunteer or can be nominated to fill positions. Parents/guardians may be acclaimed to a position on Council.
5. If there is only a single candidate for any position for Parent Officer, that candidate shall be acclaimed to the position and an election is not required.
6. Proxy voting will not be permitted at elections. Voting must be done in person. No phone or other source of communication will be permitted for voting. Any person in attendance at the voting meeting is eligible to vote.
7. Under UGDSB regulations, campaigning is not permitted for Parent Officer positions.
8. Members shall be nominated for each Parent Officer position. Voting shall be done by a raise of hands.

# Meetings and Quorum

A quorum of Council shall be a minimum of five members of Council, including two Parent Officers. Meetings cannot be held unless a quorum is present. In the case where quorum is not met, motions and decisions will be deferred until quorum may be met. In certain situations where members cannot be present, an online, facetime or video conference call may be permitted. There shall be no less than eight (8) council meetings during the school year.

# Sub-Committees

If warranted, a Sub-Committee may be formed to address special projects (for example, a school event). A minimum of one Parent Officer must sit on every Sub-Committee.

Sub-Committees are required to update the Council regularly at Council meetings. Failure to do so can result in the dissolution of the Sub-Committee.

# Filling Vacancies

Should an elected Parent Officer position become vacant before the next election, the Chair 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 Council may request that interested Voting Members submit their names for consideration. The Chair and Principal shall then appoint one of those who indicate an interest. When a vacant position on the Council is filled, the new Officer’s term shall expire at the time of the next election. The school community will be informed that the vacancy has been filled and by whom.

# Termination of Parent Officer

A Parent Officer shall be terminated if the Member is proven to:

1. Have mismanaged or misappropriated funds controlled by the Council; and/or
2. Publicly misrepresented themselves or damaged the integrity of the Council.

# Conflict of Interest

Each Member shall avoid situations that could result in an inconsistency between the overall goals and vision of the Council and a personal or vested interest.

Should an issue or agenda item arise during a council meeting where a Member is in a conflict of interest situation, he/she shall declare their conflict immediately and excuse themselves from attendance during discussion and voting on said matter. The minutes of the meeting shall record the declared conflict.

Whenever the Council is conducting business, or is considering conducting business, with a Member of the Council (including the Member’s relatives, or the Member’s employer or business enterprise), the Member shall declare the conflict of interest and shall excuse themselves from attendance during discussion and voting on said matter. The minutes of the meeting shall record the declared conflict.

The Chair of the meeting may, with just cause, direct a Member to declare a conflict of interest.

# Conflict Resolution

The council will strive to make decisions through group discussion and consensus. All present are entitled to listen and speak freely and to have their input considered. When matters are deemed to be weightier or when a clear group consensus does not exist, a formal vote will be taken. In order to ensure that Council votes are made with due consideration and context, formal votes will be restricted to Voting Members. In the event that an even number of Voting Members are present, and if there appears to be a full divide of Council for a voting topic, the Chair can request that one Parent Officer refrain from voting to ensure that there will be no tie in votes. This request must be made prior to the initial vote. Should a vote occur and come to a tie, the topic shall be postponed and voted on at the following Council meeting.

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.

# Financial Policies

***Approval of Funds***

1. All expenditures must be discussed and pre-approved at school council meetings.
2. In the event that it would be detrimental to postpone an expenditure until after the next meeting, and the expense is less than $100.00, a vote may be held via email amongst the Parent Officers. This may be done no more than twice (2) in any given school year. The results of the vote and the approval of funds must be entered into the minutes of the following meeting.
3. In the event that it would be detrimental to postpone an expenditure until after the next meeting, and the expense is more than $100.00, a vote may be held via email amongst all active parent members, providing at least 24 hours for response. The results of the vote and the approval of funds must be entered into the minutes of the following meeting.
4. If Council requires a float for any activities, a cheque request must be brought forward to MVPS’ office. Upon approval, a cheque is to be made out to the Member whom submitted the cheque request. It is the responsibility of such Member to deposit the cheque with their banking institution and withdraw the funds for the event.

***Reimbursement of Funds***

1. Council Members will be reimbursed for approved monies spent on behalf of the Council provided that:
	1. Funds were pre-approved.
	2. An original receipt or invoice is presented dated on or after the date of approval.
	3. No other items are on the receipt presented.
	4. The appropriate “School Banking – Request for Cheque” form is completed and attached. Failure to meet the above requirements may result in funds not being reimbursed.
2. Council members may request reimbursement for more than one receipt at the same time provided all receipts submitted meet the above criteria and are all pertaining to the same school council event or initiative. Receipts from different events or from different types of expenditures may not be reimbursed together in a lump sum and must be handled in separate cheques to avoid confusion in accounting or reporting.
3. All requests for reimbursement must be signed by the Treasurer and one other Parent Officer of Council before being submitted to school administrative staff. In the event that the request for reimbursement is being made by the Treasurer her/himself, then two other Parent Officers are required.
4. Receipts are to be submitted to MVPS Administrative staff. The MVPS Admiinistrative Staff is then required to ask the Treasurer or Chair if the expense has been approved. Upon confirmation, the exmpese may be reimbursed.

***Handling of Funds***

* 1. All funds-related handling (including deposits, withdrawals, counting after an event, etc.) is to be completed in the presence of a minimum of two (2) Members.
	2. All financial deposits for a given school council event or initiative must be handled separately from monies for other events or initiatives.
		+ Each event must have its own Financial Summary Form filled out and each form gets entered into the financial records individually for accurate reporting on each event.
	3. All monies collected by the Council are to remain on school premises and be locked securely in the school safe after being counted. A second Council Member or an administrative staff member must be present to assist the Treasurer with counting monies and to double check balances for accuracy.
	4. Council Members who are in charge of an event that involves money are obligated to keep accurate paper records of all expenses and incomes using the Financial Summary Form provided and to provide this form to the Treasurer upon completion of the event. It is also their responsibility to ensure that all expenses related to that event are appropriate and fall within the approved budget.
	5. For any Council fundraising event that involves items being ordered, a paper copy for every order must exist and be stored in the school office for staff or council members to access it.

***Carry-Over Policies***

1. $5,000.00 must be withheld at all times in the Council funds for playground maintenance repairs.
2. All monies to be carried over from one Fiscal Year to the next must have UGDSB approval. Failure to do so can risk Council funds being absorbed into MVPS budget and, therefore, being used for school-related costs that are not handled by the Council.

# Minutes and Financial Records

The Chair shall keep a copy of all Council minutes and Treasurer records of all its financial transactions in a master binder or similar fashion. Minutes of the meetings of the Council shall be kept for four years. Financial records for the operations of the Council must be retained for a minimum of seven years.