

**EMILY STOWE PUBLIC SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL  
BYLAWS OF GOVERNANCE**

ARTICLE ONE

OFFICIAL NAME

- The official name of this organization shall be “The Emily Stowe School Council”, hereafter referred to as the School Council

ARTICLE TWO

MANDATE OF THE COUNCIL

To support student learning and to connect parents to their child’s school and education

School Council members are:

- Effective communicators, both in listening to others’ views and expressing their own
- Positive and willing to work together
- Open-minded, tolerant, and respectful of the opinions of others
- Supportive of the final recommendations of the School Council
- Prepared to attend training sessions to increase their knowledge and skills on educational issues and their leadership and decision-making abilities
- Able to analyze problems and suggest innovative solutions
- Persons with integrity, who respect the confidentiality of others
- Effective ambassadors for, and responsible to, their community

ARTICLE THREE

OBJECTIVES OF THE COUNCIL

- Enable and empower parents to actively support their children’s education
- Focus on student learning, achievement and well-being
- Strengthen partnerships between students, parents, school faculty and the community
- Share information (communicate) with parents and the community and seek their ideas and views concerning school matters (consult)

ARTICLE FOUR

## REPRESENTATION AND MEMBERSHIP

Membership on the School Council shall include, but not be limited to:

- The School Principal
- One teacher other than the Principal or Vice-Principal
- One non-teaching member of the school staff
- One or more community representatives
- One Home and School rep

School Council must have no less than seven, parent/guardian voting members.

## ARTICLE FIVE

### ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT PROCEDURES

- Elections will be held no later than the first thirty calendar days of the school year
- Elections will be organized by the current School Council executive
- Information about the upcoming election of parent/guardian representatives and nomination forms for voting members will be sent home with the youngest and only students
- Executive to be voted by parent/guardian members
- The names of all Council members will be published within thirty days of the election;
- The names and addresses of all Council members will be forwarded to the Thames Valley District School Board following the election or as requested by The Board.

### TERMS OF OFFICE

- Positions are to be held for a one-year term
- Positions are not limited for re-election each year

### FILLING VACANCIES

- If a voting parent/guardian member position becomes vacant, the voting members of School Council shall elect another parent/guardian to fill the vacancy.
- A vacancy in School Council membership does not prevent School Council from exercising its authority.
- If an executive position becomes vacant the voting members of School Council shall appoint a member of School Council to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.
- The appointed member must be willing to take the executive position.

## ARTICLE SIX

### COMMITTEES

- School Council may establish sub-committees to report back to the to the School Council
- Every committee of the School Council shall include at least one parent member of the School Council
- The committee of a School Council may have members who are not members of the School Council

## ARTICLE SEVEN

### SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETINGS

- School Council will meet no less than six times per year
- Meeting dates and times will be established during the first School Council meeting of the school calendar year and published to the public
- Quorum requires a minimum of five members of School Council, including executive
- Any business or votes transacted without quorum are null and void
- Minutes shall be taken at all School Council meetings (by the Secretary)

## ARTICLE EIGHT

### PARENT MEMBERSHIP

- Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues
- Participate in all School Council meetings
- Act as a link between the School Council and community
- Encourage the participation of parents and community members to attend School Council meetings and fulfill duties

### EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OF SCHOOL COUNCIL

- Executive members will be elected from the voting members of School Council,
- The Chair will be elected from only the parent/guardian voting members
- Any parent/guardian of a child registered at ESPS can vote on executive membership
- Executive members will include a chair and recording secretary
- If School Council participates in fundraising, a treasurer will be elected
- Executive membership may also include a vice-chair

## ARTICLE NINE

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS

#### Chair

- Call School Council meetings;
- Schedule meetings in consultation with the school Principal;
- Prepare the agenda for School Council meetings in consultation with the Principal;
- Chair School Council meetings;
- Ensure that the minutes of the School Council meetings are recorded and maintained;
- Participate in information and training programs;
- Communicate with the school Principal, as required;
- Ensure that there is regular communication with the school community;
- Consult with senior Board staff and trustees, as required;
- May attend Board-wide School Council Chairs meetings.

#### Vice-Chair:

- Assumes the Chairperson's responsibilities in his/her absence
- Assists the Chairperson in the performance of his/her duties

#### Treasurer:

- Any matters pertaining to finance and expenditures shall follow the guidelines in the Board's School Generated Funds Policy.
- Responsibilities include:
  - Reporting financial information at each School Council meeting;
  - Ensure that the yearly fundraising budget has School Council approval. If an item is not in the budget, the treasurer may seek the approval of the School Council. This may be done at a meeting or by email (using the following procedure):
    - Email voting should only be used when a decision must be made prior to the next School Council meeting
    - Record of the email vote shall be kept for ratification at the first meeting after the email vote
    - A minimum of 24 hours will be given for discussion after the email is sent out. Members will use reply all during the discussion. During discussion, voting is suspended.
    - After discussion has ended, 24 to 48 hours will be given for members to cast their votes
  - Ensure all cheques have two signatures from the following: the treasurer and the chair of School Council, or alternate School Council parent/guardian member;
  - Submit to the School Council and Principal in June of each year, all financial records for review, the annual report and/or internal audit.

#### Recording Secretary:

- Secretary will assist with the School Council agenda

- Ask for motions to approve previous meeting minutes and the current agenda – passes meeting over to Chair for opening greetings.
- Record accurate proceedings at meetings including any motions put forth and/or passed, including details on the decision (motion presenter, approver, seconder).
- Ensure copies are maintained at the school office, sent to the school administration and uploaded on the school website.
- If the secretary is absent, another member of School Council will be asked to step-in to record meeting minutes. A copy will be provided to the secretary for appropriate storage and circulation.
- Maintain effective communication with Chairperson.

Principal:

- Ensure the School Council is established and assist in its operation;
- Support and promote the School Council's activities;
- Seek input from the School Council in areas for which it has been assigned advisory responsibility
- Act as a resource on laws, regulations, Board policies, and collective agreements
- Obtain and provide information required by the School Council to enable it to make informed decisions
- Communicate with the Chair of the School Council, as required
- Ensure that copies of the minutes of the School Council's meetings are kept at the school
- Assist the School Council in communicating with the school community
- Actively encourage the participation of students, parents/guardians from all groups and of other people within the school community

## ARTICLE TEN

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential.
- Members of the School Council shall declare a conflict of interest in matters that they, members of their families, or business entities in which they may have an interest, stand to benefit either directly or indirectly by decisions of the School Council. The Chair and/or Principal will advise the secretary to note the conflict and ensure it is accurately recorded in the meeting minutes.
- A member shall exclude him or herself from discussions in which:
  - A conflict of interest is likely to result;
  - The member's ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities as a member of the School Council may be jeopardized;
  - The School Council member, his or her relatives, or a business entity in which the member may have an interest, may gain or benefit either directly or indirectly

as a result of actions that may be taken by the Principal or board in response to advice that the council provides to the Principal or the board;

- A member shall not accept favours or economic benefits from any individuals,
- organizations, or entities known to be seeking business contracts with the school.

## ARTICLE ELEVEN

### CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Every School Council member will be given an opportunity to express his or her concern or opinion about the issue at dispute and how the dispute has affected him or her.
- Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times
- Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption
- The 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 Chair will seek to clarify preferences among all members before proceeding further. Unresolved discussions to be tabled for further discussion or clarification.
- 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.

## ARTICLE TWELVE

### BYLAW AMENDMENTS

- Bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the School Council where quorum is present provided that there is advance notice to the stakeholders; that is, specific amendments have been introduced at a prior meeting or have been published in the school newsletter, or on the school website, and are listed on the agenda for the current meeting
- A 75% majority of total School Council members is required for any modification to bylaws that are introduced without prior notice and must be present to vote.
- A copy of the Bylaws of Governance shall be made available to any person upon request.
- A copy of the Bylaws will be posted on the school website, containing copies of all minutes, current reports, and a current list of School Council members.

## ARTICLE THIRTEEN

## ANNUAL REPORT

- An annual report, and financial statement if financial transactions have occurred, shall be submitted annually to the principal and the Thames Valley District School Board.
- The report must be submitted no later than September 30th of the subsequent school year.
- Prepared and submitted jointly by the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary
- The report shall be made available to all parents/guardians by posting on the school website and a copy will be made available at the school.
- Copies of the annual report (and minutes) will be kept at the school for at least 4 years.