

Woodland Public School  
School Advisory Council

**CONSTITUTION**

**2021/22**



This Constitution was created for the 'Woodland Public School Advisory Council' (further referred to as 'the Council') and are subject to Policy and Regulations established by the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training – Specifically Ontario Regulation 613/00 and regulation 298.

Furthermore, the Council will strive to align and compliment all activities to; the DSBN Mission and the Pillars of Learning which are:

**DSBN Mission:** *“The D.S.B.N. is committed to student success by working together to inspire, empower, and support all learners to achieve their full potential.”*

**Pillars of Effective Schools:**

**Instructional Program:** EQAO results, literacy nights, math nights, etc.

**Inviting Learning Environment Student Focused:** Classroom equipment and supplies school climate, student safety, playground, swings, etc.

**Effective/Efficient Operational Systems:** Parking lot concerns, council constitution and structure, accounting practices, fund raising, etc.

**Strong Parent Community relationships:** Volunteer recruitment, fun fairs, meet the teacher nights, etc.

This Constitution is to be in place within (60) days of the school year and reviewed annually. At this annual review any updates, changes or amendments are to be ratified by council and a new Constitution distributed and posted in all appropriate communication sites.

1. Purpose of the Council is:

- To promote and maintain a safe, supportive and inviting environment for all students and staff at Woodland.
- To assist in the development of and support school and board goals.
- To enhance educational opportunities for all students in order to encourage each student to reach his/her full potential in educational, social, and recreational areas.
- To identify issues and concerns within the school community and facilitate the productive exchange of ideas through discussion in order to make recommendations.
- To provide a forum in which educational issues, EQAO improvement initiatives, DSBN policies and procedures, and school practices may be discussed and addressed accordingly.
- To encourage and welcome the participation of students, parents/guardians, staff members and principal.
- To set an annual budget and raise funds to support initiatives identified by the school and/or by Woodland School Council.
- To identify annual goals for Woodland School Council and communicate them to the school community.

2. Suggested composition of the Council is:

- A maximum of 21 members.
- A minimum of 8 parents/guardians of students currently enrolled at Woodland Public School.
- A minimum of 1 and maximum of 3 Woodland School teachers.
- The principal and his/her designate, if principal is unable to attend the meeting
- One non-teaching staff member at Woodland Public School.
- One community representative, based on availability.
- All members of the council will be equal partners but parents/guardians shall form the majority of the council.

3. Roles and Responsibilities of Council Members:

All Members must have read, agreed to and fully adhere to the Code of Ethics issued by the Ontario Government for this council (Appendix A of this document).

- The Principal shall:
  - i. attend council meetings
  - ii. assist in the operation of the council
  - iii. support and promote the council's activities
  - iv. seek input from the council in areas identified as council priorities
  - v. act as a resource on laws, regulations, board policies and collective agreements

- vi. obtain and provide information required by the council to enable it to make informed decisions
  - vii. maintain regular communication with the council chair
  - viii. assist the council in communication with the school community
  - ix. assist in facilitating council decisions:
    - x. Consensus is reached when all members of the council, including the chair, are willing to accept and support an idea or concept as the best choice for the entire council.
    - xi. when consensus is not possible, that is, after all decision-making avenues have been explored, the council must decide whether the matter warrants a simple vote.
- School Council members shall:
    - i. place the overall interests of the school and students first
    - ii. maintain a school-wide perspective on issues
    - iii. participate in council meetings
    - iv. act as a link between the School Council and the Woodland community
    - v. encourage the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the Woodland Public School community
    - vi. participate in information and training programs as necessary
    - vii. seek to reach consensus
    - viii. follow the roles/responsibilities as set out in PPM 122, Board policy, Regulation 612/00, and any forthcoming legislation
  - The Chair of the council shall:
    - i. schedule regular School Council meetings
    - ii. ensure the agendas are prepared for School Council meetings
    - iii. chair council meetings
    - iv. communicate with the principal, vice-chair and council members
    - v. ensure that there is regular communication with the school community
    - vi. facilitate collaborative decision making
    - vii. share with council all correspondence
    - viii. in the absence of the Chair or Vice-Chair, the Principal will facilitate the council meeting.
  - The Co-Chair of the council shall:
    - i. Assist the Chair in all the responsibilities of the Chair.
  - The Secretary of the Council shall:
    - i. record minutes of all meetings including attendance.
    - ii. submit the minutes to the principal and chair at the end of each meeting for review, copying and distribution.

iii. in lieu of a permanent Secretary, the council may agree to rotate the position among the members.

- The Treasurer of the Council shall:
  - i. Support an accurate and auditable record of all committee finances with a document report at meetings.
  - ii. Comply with all regulation, board and otherwise for the reporting and handling of committee finances
  - iii. Immediately report to the Chair and Principal any concerns or irregularities in committee finances with a report on any of these concerns at the next committee meeting.
  
- Sub-committees:
  - i. The Council may create any committee that they deem necessary to facilitate the objectives of the council.
  - ii. Each sub-committee shall consist of a co-ordinator (from the School Council) and any interested parents.
  - iii. The sub-committee(s) are held accountable to the Council at all times.
  - iv. Progress reports are to be made at all general School Council meetings.

4. Election Process for Members:

- The principal, in collaboration with the Council, shall encourage parents on an ongoing basis to consider involvement in the Council through monthly newsletter, flyers and personal contact.
- Parents will be notified early in September of the positions available on the Council and election procedures.
- A statement of willingness to serve is submitted in writing using the "Candidate Form" provided in September. (See Appendix B)
- A deadline is set for the submission of this by the first Committee meeting.
- If there are a sufficient number of nominees (21 or less) to fill the positions outlined in the constitution, all qualified nominees shall be affirmed as members for the school year by the first Council meeting.
- If there are an extraordinary number of forms received for the positions in the School Council (i.e., greater than 21) and the Council deems it necessary, an election will be held.
- Ballots will be made available at the Council Meeting, listing all the candidates in alphabetical order, and all parents of Woodland students will be eligible to cast their votes. The Principal will ensure that parents have access to the ballots.
- The votes shall be tallied by the Principal and one member of council not running in the election. Those with the highest number of votes shall be declared elected.
- The names of the Members of the Council shall be communicated. (i.e., Newsletter).

5. Election Process for special positions:

- At the September Council meeting a request to fill the Chair (Co-Chair), Secretary, Treasurer and any special positions will be first on the agenda.
  - If there is only one candidate for each position, they are to be acclaimed with no vote required.
  - If there are 2 or more candidates volunteering to fill a position, the Principal and one member of council not running in the election will facilitate a secret ballot for election of a candidate.
6. Terms of office:
- Terms of office for council members is 1 year
  - Term of office for the chair is 2 years.
7. Meetings
- There will be a minimum of four (4) meetings per year.
  - Meetings will be open to all parents, staff and community members.
  - Agendas and minutes should be provided to all members and all parents at least three school days prior to the scheduled meeting date utilizing the most practical and effective methods considering the school website, email, newsletter, social media and or other manner.
  - Effort is to be made by the Council to reach consensus on decisions.
  - If consensus cannot be reached, a motion can be made. It must be seconded with an opportunity to discuss and a simple vote will be carried. In the case of a tie, the vote of the chair breaks the tie.
  - Individuals with a conflict of interest in a vote shall abstain from voting.
  - The duration of a council meeting will be no more than 90 minutes. After 90 minutes, the council must decide (through consensus or vote) whether to extend the length of the meeting. If it is extended, a specific time limit shall be established.
  - The parent community will be kept informed of activities and decisions of the School Council through the school newsletter.
8. Quorum
- A quorum for a general meeting shall consist of:
    - i. The school principal or designate
    - ii. Four (4) other members of the School Council provided that parent/guardian representatives from the majority.
    - iii. Decision making, if required outside of scheduled meetings, can be completed through email communication and the affirmative vote of at least six (6) of the regularly attending council members
9. Amendments
- The constitution may be amended by the following process:
    - i. A notice of motion indicating that an amendment to the constitution will be forthcoming shall be submitted to the chair and the council members in writing at least 14 days prior to any general meeting.

- ii. Amendments may be made by consensus of the council. If a consensus cannot be reached, an affirmative vote of at least a 2/3 majority of council members is required for the amendment to occur.
- iii. The council may pass by-laws that regulate the business and affairs of the council. By-laws require majority of council members to be approved.

## CODE OF ETHICS

- *A member shall* consider the best interests of all students.
- *A member shall* be guided by the school's and the school 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* maintain the highest standards of integrity.
- *A member shall* recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.
- *A member shall* treat all other members with respect and allow for 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 school council.
- *A member shall* not disclose confidential information.
- *A member shall* limit discussions at school 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.

Source: Adapted from the bylaws of the Port Arthur Collegiate Institute School Council, Lakehead Board of Education, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Appendix B

**Woodland School Advisory Council**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

On behalf of the School Council at Woodland Public School, I am extending an invitation to you to participate on our School Advisory Council. School Councils play an important role in ensuring the success of all students and communicating school successes to other parents and community members. Participating on the Woodland School Advisory Council will give you the opportunity to provide meaningful input on school life.

As part of Woodland School Advisory Council, you would:

- focus on improved learning for all students
- maintain a school wide perspective on issues
- represent and communicate the views of the school community
- provide input at committee meetings
- attend and participate at council and committee meetings
- become a link between the school and the community

**Our first meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 29th at 6:00pm.**

If interested in participating, please complete and return the section below by Monday, Sept. 21st.

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**I wish to declare my candidacy for a position as a parent/guardian representative on the school council.**

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Name   |           |
| I am the parent/guardian of (name and grade) |           |
| I am an employee of the Board                | Yes<br>No |
| Signature and Date                           |           |

I will require childcare in order to attend.

I hope to see you there!

Sincerely,  
K. Worth  
Principal