

# Larchwood P.S. School Council

## By-laws

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### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

The Larchwood School Council is an advisory body that will work collaboratively within the school community to develop strategies and solutions to enhance the development and educational experiences of all the students and parents to participate in meaningful educational activities and decision making to strengthen the role of families in education and schooling and to foster meaningful parent participation.

### **GOALS:**

The goals of the Larchwood School Council shall reflect the mission statement:

- To promote, maintain and support a positive school environment for everyone.
- To enhance the lines of communication among parents/guardians, administrators teachers, students and other community members.
- To provide a forum for input into educational matters for members of the school community.
- To provide a vehicle for transmitting ideas, recommendations, and concerns to any or all administrative levels.
- To encourage parents/guardians and community members to participate in educational matters.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The School Council shall not be involved in the day to day management of the school but shall act in an advisory capacity while respecting the management rights and responsibilities of the principal and the school board.

School Councils are advisory bodies. A school council will provide advice to the school principal and where appropriate, to the school board on any of the matters listed below that council has identified as priorities.

1. Curriculum and program goals and priorities
2. Preparation of the school profile
3. School budget priorities including the local capital improvement plans
4. School community communication strategies
5. Methods of reporting to parents and communities
6. School-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational and nutrition programs
7. Local co-ordination of services for children and youth
8. Development, implementation and review of board policies at the local level
9. To develop yearly plan with goals and procedures
10. Organize information and training sessions to enable members of the council to develop their skills as school council members.

## MEMBERSHIP

1. The Larchwood Public School Council shall reflect the diversity of our school community. Parents and guardians will form the majority of members on the school council.
2. The Larchwood Public School Council shall consist of a maximum of 21 members but not be limited to:
  - a. parents and/or guardians of students registered at L.P.S.
  - b. at least 1 teacher, elected by members of the teaching staff
  - c. at least 1 non teaching school staff member, elected by the non-teaching members
  - d. if possible, 1 community representative, elected by the council
3. The Chair, Vice-chair and Secretary of the Larchwood Public School Council shall be members who are also parents/guardians and shall be elected by the council.
4. The term of office for elected and appointed positions shall be for 1 year.
5. If a member does not attend three consecutive meetings without a reason acceptable to the Council, the position may be deemed to be vacant by the Council.
6. No honorarium shall be paid to the members of the Larchwood Public School Council.

## ELECTIONS

1. Election term – the length of term of the Executive Positions shall be one year.
2. Such terms shall take effect October 1<sup>st</sup> and end September 30<sup>th</sup> of the following year.
3. Elections shall take place at the Annual General Meeting which will be in September of each year.
4. Elections shall be done within the first 30 days of the new school year.
5. Nomination forms shall be filed by all parent/guardians for selected positions on the school council. Parents/Guardians may nominate themselves or other parents.
6. No individual campaign literature for school council elections may be distributed or posted with in the school
7. The electionday proceedings must be publicized by the Principal at least 14 days before the election.
8. Voting shall be done by a show of hands with the exception of election of officers which has more than one person nominated for one position. That shall be done by secret ballot.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Any time the school council does business for a monetary gain/loss with any person, agency or company and a member of the council has a vested interest in any way with that particular person, agency or company, that member shall declare a conflict of interest and shall not discuss or vote any such resolution relating to the matter.

A member shall also not accept any favours or economic benefits from any person, agency or company know to be seeking business contracts with the school.

## **ELECTED POSITIONS**

No person may hold more than one elected position at any one time.

The affairs of the Council shall be managed by a board of elected officers and the immediate:

1. Chair/Vice-Chair
2. Secretary
3. Members of the School Council
4. Principal

### **1. Chairperson / Vice- Chair (in absence of the Chair)**

- ~shall ensure a review of the constitution and by-laws at the beginning of each school year.
- ~establishes council meeting dates and times approved by the council
- ~ calls council meetings
- ~ prepares agendas for all council meetings
- ~ chairs council meetings
- ~ ensures that minutes of council meetings are recorded and maintained by the Secretary
- ~ communicates with the school principal
- ~ ensures that there is regular communication with the school community
- ~ consults with the senior staff members of the school board and trustees as required
- ~ participate in information and training programs as required
- ~ organizes future elections in collaboration with the principal

### **2. Secretary**

- ~ records and maintains the minutes of school council meetings and distributes the minutes of said meetings to rest of school council when completed.
- ~ submits minutes to the chair no later than 14 days after last meeting
- ~ maintains all official documents of the council including policy manuals, constitutions and bylaws.
- ~ prepares the annual report of the Larchwood School council with the input of the chair.

### **3. Members of the School Council**

- ~ participate in council meetings and information and training programs
- ~ act as a link between school and the community
- ~ are responsible for encouraging parents/guardians and others within the school community to participate in education matters.
- ~ shall be members of one or more committees of the council.

### **4. The principal**

- ~ helps establish the school council and assists in its cooperation
- ~ supports and promotes the council's activities
- ~ asks for advice from the council in the areas within its jurisdiction
- ~ acts as a resource to the council on laws, regulations, board policies and collective agreements
- ~ encourages the participation of parents and guardians and other people within the school

community

~ ensures that copies of the minutes are kept at the school

## VACANT POSITIONS

A position vacated during the school year will remain unfulfilled provided the parents retain the majority voting status on the Council.

In the event that the majority is not maintained, a vacancy in the membership of school council shall be filled in one of the following ways:

- I. The parent who received the next highest votes in the election will assume the vacant position.
- II. The council will nominate and elect a qualified individual.

## GENERAL MEETINGS

1. Notices of meetings shall be put in the monthly school newsletter calendar and put up on the School Council Information board near the main office and shall state the place, date, time and purpose.
2. A minimum of six general meetings will be held yearly.
3. All regular meetings shall be considered open, public meetings with active participation.
4. (A time limit will be given to all topics of discussion as to keep in time with the set meeting and agenda)
5. When a time limit is reached on a topic of discussion it will be to the discretion of the Chair if we put it off until next meeting or take a topic off the Agenda to accommodate the new topic taking place.
6. Meetings will start at the precise time set on the Agenda. A time limit of 60 minutes will be given for each meeting with the possibility of 2 fifteen minute extensions approved by a vote of majority of present school council members.
7. If any people/persons are late to the meeting they will not be brought up to date. They are required to read the minutes of the meeting at the end of the council meeting or get in contact with another member to be brought up to date.
8. The Annual General Meeting shall be held before the end of September on a date fixed by the principal and the Chair.
9. Special meetings may be called by the Chair.
10. Unless otherwise provided, questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by majority vote.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

1. The annual general meeting will be the 1<sup>st</sup> school council meeting of the school year and will be held before the end of September.
2. The purpose of the annual meeting shall be to:
  - a. elect new council members
  - b. review last years meeting minutes
  - c. receive and approved of the School Improvement Plan and Fundraising Plan
  - d. transact other business as deemed appropriate by the council.

3. Notification of the date, time and place of the Annual General Meeting shall be provided in writing to all school community homes not less than fourteen days prior to the meeting.

## **QUORUM**

A quorum for all regular meetings of council shall consist of a majority of voting members.

The Principal is never permitted to vote in any voting procedures.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. Larchwood School Council meetings are not a forum for the discussion of individual school personnel, students, parents, or other individual members of the school community.
2. As such the School Council shall not:
  - a. participate in the personal dealings between a teacher of the school and a parent/guardian or a student
  - b. or support an individual or group grievance against a teacher of the school
3. A member of the school council who is approached by any member of the school community with a concern relating to another member of the school community, are in a privileged position and must treat such discussion with discretion, protecting the confidentiality of the people involved.
4. A parent who accepts a position as a member of the Larchwood School Council shall:
  - a. uphold the constitution and by-laws of the School Council.
  - b. perform his/her duties with honesty and integrity.
  - c. work to ensure that the well-being of students is the primary focus of all the decisions of the Council.
  - d. respect the rights of all individuals.
  - e. take direction from the members.
  - f. respect all confidential information.
  - g. support public education.

## **FORMING COMMITTEES**

Every committee must include one parent member of the council. Committees may also include others who are not members who are not part of the council. Committee meetings must follow the same rules as school council meetings: all committee meetings are to be held at the school, must be open and accessible to the public, and are to be publicized by the principal in the same way the regular school council meetings are.

## **BYLAW AMENDMENTS**

1. The bylaws and constitution of Larchwood Public School may be amended by a vote of eligible members at any Council Meeting. The proposed amendments will be posted on the bulletin board at least fourteen (14) days prior to the next School Council Meeting.

2. Passage of amendments will require an affirmative vote of two-thirds of those present at the advertised meeting.
3. The bylaws will be reviewed again each year at the Annual School Council Meeting in September.
4. New or a change in the guidelines set forth by the Ministry of Education shall override the Larchwood Public School /by-laws and Constitution when in conflict with any formal amendment process.