

Sir William Mulock School Council Constitution

Article 1: Name and Address

1. The organization will be known as “Sir William Mulock School Council,” hereinafter referred to as the “SWMSC” or “Council” or “School Council.”

Sir William Mulock Secondary School
705 Columbus Way
Newmarket, Ontario L3X 2M7
Phone: 905-967-1045

Article 2: Mission Statement

1. ‘To enable every student to strive for personal excellence, to make a contribution to his/her community and to acquire the skills and attitudes that will prepare him/her for life-long learning in a global society.’

Article 3: Procedures and Operating Guidelines

1. The operational procedures of the Council are written in compliance with the Ontario Ministry of Education Act – Regulation 612.00/613.00, York Region District School Board (YRDSB) Policy and Procedures #262.0, YRDSB Policies and Procedures 676.0, and with reference to the Ontario Ministry of Education School Councils – A Guide for Members, and the YRDSB School Council Handbook – Quick Start Guide. All recommendations and activities of the Council shall comply with all Ministry of Education Acts, York Region District School Board Policies, and Procedures and Staff Collective Agreements. The School Council members will adhere to the Constitution.
2. The members of the School Council shall be responsible for maintaining the Constitution.

Article 4: Purpose and Objectives

1. Fostering collaborative partnerships among the school, the family, and the community that are essential to improving student learning.
2. Increasing a shared sense of accountability for public education.
3. Encouraging effective parental involvement in the education of their children.
4. Providing a means for regular communication and dialogue among all partners in education.
5. Participating in the development and support of the School Improvement Plan (SIP.)
6. Providing input into decisions made by the School Administration, the Board, and the Ministry.
7. Helping create an environment within the School which actively promotes an atmosphere for the Intellectual, Physical, Social and Ethical development of the student.
8. Actively supporting the Principal, Administration, Staff, Parents, and Students in achieving such an environment.

9. Collaborating with the principal to coordinate community resources that support student-learning needs.

Article 5: Membership

In accordance with York Region district Policy 262.0, members of the School Council shall include:

1. Parents/guardians, hereafter referred to as “parents,” of students enrolled in the school must constitute the majority of the members of Council. A person may not be a parent member if he/she is employed at the school. If he/she is not employed by the school, but employed elsewhere by the Board, he/she must make every effort to inform the Council of that fact. An employee of the Board cannot serve as the chair or co-chair of the Council.:
 - i. Chair (Executive)
 - ii. Co-Chair or Vice Chair (Executive), if applicable
 - iii. Secretary (Executive)
 - iv. Treasurer (Executive)
 - v. Fundraising Coordinator (Executive), if applicable
 - vi. Members-at-Large (up to twenty (20))
2. Community Representative, if applicable
3. Principal/Vice Principal(s)
4. Teacher Representative
5. Support Staff Representative, if applicable
6. Student Representative

Article 6: Roles and Responsibilities of Council Members

ALL School Council Members’ Roles and Responsibilities *shall* include:

1. Regularly attending School Council meetings and informing the Chair if unable to attend.
2. Participating on committees and assisting with tasks of the Council.

Chair’s Roles and Responsibilities *shall* include:

1. Presiding over all School Council meetings and overseeing all Council activities.
2. Preparing an agenda prior to meetings.
3. Ensuring that:
 - i. Minutes are recorded
 - ii. Parents are consulted
 - iii. Fundraising meets Board policies
 - iv. The Constitution is reviewed annually
4. Preparing, in consultation with the Principal, an annual report which shall be submitted to the Superintendent.

May also include:

5. Having served on the Council in the previous term.
6. Representing the Council at official school functions.
7. Signing any documents which the Council has authorized.
8. Spending authority for up to \$50.00/year for Council-related objectives, without Council’s prior approval. Such expenditures must be supported by the usual required documentation and must be noted in the next Treasurer’s report and minutes.
9. Regularly checking for Council telephone and email messages on the Council’s school voicemail and email account.

Co-Chair/Vice Chair's Roles and Responsibilities *shall* include:

1. Sharing responsibilities with Chair.
2. Acting on behalf of the Chair in the event of Chair's absence.
3. Taking minutes in Secretary's absence

Secretary's Roles and Responsibilities *shall* include:

1. Recording minutes of all School Council meetings.
2. Forwarding minutes to Council meeting attendees and the parent community in general.
3. Maintaining a file of minutes for a four-year period.
4. Preparing, distributing, and updating a current list of all Council members, including email addresses and phone numbers.

Treasurer's Roles and Responsibilities *shall* include:

1. Preparing and distributing a financial report at all School Council meetings.
2. Preparing an annual financial report for the parents, Principal, and the Board, ensuring the Council balance reconciles with the school's balance.

Fundraising Coordinator's Roles and Responsibilities *shall* include:

1. Being responsible for coordinating any School Council fundraiser(s), under the direction of the School Council, and overseeing any other fundraising efforts of the Council.
2. Ensuring all fundraising campaigns are approved by Council and Principal.
3. Reviewing other fundraising possibilities and presenting suggestions.
4. Submitting fundraising reports to Council as needed.

Member(s)-at-Large' Roles and Responsibilities *shall* include:

1. Acting as a liaison between School Council and parents.
2. Encouraging the participation of parents in activities supported by Council.

Community member's (non-school parent) Roles and Responsibilities *shall* include:

1. Acting as a liaison between the School Council and the community.
2. Representing the community on the Council.

The Principal's Roles and Responsibilities *shall* include:

1. Attending all School Council meetings, unless unable to do so by reason of illness or cause beyond control. In such case, the Vice-Principal, if applicable, shall attend as a delegate. In the case where there is no Vice-Principal, the meeting must be postponed until such a time as the Principal is able to attend.
2. Call the first school council meeting within the first 35 days of the school year
3. Provide written notice (at least 14 days) of dates, times and locations of the election to every parent of a student who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school;
4. Make known the names of members of the school council to parents of students enrolled in the school within 30 days after the determination of the school council;
5. Not be entitled to vote in votes taken by the school council or by a committee of the school council;
6. Provide written notice of the dates, times and locations of the meetings of the school council to every parent of a student who is enrolled in the school;
7. Ensure that copies of the minutes of the school council meetings are kept at the school and are accessible to all parents;
8. Ensure that the school council constitution and by-laws are readily available to the school community;
9. Ensure that school council communications and the school council annual report are accessible to all students and parents/guardians;
10. Distribute to each member of the school council any materials received from and identified by the Ministry of Education or the Board as being relevant for distribution to school councils;

11. Act as a resource person to the school council and assist the council in obtaining information regarding the function of school councils, including information relating to relevant legislation, regulations and policies;
12. Consider each school council recommendation and advise the council of decisions reached or actions taken in response to each recommendation, along with a rationale for these actions or decisions;
13. Solicit the views of the school council with respect to the establishment and amendment of Board policies and procedures that relate to student achievement and well-being and to the accountability of the education system to parents;
14. Solicit the views of the school council with respect to the establishment, implementation, review and communication of the school improvement plan and the school profile;
15. Ensure that any fundraising carried out by the school council aligns with the school improvement plan;
16. Ensure that the financial records are maintained at the school and available for examination for a seven year period;
17. Support and promote the school council's operations and activities;
18. Advise the school council when they are not in compliance with Board policies and procedures;
19. Communicating with the Chair(s) as required.

Teacher Representative's Roles and Responsibilities *shall* include:

1. Representing the teachers at School Council meetings.
2. Sitting on committees as the need arises.

Support Staff Representative's Roles and Responsibilities *shall* include:

1. Representing the school support staff at School Council meetings.

Student Representative's Roles and Responsibilities *shall* include:

1. Being a student Council member.
2. Representing the students of Mulock on the School Council.
3. Acting as a liaison between the students and the Council.
4. Attending Council meetings, as required.

Article 7: Committees

1. All committees will be sub-committees of the Council.
2. Election of sub-committees will take place as determined by the Council.
3. Sub-committees must include at least one parent member of Council and may include persons who are not members of the Council.
4. Progress reports shall be submitted to the Council, as requested.
5. Committees will make recommendations to the Council.
6. Committee members shall abide by the Council's Code of Ethics.

Article 8: Fundraising

1. All fundraising is subject to the approval of the Principal, in accordance with Board policies and guidelines.
2. Where possible, funds raised should be spent in the year in which they are raised.
3. The fundraising plan for each school year shall align with the school improvement plan.

Article 9: Meetings

1. Number and Timetable of Meetings

In the spring, a timetable will be created which states the meeting dates agreed upon for the following school year. A copy of these dates and times will be included in communications to the families of the school. It is recognized that this timetable may change from time to time. At least four (4) meetings must be scheduled each school year. The first meeting must be within 30 days of the commencement of school.

2. Agendas

Agenda items should be submitted to the Chair one week prior to the Council's next meeting. The Chair will set the agenda, with the Principal, prior to the meeting and arrange for it to be sent out to the parent community in advance of the meeting.

3. Minutes

- i. The Chair will ensure that minutes be taken at every meeting and they shall be posted on the school website prior to the next meeting of the Council. The minutes shall include motions, decisions, and actions to be taken.
- ii. Minutes must be kept for a minimum of four years and must be available at the school for examination by any person.

4. Quorum

- i. A meeting will have quorum if:
 - the majority of Council members are present
 - and
 - the majority of those present are parents.
- ii. A meeting of Council can be held if there is no quorum but all voting will be deferred.

Article 10: Decision-Making

1. Consensus

The preferred method to resolve issues on Council is by consensus. Consensus is a collective opinion or general agreement by ALL the Council members.

2. Voting

- a. In the case where a decision cannot be reached through consensus, the chair may decide on one of the following:
 - i. to have a vote by way of a show of hands or a silent vote by those present in which a 51% majority shall carry the vote
 - ii. a rescind motion requires a 2/3 majority
 - iii. to defer the issue to the next meeting
 - iv. to defer the issue to a special meeting
 - v. to defer the issue to a sub-committee
- b. All members of Council are entitled to one vote, including teacher, staff, student and community representative(s). The Principal and Vice-Principal(s) of the school are not entitled to vote in votes taken by the School Council or by a committee of the School Council.

3. From time to time, Council may be required to communicate with other Council members to conduct emergency votes or to transmit other information in conducting Council business. For these purposes, communication by email is considered sufficient to have communicated to all Council members, provided that all the Council members who have provided email addresses are included in the distribution. By extension, voting by email, if initiated by the Chair and suitably recorded, is considered valid. For emergency email votes, a period of 48 hours shall be allotted to allow members to reply. Majority will rule. The motion and the result of the voting shall be recorded in the minutes of the following meeting.

Article 11: Remuneration

1. Council members cannot receive any remuneration for their work as a member of Council.

Article 12: Finance

1. School Council Account

All School Council funds will be kept in the Sir William Mulock's School Council Account.

2. Signing Authorities

Consistent with the Board's Finance Policies and Procedures, the Administration shall have signing authority. The signatures of the Principal and one of either the Chair(s) or Treasurer will be required for disbursement of funds.

3. Disbursement and Allocation of Money

- i. All funds are deposited in the bank and cheques issued for reimbursements upon submission of original invoices/receipts.
- ii. A Cheque Request Voucher – School Council form, duly filled out and signed by the Chair and/or Treasurer, is required before any payment is issued.
- iii. All money must be collected by the end of the year. Funds should be disbursed or allocated to a specific purpose by the end of the year, leaving a minimal balance to start the new school year.
- iv. Financial records shall be kept a minimum of four years and must be available at the school for examination by any person.

Article 13: Constitutional Amendments

1. The School Council will review the Constitution annually. A sub-committee can perform the review and bring proposed amendments to the School Council for voting. Amendments to the Constitution must be presented to the Council at a regularly scheduled meeting. Constitutional amendments require a 2/3 majority to be passed.

By-Laws

Article I: Election Procedures

All parents, teachers, support staff, and student(s) shall be elected through processes adhering to the following procedures, in compliance with *Ontario Regulation 612.00* and *School Council Policy and Procedure 262.0*:

1. Acclamations

- i. Parent elections shall be by acclamation when the number of candidates is equal to, or less than, the number of parent member positions on the Council.

2. Election Procedures for Parent Members

- i. The election shall be held at the beginning of each school year on a date determined by the SWMSC. According to *Ontario Regulation 612/00*, elections must take place within the first 30 days of the school year.
- ii. Written public notice of the annual elections and nomination forms shall be given to every parent, by the Principal, at least 14 days before the date of the election.
- iii. Each parent/guardian seeking election must be nominated or self-nominated in writing, must have a child registered at the school, and must declare if he or she is employed by the Board. For those unable to attend the meeting, nominations will be accepted in writing, prior to the election meeting, by the Chair of the Council or the Principal.
- iv. Each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school shall be entitled to one vote for each parent/guardian membership position on the Council.
- v. The election shall be conducted by secret ballot. In the event of a tie, a run-off ballot will be held immediately.
- vi. The Principal will communicate the results to the candidates and then to the school community. A list of candidates and the vote results will be kept on file for use in the event of vacancy on the Council
- vii. The school Principal and Vice-Principals, if applicable, shall be designated members
- viii. The Community Representative shall be appointed by the Council
- ix. The Teacher Representative shall be elected by the teachers
- x. The non-teaching staff member shall be elected by the members of the non-teaching staff

Article II: Term of Office

1. Members are elected for a one-year term to last from the first School Council meeting, after elections are held, until the first School Council meeting of the next school year. In all cases, such as filling a position mid-year, the term will end at the first School Council meeting of the following school year. Members of the Council may be re-elected to serve additional terms of office

Article III: Vacancies

1. A vacancy in the membership of the SWMSC does not prevent the Council from exercising its authority.
2. Positions that become vacant due to resignation or removal shall be filled as soon as possible by offering the person with the next highest number of votes, the opportunity to accept the position. When there are no more candidates available, Council may appoint parent members.
3. In all cases, parents must make up the majority of the members of Council.

Article IV: Removal

1. The Council may choose to remove from Council any member who has missed two (2) meetings and shall undertake to replace that person according to By-Law Article III – Vacancies.
2. A Council member who is found to have breached the Code of Ethics or Conflict of Interest By-Law is subject to removal.

Article V: Conflict of Interest

1. Conflicts of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential.
2. If individual Council members perceive themselves to be in conflict of interest, they are honour- and duty-bound to declare their conflict at the earliest possible opportunity and at the time of the meeting so the minutes may reflect this declaration.
3. If a School Council member finds him- or herself in a conflict of interest position in terms of some issue under consideration by the council, the member should declare such and either leave the room or refrain from participating in the discussion relating to that subject. The member should not vote on any decision made on the issue.

Article VI: Conflict Resolution

1. The Council will undertake to resolve all internal conflicts within its mandate in a timely manner. The Council will abide by any conflict resolution policy issued by the Board.

Code of Ethics

The School Council members shall:

- consider the best interests of all students;
- be guided by the school and the Board's mission statements;
- act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of a school council, as identified in the Education Act, its regulations, and the applicable by-laws and procedures;
- become familiar with the school's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them;
- maintain the highest standards of integrity;
- recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community;
- conduct themselves in accordance with the Board's Equity and Inclusive Education policy;
- treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption;
- encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
- acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the council;
- respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the school council;
- not disclose confidential information;
- act in accordance with relevant laws, including Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), and relevant Board policies and procedures;
- advise the principal immediately if the member believes that there may have been a privacy breach;
- abide by applicable laws and policies with respect to access, use or disclosure of Board data and information;
- limit discussions at school council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole;
- use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise;
- promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community;
- declare any conflict of interest;
- not accept any payment or benefit financially through school council involvement.