



## School Community Council By-Laws Established November, 2020

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**1. Name of the organization:** DDSB@Home

**2. Philosophy or Mission Statement:** To promote parent engagement and connections for our virtual community while fostering an overall sense of safety and wellbeing. The SCC will act as an advisory support to staff, students and parents in a virtual community.

### **3. Participation**

Participation in the School Community Council (also known as S.C.C.) is open to all parents/guardians and representatives of students attending this virtual public school. Participation is also open to any public supporter who lives in the Durham region and/or has a vested interest in the DDSB@Home virtual school and who demonstrates an interest and support for the activities of the school. Although participation is open to all individuals represented by the above criteria, only elected members will have the right to vote on motions presented at the S.C.C. meetings.

### **4. Membership**

Each Campus SCC will be comprised of the following:

- Large Group Chairperson: Volunteer or Random Selection
- Campus Chairperson: 1 elected member (not an employee of the Board)
- Secretary: 1 elected member (not an employee of the Board)
- Treasurer: 1 elected member (not an employee of the Board)
  
- Sub-Committee Chairpersons - Fundraising: 1 volunteer if required
- Voting Members: 4 per Campus - Random Selection  
(Who expresses interest via nomination form or email to the principal in Sept.)
  
- Teacher Representative: 1 volunteer
- Student Representative (optional): 1 elected by student body and staff
- Non-Teaching Staff Representative: 1 volunteer
- Community Representatives: minimum of 1 volunteer (if available)
- Principal/Vice-Principal/Designate: non-voting member

### **5. Election Process:**

Elections for the S.C.C. will be held annually no later than 30 days from the beginning of the school year. Nomination forms will be sent home in early September and elections will be held at the first SCC meeting in September. Positions left unfilled after the first election can be filled through a 2nd election within 15 days of the first. After the election, any positions which remain or become vacant during the school year may be filled through appointment by motion of the elected members and shall have full and equal membership rights and responsibilities. Regular attendance at Council meetings is expected of all S.C.C. members.

Each elected position on the S.C.C. will be filled through a nomination and election process. All parents in attendance at the election meeting will have the opportunity to elect the current year SCC. Voting will take place through virtual polling or virtual form. The principal of the individual campus will reach out to the individual nominees to review the voting process prior to election night.

If roles go unfilled for any position, the election process will be extended 15 days (as noted above) and allow for additional opportunity to canvas the school community for a candidate. The Principal/Designate to take the role of the unfilled position until a member can be elected. If the secretary position cannot be filled, a volunteer from the elected/voting members can volunteer to fill that position for the meeting date.

### **Subcommittees:**

**A fundraising sub-committee:** will be formed on an as needed basis. Any funds raised within the Campus must remain within the Campus that it was raised and allocated for that Campus unless voted upon by all Campuses. If a Pro Grant application is submitted, Pro Grant monies will be allocated to the Campus(es) listed on the original proposal submitted.

**Parent Feedback sub-committee:** to collect and analyze data and feedback from the DDSB@Home community to determine what is working and what is not working and to share that data with the individual Campus for which it was collected.

## **6. Duties and Responsibilities**

### **CHAIRPERSON**

- Calls School Community Council meetings
- Chairs School Community Council meetings
- Ensures that the minutes of the School Community Council meetings are recorded and maintained
- Participates in information and training programs
- Communicates with the school principal and Board personnel
- Ensures there is regular communication with the school community
- Consults with senior Board staff and trustees, as required

- Must be a parent member of the Council
- Cannot be a Board employee
- Presides at all meetings and has general supervision of the affairs of the Council
- Works with the principal in planning and directing the business of the Council including monitoring committee progress
- Prepares the agenda for all meetings in cooperation with the principal
- Ensures the agenda is sent out at least one week prior to each meeting
- Has the authority to modify or change the agenda if it is determined to be in the best interest of the Council's work
- Appoints temporary or standing committees (ad hoc) as needed
- **Plays a neutral role** - is not a formal member of the group but rather a servant of the group who does not advocate a position
- **Focuses positive energy** - keeps the group focussed on the tasks to be accomplished at the meeting with questions or statements such as "How does this relate to our objective?" or "We have strayed from our agenda and need to return to the issue of..."
- **Suggests alternative procedures** - proposes options when a process is not enabling the group to achieve its goal
- **Protects individuals** - ensures individuals are not "attacked" for expressing contrary opinions
- **Encourages participation** - ensures all members have equal opportunity to contribute and seeks opinions from quieter participants
- **Keeps enthusiasm high** - shows interest in what's being said and uses "attending" behaviours
- **Enables win/win solutions** - helps the group reach consensus
- **Coordinates pre and post meeting events** - handles all arrangements to support productive meetings
- **Seeks clarity on issues** - clarifies the thinking of the group, by soliciting more information
- **Assists recorder** - summarizes and clarifies to help the recorder
- **Plans warm-up or other opening activities** - organizes appropriate activities to start each meeting

### **Co-Chairperson (in the event the Chair is absent - Volunteer)**

- Exercises all functions in the absence of the Chairperson
- Maintains a listing of the membership with phone numbers, addresses, and attendance
- Assists the Chairperson as needed
- Assumes other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Council

### **SECRETARY**

- Keeps full and accurate accounts of the proceedings and transactions of all meetings of the Council
- Files notes and minutes of all meetings in the SCC Shared Drive for a period of up to 4 years

- Provides digital copies of the minutes to the principal and staff to be shared with school community
- Prepares any official correspondence that the Chairperson may request
- Maintains a “Council File” containing copies of all minutes, Council plans and progress reports, any Council related information from the Ministry or Board, and a current copy of the by-laws
- Provides an annual report of all Council activities to be distributed digitally to all members of the school community
- Provides an annual copy of the bylaws to all Council members by the third meeting of the year

## **TREASURER**

- Works with Principal and Admin Assistant to ensure that accurate accounts, receipts, disbursements, and monthly bank reconciliations are maintained via electronic recording and communication
- Assumes other duties as assigned
- Develops any budget proposals necessary for the operation of the School Community Council
- Prepares regular statements to be shared at all Council meetings
- Provides an annual report of all collections, disbursements and assets to be distributed to all members of the school community

## **OTHER OFFICERS**

- As deemed necessary according to the individual Council by-laws

## **5. Meetings**

The SCC shall meet a minimum of 4 times a year for each individual Campus - meeting dates for the rest of the year will be determined at the September Election meeting. Inclusive to those four, two meetings will be held with all Campus elected and voting members together (if necessary).

Minutes will include:

- a) members in attendance
- b) topics discussed
- c) motions presented and decisions made

They will not contain personal opinions.



Meeting attendance for voting members is important. Voting members who are not able to attend more than two meetings in one school calendar year will be removed from the list of voting members. Voting members include: Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and 4 additional voting members.

## **6. Decision Making Procedures**

## **Quorum**

A quorum is required to pass motions made at the S.C.C. meetings. A quorum exists where a majority of the elected and voting members of the S.C.C. are present. (The majority of which must be parents). In individual Campus meeting Quorum will be based on the number of voting members present for that individual Campus. In All Campus meetings, Quorum will be determine by amalgamating all voting members from each Campus and determining the number (50% + 1) required to reach Quorum.

## **Voting and Non-Voting Members**

Meeting attendance for voting members is important. Voting members who are not able to attend more than two meetings in one school calendar year will be removed from the list of voting members. Voting members include: Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and 4 (or less) additional randomly selected members who put forth a nomination for voting member

## **Accountability**

All meetings will follow the procedures in the current edition of "Roberts Rules of Order" (see #10). All decisions will be made in a fair and democratic manner. It is hoped that all decisions will be made through consensus; however, if a vote is needed to resolve an issue, majority will be considered 50% + 1 of the elected members excluding the Chairperson of the S.C.C. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson shall cast the deciding vote.

Financial records must be kept in order and available for inspection by Council members, the community and/or school officials. A current financial report will be presented at each scheduled S.C.C. meeting. All monies generated through fundraising initiatives must be deposited through the school office bookkeeping process. One week prior to the scheduled S.C.C. meeting, the school office will provide the S.C.C. Treasurer an updated statement of all transactions on the S.C.C. account and a current balance. Access to the account will require two of four signatures of signing officers (principal, or designate and chairperson or treasurer of the S.C.C.). At year end, all transactions on the S.C.C. account will be communicated to the community through a special end of term S.C.C. newsletter.

All Major Fundraising Initiatives must follow the procedure outlined in procedure #5131. Minutes of the previous meetings must always be reviewed and kept on file and will be posted on the school website. All meetings must be conducted in a business-like manner. School Community Council meetings are not a forum for discussion of individuals (students, staff members, parents).

An agenda will be presented at each meeting by the Chairperson. This agenda will be prepared by the S.C.C. Chairperson in consultation with the school Principal. Members/parents may make a request to the Chairperson or the Principal, seven calendar days in advance of the meeting, to include an item on the agenda. This time frame must be followed to allow sufficient time to distribute the full agenda to the school community.

## **7. Specific Objectives of the SCC**

a) To follow the Ministry and Board guidelines concerning School Community Councils

b) To act as an advisory body to the principal of the school

c) To participate in four major areas of responsibility: fostering parent/student engagement; curriculum support and/or review, well-being and fundraising

Sub-committees may be created to report to the main S.C.C. in these four areas.

Sub-committees must be chaired by an elected member of the current S.C.C.

Composition of the sub-committees may include non-members of the current S.C.C.

d) To review, annually, the school policies and provide input in direction setting

e) To provide advice to the appropriate Superintendent of Education in the appointment of principal/vice-principal

f) To advocate for students and staff at the school, e.g. social connection opportunities, community events, resources to support virtual learning, technology to support curriculum delivery in the virtual environment

g) To facilitate fundraising initiatives that will augment the annual operating budget assigned to the school

h) To assist and advise the principal in directing funds generated through fundraising initiatives

i) To advise Board and the Ministry of Education on issues and policies directly affecting the school

## **8. Amendments to the Constitution**

The constitutional guidelines are subject to review and change. Changes to the Constitution may be made by a majority vote of the elected S.C.C. members. Changes to the constitution must be advertised one week prior to voting on these changes and communicated via email one week prior to meeting to all voting members. This amendment process will not apply to changes mandated by the Board or Ministry.

## **9. Definitions**

**Elected member** - any member who is elected to the position and is not an employee of the board. This includes representatives from:

a) parents and guardians

In the event that there are insufficient volunteers to contest the S.C.C. seats, elected

members will include any member who is represented by the above criteria and is acclaimed to the position of School Community Council Representative.

**Length of term** - one year. Positions / seats on the council may be contested in consecutive years.

**Vote** - Council issues may be resolved through a formal vote. The vote may be by virtual ballot. Only elected members have a vote. The Chairperson may vote only in the event of a tie. **Majority will be considered 50% +1.**

For issues requiring full community input and vote (e.g., uniforms, dress code), a process will be developed by the current Council to facilitate as many votes as possible. All items requiring a full community vote must be advertised to the community 30 days prior to the vote. **Definition of majority will be determined and communicated prior to vote.**

**Annual S.C.C. Election Process** - Based on current Ministry regulations, the election of the School Community Council must be completed prior to the end of September of each school year. The following timeline will be followed annually:

#### **SEPTEMBER:**

**First week** of school:

- advertise the role of the School Community Council
- request nominations / volunteers for the positions available (nomination form will be attached)
- accept nominations / volunteers for 5 working days only

**Second week** of school:

- collect all nominations / volunteers (proper nomination forms must be submitted to be considered). If sufficient numbers warrant, disseminate information about nominees and process for voting
- If numbers of nominations / volunteers can be accommodated by the current guidelines and constitution for S.C.C. composition, all nominations / volunteers will be acclaimed

**Third week** of school:

- if all members are acclaimed, inform community through newsletter
- if necessary, set up election
- inform community of winners if election was necessary

**Fourth week** of September:

- hold inaugural S.C.C. meeting
- establish list of Council Officers
- establish Council priorities and future meetings
- communicate list of S.C.C. Officers and Council priorities

### **Advisory**

- the School Community Council by Ministry mandate is advisory to the principal of the School

### **Community member**

- any person or persons interested in the educational system but who does not have a child in the school in which he/she is a member of the School Community Council

## **10. Operating Procedures**

### **ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER**

Rules of order help people work together effectively. They are a tool, to be agreed upon by each School Community Council according to its need. The Council requires a set of rules especially to assist the chair in knowing the procedure for:

- making a motion
- tabling a motion
- amending a motion
- withdrawing a motion
- notice of motion
- voting
- rejecting a motion
- points of order

The following is a simplified guide to rules of order. Other official rules, such as Robert's Rules of Order are easily available. Included in the Appendix is the F.W.T.A.O. document on Rules of Order.

### **Simple Rules of Order**

1. An individual must be recognized by the chair before obtaining the floor to make a motion. The chair of the meeting must say it is your turn, before you can speak to the meeting and formally propose a course of action.
2. Once an individual has the floor, he or she may make a formal proposal or motion, beginning with the statement, "I move...."
3. Another individual must second the motion, by saying, "I second the motion". This indicates that he or she agrees the proposal should be discussed.
4. Once a motion is made and seconded, the chair states the question so everyone is clear on what is being proposed. From this point, until the motion has been voted All discussion must focus on the motion.
5. After stating the motion, the chair asks if the assembly is ready for the question, or ready to vote on the proposal.
6. If no one indicates a desire to speak to the issue, the chair puts the question or conducts the vote by asking for those in favour and those opposed. (The vote may be conducted by a show of hands, by standing, or by ballot.)
7. If members of the group wish to discuss the motion, the chair opens debate. Each



participant may speak to the question twice, but no one may speak the second time until everyone has had the chance to speak once. Once debate is complete, the chair puts the question.

8. The majority needed to pass the motion should be stated in the School Community Council bylaw (eg. 51%). In case of tie, the motion is lost.

### **Amending a motion**

- Up until the chair states the question, the person making the motion may change it, (although the seconder may withdraw and the changed motion may need another seconder). Once the chair has stated the question, however, the motion must be formally amended in order to be changed.
- The person making the motion may propose to modify it. The chair will ask if anyone objects. If they do, the question to modify the motion is put to a vote. If the group consents to the modification, debate continues on the motion as amended.
- Another individual can move to amend the motion by stating, "I move to amend the motion by..." From here, the process is the same for any other motion-steps three through eight on the previous page.
- An amendment to the amendment may also be proposed, but a third amendment is out of order.
- After the amendment has been dealt with, discussion returns to the original motion.

### **Withdrawing a motion**

- At any time before a vote, the person making the original motion may ask to withdraw it. The motion to withdraw does not require a seconder. Once the question is withdrawn, it is as if it never existed.
- If the chair has already stated the question and a request to withdraw the motion is made, the chair asks if there is any objection. If there is none, the motion is withdrawn. If someone objects, the request to withdraw the motion is put to a vote.

### **Tabling a motion**

- A motion to table a motion means to set it aside to discuss at another time so more pressing business can be discussed, or so more information about the issue can be obtained.
- The motion to table takes precedence over the motion being discussed.
- The motion to table requires a seconder.
- There can be no debate on a motion to table.

### **Motions that are null and void**

- Any motion that contradicts provincial laws and regulations, local policy or School Community Council bylaws is out of order, even if the motion was voted on and passed by a majority vote.

