

# Palmerston School Council By-laws

## Mandate

School Council serves as an advisory body and may make recommendations to the School Principal and the Board on any matter concerning the education of the children attending Palmerston Public School.

School Council shall not be entitled to make recommendations that deal with personnel matters and collective agreements, the security of property, the acquisition and disposal of a school site, negotiations or litigation affecting the Board, and matters involving an individual student.

## Executive

The role of the School Council Executive is to reflect the views of the School Council as a whole, to fulfill School Council's mandate and to act in the best interests of all students.

The Executive members shall:

- A. Discuss with, and advise, the Principal on school policies;
- B. Take actions and make decisions in the interest of the students and the school;
- C. Attend and participate in the meetings of the School Council;
- D. Encourage the participation of all parents, and other members of the school community, in activities at the school and in the greater community that will further the education of the students.
- E. Facilitate reaching consensus in decision making;
- F. Consult with parents, staff and community on substantive matters before School Council; and
- G. Advocate for the school, staff, parents and community by making necessary requests of the Board and the Ministry.

## Composition

- A. The number of members of the Executive of School Council will be a minimum of four and a maximum of twelve;
- B. School Council Executive shall include a Chair, Co-Chair/Vice Chair, Secretary and a Treasurer. These members of the School Council shall be parents of children attending school.
- C. A Board employee cannot be appointed as representative on the Executive unless he/she is not employed at the school, and the members of School Council are informed about his/her employment before the appointment; and
- D. A Board trustee cannot be a member of School Council.

## Officers

The elected and/or appointed members of School Council make up the School Council Executive.

### The Chair

The chair is a voting member who, in addition to performing the same duties as other council members, shall:

- Arrange for meetings;
- Prepare agendas;
- Chair council meetings;
- Ensure that minutes of council meetings are recorded and maintained;

- Facilitate the resolution of conflict;
- Participate as ex-officio members of all committees established by the school council;
- Communicate with the school principal on behalf of the council.
- Maintain a file of all correspondence, minutes, by-laws and reports.
- Ensure all financial records are maintained appropriately.

#### Vice Chair/Co-Chair

The vice chair/co-chair is a voting member who will assist the Chair in carrying out his/her responsibilities. In the event the Chair is unable to fulfill any of his/her responsibilities, the Co-Chair shall act as the Chair's designate.

#### Secretary

The secretary is a voting member who, in addition to performing the same duties as other council members, shall:

- Attend meetings
- Prepare and distribute meeting minutes
- Prepare action lists and distribute to the council
- Verify and record all consensus or voted decisions of the school council
- Assist with correspondence as needed

#### Treasurer

The treasurer is a voting member who, in addition to performing the same duties as other council members, shall:

- Receive all funds raised by the school council
- Prepare bank deposit form and provide to school secretary for deposit on a regular basis (school council account is maintained by the school).
- Ensure that all requests for payments (form required by school to have a cheque completed from the school council account) are properly supported and approved. Requests for payments require two signatures. These will be completed by the treasurer or chair and the principal before any cheque can be issued.
- Ensure a treasurer's report is presented at each regular school council meeting.

#### Additional Required School Council Members

- A. School Council shall include:
  - i. The Principal;
  - ii. School Staff Representative (teaching and non-teaching)
- B. No voting rights are granted to any additional members of School Council.

#### School Principal

The school principal must be a member of the school council, as he or she is an important link between the council and the school. (In fact, a meeting cannot be considered a meeting of the school council unless the principal, or delegated vice-principal, is in attendance.) However, the principal is not a voting member of the council.

### The Principal:

- Distributes promptly to each council member material identified by the ministry for distribution to school council members and posts the material in a school location accessible to parents;
- Acts as a resource to the council on laws, regulations, and board policies;
- Attends all school council meetings, unless this responsibility has been delegated to the vice-principal;
- Considers each recommendation made by the school council to the principal and returns to the council with the action taken in response to the recommendation;
- Solicits views on matters pertaining to the establishment or 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;
- May participate on any committees established by the school council;
- May solicit the views of the school council on any matter;
- Observes the council's code of ethics and established bylaws.

### School Staff Representatives (one each from the teaching and non-teaching staff )

School staff representatives are non-voting members who:

- contribute to the discussions of the school council;
- solicit views from their staff groups to share with the school council;
- may participate on any committees established by the school council;
- communicate information back to their staff groups;
- observe the council's code of ethics and established bylaws.

### Other Optional Members

A. Optional Members may include:

- i. Parent Representatives
- ii. Student Representatives
- iii. A Community Representative

### Parent Representatives

Parent representatives are voting members who:

- participate on any committees established by the school council;
- contribute to the discussions of the school council;
- solicit the views of other parents and members of the community to share with the school council;
- observe the council's code of ethics and established bylaws.

### Student Representatives

Student representatives are non voting members.

A student representative is a welcome but not required member of Palmerston School Council. Please see Section 5.7 of the Ontario Ministry of Education's "School Councils: A Guide for Members" (<https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/council02.pdf>, 2002) for guidance as to what some of the roles and responsibilities of a student representative might be.

## Community Representative

The community representative is a non-voting member of the council. In order to become a community representative on the school council a written request should be prepared and presented to the school executive. At the next school council meeting, following receipt of the request, the school council members will vote for the community representative. The community representative:

- contributes to the discussions of the school council;
- represents the community's perspective;
- will not participate on any committees established by the school council;
- helps build partnerships and links between the school and the community;

## Voting Procedures

- A. At the last meeting of the school year (in June) the members currently occupying the elected positions indicate their desire to run again or to vacate the position for the upcoming school year. Other members may volunteer to run for any position and a vote is taken by the members present to fill the elected spots. If any positions remain open, council will advertise the positions and a vote will be taken for the vacant positions at the first meeting of the school year.
- B. If a member has trouble fulfilling their duties, the chair or the co-chair will speak with the member to ensure that they are aware of their impact on the rest of council and to see what can be done to help that member to fulfil their duties. Ontario Regulation 612/00 contains no provision for the discretionary removal of a duly elected or appointed school council member before the end of his or her term. Bylaws created by a school council, or policies established by a board, must not conflict with the provisions of the regulation. A school council member is, therefore, entitled to hold his or her position until the term expires.

## Early Resignation

If an elected or appointed member feels that they cannot fulfil their duties, they may resign from their position. They must inform the chair, in writing (including via email) that they intend to resign from their position after the next meeting. The chair will communicate this with the rest of council and indicate that a new election will happen at the next meeting and ask for new candidates to come forward.