

Win Ferguson School Council Operating Procedures

January 2014

1. DEFINITIONS

In these Operating Procedures:

- “School” means Win Ferguson Elementary School;
- “Council” means the School Council for the School;
- “Parents” means parent, legal guardian or primary caregiver of any child attending an educational program at the School;
- “Regulation” means the School Councils Regulation under the School Act;
- “School Community” means persons other than parents (as defined in 1C above) who have, in the opinion of the majority of the members of the School Council, an interest in the well-being of the School.

2. AUTHORITY

The Win Ferguson School Council derives its authority to participate in the education of our students through Alberta Provincial Legislation, specifically *Section 22* of the *School Act*, and the School Councils Regulation which supports it.

3. MISSION STATEMENT

Our school council is a collective association of parents, teachers, principals, staff, and community representatives who work together to promote the well-being, effectiveness and leadership qualities of our entire school community therefore enhancing the students' learning experience.

4. PURPOSE

The goals of the School Council, in keeping with the *School Act* and the *School Councils Regulation*, are to:

1. Represent the parent perspective by providing advice to and consulting with the principal and the board on matters relating to the School such as: the School philosophy, mission and vision, policies, improvement plans, programs and directions, and budget allocations to meet student needs;
2. Develop special events which will foster participation and well-being of the school community;
3. Develop a communication plan to share information with parents and the community and facilitate communications with all educational stakeholders;
4. Consult with other school councils and provincial organizations;
5. Advise school boards, Alberta Education or other provincial organizations on broader educational issues;
6. Encourage a positive atmosphere where individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
7. Stimulate continuous improvement in meaningful involvement by all members of the School Community;

8. Facilitate collaboration among concerned participants of the School Community;
9. Support an approach to education in which decisions are made collaboratively and, wherever possible, at the School and classroom level;
10. Facilitate the achievement of a common vision for the School;
11. Facilitate a formal performance evaluation of our School Council and communicate the results of this evaluation to the school board and the School Community;
12. Support the School in its efforts to focus teachers' time and the School resources on the essential tasks of teaching and learning;
13. Facilitate communication with educational stakeholders and the general community;
14. Comply with the School Councils Regulation by providing the school board with an annual report that summarizes the School Council's activities for the previous school year, including a financial statement relating to money, if any, handled by the School Council, no later than September 30th.
15. Adhere to School Council's Code of Ethics

5. GOVERNANCE, MEMBERSHIP and DECISION MAKING

Win Ferguson Community School Council uses a Town Hall model of Governance.

- The membership of the School Council shall consist of:
 - Parents
 - The principal of the School
 - One or more teachers from the School, appointed or elected by the teachers;
 - Others as decided by the School Council.
- The voting members of the School Council shall consist of: Parents of children attending Win Ferguson Community School
- The non-voting members of the School Council shall consist of: All individuals not defined as parents of children attending Win Ferguson Community School
- The parent/other ratio may vary at times, but the number of parent members must always exceed the number of administration, staff and/or community representatives.

6. DECISION MAKING

Decisions at School Council meetings will be made by consensus as much as possible.

- A decision made by consensus must be stated clearly and recorded as such in the minutes of the meeting.
- If a decision is made by a vote, the motion must be moved and passed by the majority of School Council voting members.

7. QUORUM

Quorum will be attained when the majority of members present at any meeting are parents of students enrolled in the School, and the principal or designate is present and 50% of the elected Executive members.

In the absence of a quorum, no motions may be considered or approved.

8. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and TERMS of OFFICE

The positions of the Executive Committee shall consist of: A Chairperson, Vice Chairperson (or Co-Chairperson), Secretary, Past Chairperson (Not Mandatory) and a PTA Rep

1. All Executive Committee positions must be filled by parents
2. Every parent is eligible to be elected to an Executive Committee position on the School Council;
3. The terms of office are from the Annual General Meeting to the following Annual General Meeting.
4. The Executive Committee of the School Council will be elected by parents attending the Annual General Meeting;
5. The Executive Committee, through the Chairperson and in consultation with the principal, will provide the agenda for all meetings and circulate minutes of the same;
6. The Executive Committee will carry out the day-to-day operation of the School Council.

9. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. A. Chairperson

It is expected that the School Council Chairperson will be a parent of a student attending the school. Unless otherwise delegated, the Chairperson of the School Council will:

- 1) Chair all meetings of the School Council;
- 2) Coordinate with the principal to establish meeting agendas;
- 3) Communicate with the principal on a regular basis;
- 4) Call regular School Council meetings;
- 5) Decide all matters relating to rules of order at the meetings;
- 6) Follow existing School Council operating procedures;
- 7) Ensure that minutes are recorded and maintained;
- 8) Have general supervision of all activities of the School Council;
- 9) Be the official spokesperson of the School Council;
- 10) Ensure there is regular communication with the school community, beyond those who attend meetings;
- 11) Stay informed about school board policy that impacts School Council;
- 12) Submit an annual report in conformance with the Regulations.

1. B. Vice Chairperson

Unless otherwise delegated, the Vice-Chairperson of the School Council will:

- 1) In the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the Chairperson, fulfill the Chairperson's responsibilities;
- 2) In the absence of the Chairperson, supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the School Council;
- 3) Work with and support the Chairperson in agenda preparation;
- 4) Promote teamwork and assist the Chairperson in the smooth running of the meetings;
- 5) Keep informed of relevant school and school board policies;
- 6) Prepare to assume the position of Chairperson in the future;
- 7) Aid the Chairperson and undertake tasks assigned by the Chairperson.

1. **C. Secretary**

Unless otherwise delegated, the Secretary of the School Council will:

- 1) Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure the minutes accurately reflect the directions agreed to at the School Council meeting;
- 2) Keep minutes, correspondence, records and other School Council documents;
- 3) Distribute notices of meetings and other School Council events as required;
- 4) Ensure all materials relating to the School Council including resources (Alberta School Council Resource Manual), all meeting minutes and any relevant documents are available to the public in an accessible location in the School;
- 5) Prepare communications for newsletters, website or other notices on a regular basis;

In the absence of the secretary, the School Council shall choose a recording secretary for the meeting.

1. **D. Past Chairperson (Not Mandatory)**

The Past Chairperson of the School Council will:

- 1) Serve in an advisory capacity to the new School Council;
- 2) Act in the absence of both the Chairperson and Vice-Chair.

1. **E. PTA Representative**

The PTA Representative will serve as a liaison between the School Council and the PTA

Each elected officer, at the end of his/her term, shall ensure that all relevant material is forwarded to the incoming officer.

10. VACANCIES

Any vacancies of the School Council will be advertised to the parent community. Elections for vacant positions will be held at the next regular meeting of School Council. If this fails to fill the vacancy then that position will continue to be advertised until it is filled at a subsequent meeting.

11. MEETINGS

Regular Meetings

At the Annual General Meeting, the School Council will review the number of regular meetings, and time, date and place of those meetings for the school year.

Special Meetings

- The School Council Executive Committee in consultation with administration may at any time give notice of a Special Meeting of the School Council. Written notice will be given at least 5 days before the meeting. The notice will state the time, date and place of the meeting, and describe the matters to be dealt with.
- At any Special Meeting all parents in attendance at the Special Meeting shall have the right to vote.

Annual General Meetings

Where the School Council hasn't been operational the year prior, an Establishment Meeting will be held in accordance with Section 3 of the School Councils Regulation, otherwise an Annual General Meeting of the School Council will take place one each school year.

The Annual General Meeting of the School Council shall be held not later than thirty (30) days after the first instructional day of the school year and will be advertised throughout the School and the community at large at least twenty one (21) days in advance of the meeting.

- All parents are eligible for election.
- All parents are eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting.
- The business of the Annual General Meeting shall include:
 - the election of Executive Members;
- And may also include:
 - plans for the upcoming year;
 - discussion of any major issue in which all parents should have input such as: changes to the Vision or Mission; school policy; or other major changes in school program or focus

- any formal evaluation of the School Council.

12. MEETING AGENDAS

The Chairperson will work in partnership with the principal to establish the agendas for all meetings. Agenda item requests must be made through the Chairperson, who will, if necessary, consult with the Executive and principal as to the appropriateness of the item requested.

13. COMMITTEES

The School Council may appoint committees that consist of School Council members and/or School Community members. Committees will meet outside of School Council meetings to complete their assigned tasks and report verbally and/or in written format on their activities at School Council meetings.

14. POLICIES

Subject to any provincially or board mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may make and implement policies in the school that the School Council considers necessary to carry out its functions.

1. The School Council may develop policy for the duration of their term.
2. The policies of the School Council will be reviewed at the beginning of every new School Council term to decide if each policy will be implemented for the new School Council and its term.
3. Topics on which School Council may wish to develop guiding policies include, but are not limited to: Communication (Internal and External), Record Keeping, Privacy, Location of Meetings, Official Correspondence Address, New Member Orientation, School Council Evaluation, and Social Media.

15. FUNDRAISING SOCIETY and OTHER GROUPS OF PARENTS

The School Council recognizes and appreciates the efforts of other groups of parents striving to support and enhance the educational opportunities in the School.

1. The School Council will communicate regularly with the fundraising society and/or other groups of parents to support their activities and to solicit support for School Council activities.
2. The School Council may develop policies to promote a productive, open and transparent relationship with the fundraising society and/or other groups of parents.

16. CODE OF ETHICS

All School Council members shall:

1. Abide by the legislation that governs them;
2. Be guided by the mission statement of the school and School Council;

3. Endeavour to be familiar with school policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them;
4. Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth;
5. Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community;
6. Declare any conflict of interest;
7. Encourage a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
8. Apply democratic principles;
9. Consider the best interests of all students;
10. Respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the School Council;
11. Not disclose confidential information;
12. Limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole;
13. Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise;
14. Promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community;
15. Accept accountability for decisions;
16. Not accept payment for School Council activities.

17. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The School Council shall abide by the Conflict Resolution Procedures outlined in the school board's policies and regulations. If none exist, the School Council shall apply every effort to resolve internal conflicts using the steps outlined in these Operating Procedures.

If at any time, ten (10) parents, or fifty per cent (50%) of the Executive Committee members of the School Council are of the opinion that the School Council is in a state of conflict such that its operation is significantly impaired, they may deliver a written request signed by them to all School Council members, and the following will apply:

- The Chairperson will call a Special Meeting of the School Council.
- The Secretary will provide a minimum of five (5) days written notice to all parents and School Council members of the date, time, place and purpose of the Special Meeting.
- At the Special Meeting, all parents and School Council members present will have an opportunity to hear and discuss the issues causing conflict.
- On motion, seconded by any parent or School Council member present at the Special Meeting, a vote shall be held respecting a proposed resolution to the conflict.
- If the combined majority of parents and School Council members present vote in favour of the resolution proposed, the School Council will immediately act upon the resolution.

19. PRIVACY

The School Council shall adhere to the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) and shall not use or share personal information for purposes other than those of School Council business.

20. DISSOLUTION

As per Alberta Provincial Legislation, only the Minister of Education has the authority to dissolve a School Council. If the School Council is dissolved, the Principal may establish an advisory committee to perform some or all of the duties of the School Council until the next school year. The Principal will perform the duties as outlined in Alberta Provincial Legislation with respect to the re-establishment of the School Council within forty (40) school days after the start of the next school year.

21. REVIEWS and AMENDMENTS

Subject to any provincially or board mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may make any changes to these Operating Procedures deemed necessary to carry out its functions.

- The Operating Procedures should be reviewed for their relevance and effectiveness annually, by the School Council Executive Committee or a committee established expressly for that purpose.
- Notice of proposed changes to the Operating Procedures will be provided to the School Community no less than 5 days before the meeting.
- The Operating Procedures of the School Council may be amended by a majority vote of the voting members present at any scheduled Regular, Special or Annual General meeting of the School Council.