

Lyn Public School - Parent Council By-Laws

1. Membership

The Parent Council shall be comprised of the following people:

- Parents/Guardians
- The Principal of the school
- One (or more) staff member(s) employed at the school other than the principal or vice-principal
- Optional – Community Representative(s)

2. Election Committee

- (a) The Parent Council shall form an Election Committee in May of each school year to help plan the election process, gather the nominations, and run the election for the following school year. No one standing for election, or the spouse of anyone standing for election, shall be a member of the election committee.
- (b) The Election Committee shall:
 - provide nomination forms to the school community;
 - ensure that the school community is notified of the election procedures and election date(s), location, and time, at least fourteen days in advance of the election;
 - request a profile from all candidates and make these available to the school community;
 - conduct the elections by secret ballot;
 - count the ballots;
 - assist the Principal with notifying all candidates of the results;
 - keep all results and related information confidential.
- (c) If the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of positions, the candidates shall be acclaimed.
- (d) Only the names of the successful candidates shall be made public.
- (e) All individuals standing for election shall be notified of the results before the results are released to the school community.
- (f) The Parent Council shall assist the Principal with publicizing the names of the new members to the school community within thirty days of the election.

3. Election of Parent/Guardian Representatives

- (a) Parents/Guardians must form a majority on Parent Council.
- (b) There shall be a minimum of six positions for Parent/Guardian members on the Parent Council.
- (c) Election shall be for a one-year term.
- (d) A person is qualified to be a Parent/Guardian member of Parent Council if:
 - (i) he/she has a child enrolled at the school;
 - (ii) he/she is not employed at the school; and,

- (iii) in order to qualify as a Parent/Guardian member, he/she must take reasonable steps to inform voters if employed elsewhere by the school board.
- (e) Each Parent/Guardian of a student enrolled in the school shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant Parent/Guardian member position on the Parent Council.
- (f) The nomination of Parent/Guardian members shall be held within the first thirty days of the start of each school year.

4. **Election of Other Members**

- (a) The Principal, in consultation with the Election Committee, will make the necessary arrangements for the teaching staff representative to be elected within the first 30 days of the school year.
- (b) Anyone assigned to the teaching staff of the school (full or part-time), other than the principal or vice-principal, may be a candidate.
- (c) Staff at the school, other than the Principal or Vice-Principal, can vote for the teacher representative on Parent Council.
- (d) Non-teaching employees at the school, other than the Principal or Vice-Principal, can vote for the non-teaching representative on Parent Council.

5. **Selection of Community Representatives**

Appointments of Community Representatives to the Parent Council are to be by majority vote at a meeting of the Parent Council members.

6. **Replacement of Parent Council Members**

If a position on Parent Council becomes vacant during the school year, for whatever reason, the Parent Council will advise the school community and invite those eligible to replace the particular position (i.e. Parent/Guardians, Teaching staff, or Community Representatives) to nominate their own or another name for the vacant position. Provided that such person consents to his/her nomination, the first eligible name received in writing by Parent Council will be appointed to fill such position until the next election for Parent Council is held. If such person declines, then the next name received shall be appointed, and so on until the position is filled. All other nominees will be invited to attend meetings, but will not have voting rights.

7. **Officers**

- (a) **Chair** – The Parent Council shall have a Chair or Co-Chair position(s) held by a Parent/Guardian member and elected by the Parent Council. Someone employed by the school board cannot be Chair or Co-Chair. The Chair or Co-Chair:
 - consults with Principal to set the date of the annual election

- ensures meeting dates and times are established
- calls meetings
- sets the agenda in consultation with the Principal and Parent Council
- distributes the agenda prior to the meeting
- runs the meeting in a democratic manner
- ensures that the by-laws are followed
- ensures that meetings are conducted on matters within the Parent Council's responsibility
- works with the Principal in communicating with the school board
- other duties as assigned by Parent Council

(b) In addition to the mandated Chair or Co-Chair position, the Parent Council Parent/Guardian members will also nominate and acclaim or elect a Secretary and Treasurer.

(i) The Secretary:

- records Minutes of the meetings
- distributes Minutes prior to the next meeting
- maintains an archive of Minutes and pertinent correspondence for at least 4 years

(ii) The Treasurer:

- is responsible for all funds raised by Parent Council in accordance with school board policy and procedures
- provides Parent Council with a financial report at each meeting
- works with school administration to conduct "accounting procedures" and reconcile Parent Council's accounts on a regular basis

8. Committees

- (a) The Parent Council may establish Committees to make recommendations to the Parent Council.
- (b) The duties and responsibilities for each Committee will be discussed and approved by Parent Council.
- (c) Every Committee must include at least one parent member of the Parent Council.
- (d) A Committee may include persons who are not members of the Parent Council.
- (e) The Parent Council shall have a Fundraising Committee that will include Parent/Guardian and staff members that will:
 - establish fundraising goals and schedule fundraising events for the year
 - ensure that funds raised are provided to Treasurer, who will work with the school administration to ensure all school board policy and procedures are followed
 - provide Parent Council with a financial report upon completion of each fundraising event

9. Meetings

- (a) The Parent Council shall meet at least six times during the school year.
- (b) The first meeting shall be held within the first 35 days of the school year on a date to be fixed by the Chair and/or Principal.
- (c) A meeting must have a majority of members present and within that group a majority of parents in order to constitute a meeting.
- (d) The Principal or his/her designate must be in attendance in order to constitute a meeting.
- (e) All meetings shall be open to the public and held in a location accessible to the public.
- (f) The Parent Council is entitled to hold its meetings at the school.
- (g) The Principal shall give written notice of the date, time, and place of the meetings to every parent/guardian. This may be done by sending a notice home with the child, in the regular school newsletter, or by posting a notice in the school in a location accessible to parents/guardians.

10. Duties of Members

(a) Standards of Conduct

- members shall focus on the best interests of all students
- one person shall speak at a time
- no abusive language or personal remarks
- confidential issues shall not be discussed
- comments shall be limited to a reasonable time
- comments shall be limited to the topic under discussion
- members shall be accountable for their decisions
- members shall declare any conflict of interest

(b) Removal of Member

In rare cases, a member may have to be removed from Parent Council. A member may be removed for:

- behaviour that regularly prevents the Parent Council from carrying out its responsibilities
- habitually failing to perform the duties of a member
- failing to comply with the by-laws of Parent Council
- engaging in activities deemed to be detrimental to the interests or contrary to the purposes of the Parent Council

The permanent removal of a member from Parent Council requires 2/3 of the votes cast by voting members of Parent Council at a Parent Council meeting attended by not less than 80% of the Parent Council.

11. Decision-Making Process

- (a) Consensus - Parent Council will attempt to make all decisions by consensus.
- (b) Voting – In the event that the Parent Council cannot reach consensus on an issue, the Chair shall call a vote in respect of that issue. Each member of Parent Council shall be entitled to one vote on all matters, with the exception of the Principal and the Chair. The Principal is not entitled to vote. The Chair shall not vote on any matter other than to break a tie vote, in which case the Chair shall be required to vote in order to break the tie. Voting using a show of hands, with a majority win, shall make the decision. Upon request by any member of Parent Council, the vote will be conducted by written ballot, in which case a written ballot shall be held and the Chair and the Principal, together, shall count the votes and determine and announce the outcome of the vote.
- (c) Decisions Outside Regular Meetings - On occasion, decisions are required to be made outside of the regular meeting. In these cases, members' input and vote may be obtained via telephone or electronic mail. A report of any decisions made outside of the regular Parent Council meeting will be reported on at the next available meeting.

12. Conflict Resolution

The Parent Council will make every effort to solve its internal disputes in a timely manner using the following process:

- (a) Identify the Source of Conflict
Conflict usually stems from disagreements on:
 - (i) facts,
 - (ii) goals
 - (iii) method or values,
 - (iv) beliefs and ethics
- (b) Identify the Contributing Problems
 - (i) Communications – misinformation or lack of information; ill-defined expectations; hidden agendas; lack of candor; absence of trust
 - (ii) Organizational Structures – Can we improve on Parent Council's decision-making process?
 - (iii) Resources – Do limited resources, such as time or money, prevent seeking a solution to the conflict?
 - (iv) Human Factors – Personality traits such as authoritarianism, rigid viewpoints, and low self-esteem, can be sources of conflict. They are often impossible to change, and can only be managed by diplomacy and tact.

(c) Resolve the Conflict

- (i) Plan ahead – individual planning and reflection; specific concerns/interests/positions; underlying concerns; personal needs; establish meeting place and time
- (ii) Set the stage – set a positive tone; adopt a problem-solving mode; acknowledge the other person; agree to ground rules
- (iii) Talk it out – define the problem; understand the issues from different perspectives; deal with emotions; identify needs and interests; discuss assumptions and values
- (iv) Create Solutions – identify a range of options/alternatives; determine advantages and disadvantages; choose mutually satisfactory solutions; if an impasse is reached, consider engaging a mediator, volunteer, etc.
- (v) Plan for Follow-up – schedule future meeting; reflect on possible changes for next time

13. Conflict of Interest

- (a) It is expected that any individual with a conflict of interest with respect to any issue shall immediately notify Parent Council, who will then decide on that individual's further participation on the issue.
- (b) Individuals employed at Lyn Public School cannot serve as Parent/Guardian members of the Parent Council.
- (c) School board employees wishing to serve as Parent/Guardian member or Community Members must inform people qualified to vote in the election of Parent Council of that employment.
- (d) School board employees cannot serve as Chair or Co-Chair.

14. Amending Process

Amendments to by-laws require a majority vote of Parent Council.

These By-Laws are enacted by the School Council of Lyn Public School effective the _____ day of June, 2014.

These By-Laws amend and replace the Election Procedure Bylaws passed by the School Council of Lyn-Tincap Public School on Januar 22, 2003 and the Voting Bylaw passed by the School Council of Lyn-Tincap Public School on April 8, 2002.

Tracey Robinson
Chair, School Council 2013/2014

Secretary, School Council 2013/2014