

AVALON PUBLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

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ARTICLE I – NAME

- 1.1 The organization shall be called the Avalon Public School Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council.

ARTICLE II – DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Board** means the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, and where appropriate the Board's senior staff.
- 2.2 **Chair** includes co-chair, if applicable, and includes another Council member to whom the Chair has delegated his or her authority.
- 2.3 **Council** means the Avalon Public School Council.
- 2.4 **The Executive** means the mandatory and optional officers of the Council.
- 2.5 **Parent Members** means members of the Council who are parents or guardians of children at Avalon Public School.
- 2.6 **Parents** means parent(s) and guardian(s) of children enrolled at Avalon Public School.
- 2.7 **School** means Avalon Public School.
- 2.8 **School Community** means persons living or working within the attendance boundaries of Avalon Public School, Parents, Avalon Public School staff and students, and guests invited by the Council.
- 2.9 **Principal** includes the principal, vice-principal or an agent appointed by the principal of Avalon Public School, if applicable.
- 2.10 **Student** or **Students** means students enrolled at Avalon Public School.

ARTICLE III – PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The purpose of Council is, through the active participation of parents, to improve student achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. Council's primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations to the principal of the school and the Board.
- 3.2 The objectives of the council are to:
- 3.2.1 develop a strong relationship between home, school and the wider community served by the school, enhance educational opportunities for all students, and foster a community that will help students develop to their full potential;
 - 3.2.2 seek the views and opinions of the school's community on the operation of the school and the programs and services provided;
 - 3.2.3 provide advice to the principal and, as appropriate, to the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board and/or its senior staff, on the development and implementation of policies, programs and services affecting the school;

- 3.2.4 be an effective voice for promoting the interests of the school and students, and to actively support the school in meeting the educational needs of students;
 - 3.2.5 provide a forum for open communication among the staff, the parents and the rest of the Avalon Public School community while maintaining a school-wide focus on all issues.
 - 3.2.6 ensure fundraising efforts are directed toward the betterment of the school environment as a whole and, to the extent possible, benefit the entire school population.
- 3.3 The Council's operation shall be guided by the Vision Statement (Annex 1).

ARTICLE IV – AFFILIATIONS

- 4.1 The Council may seek membership in, or affiliation with, other organizations that have similar purposes, such as membership in the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC).
- 4.2 Membership in, or affiliation with, other organizations, including any umbrella organization of Board school councils, or any subsequent changes in such affiliation, will require a majority of votes at a meeting for which proper notice has been given to the membership.

ARTICLE V – ELECTIONS

- 5.1 Council elections will be conducted in accordance with [Board Procedure PR.509.SCO](#) and other relevant policies and procedures. The Council's Constitution and By-laws regarding elections take precedence so long as they do not conflict with Board policies and procedures.
- 5.2 Council elections will take place in September of each year and will be held at the Annual General Meeting.

ARTICLE VI – MEMBERS

- 6.1 The Council shall consist of the following members:
 - 6.1.1 Parent Representatives (unlimited)
 - 6.1.2 School Principal
 - 6.1.3 Teacher Representative (one)
 - 6.1.4 Community Representative (up to two, as and when required)
 - 6.1.5 Non-Teaching Employee Representative (one)
 - 6.1.6 Student Representative (one to be appointed by the principal if, after consulting with the Council, the principal deems it necessary)
 - 6.1.7 Past Chair or Co-Chair (if a past Co-Chair is not able to fill this position, a long standing member of the Council may be appointed)

- 6.2 The majority of Council members must be parents.
- 6.3 There shall be no honoraria paid to members of the Council.

ARTICLE VII – OFFICERS

- 7.1 The elected officers shall be a Chair or two Co-Chairs, Treasurer, and Secretary.
- 7.2 Should a Chair or Co-Chairs not be elected or acclaimed, parent members shall chair the meetings on a rotating basis.
- 7.3 The officers of the Council must be members elected by the members of the Council.
- 7.4 Appointed Officers: Other non-elected officers may be appointed by the Council to fill various operational requirements on an as and when required basis. Examples may include the hot lunch coordinator or the medieval fair coordinator.
- 7.5 Two parent members may share any officer's position.
- 7.6 The term of office shall be from the later of the date he or she is elected or appointed and the date of the first meeting of the school council after the elections until the date of the first meeting of the Council in the next school year.
- 7.8 An individual may be reelected to the Council as long as they have a child enrolled at Avalon Public School.
- 7.9 Council shall search actively to fill any vacant mandatory officer's position. At the start of each meeting such vacancies shall be announced. Any vacancy can be filled at an open Council meeting, either by election or by acclamation.
- 7.10 Elected and appointed members may seek additional terms of office. No elected member may serve in their position more than 3 consecutive school year terms.
- 7.11 The duties of the officers, the duties of the principal in relation to the Council, and members of the Council at large, are set forth in Annex 2 to this Constitution.

ARTICLE VIII – MEETINGS

- 8.1 There shall be one Annual General Meeting in September of each year (to be combined with elections of officers). This meeting will be open to all members of the school community.
- 8.2 Council meetings shall be held at the school at least six times in each school year. Notice of Council meetings will be posted on the school's notice boards, and be publicized to parents/ guardians in the school newsletter and/or by separate notice.
- 8.3 Special Agenda Meetings of the Council may be held at the call of the Chair or Co-Chairs or principal.
- 8.4 Members of Council shall make reasonable efforts to attend all Council meetings. For purposes of achieving a quorum and in order to ensure an effective Council, any member is deemed to have resigned his or her position if absent without notice for three consecutive Council meetings, but may be reinstated by a vote by Council.

- 8.5 In the event that the Chair is unable to perform his or her duties, the duties of the Chair shall be assumed by the Co-Chair or another Council member.
- 8.6 Council may adopt its own rules of procedure for the conduct of meetings which are consistent with Canadian principles of fairness and democracy.
- 8.7 Meetings of the council shall be open to all members of the school's community, and no such person may be excluded from the meeting except for disruptive behaviour.
- 8.8 A non-staff Council member may be removed from Council by a two-thirds vote for behaviour that is inappropriate or detrimental to the school or Council, for failure to perform his or her duty, for misrepresentation of or to Council, or for ignoring Council direction.
- 8.9 Commercial representations shall not be permitted without prior approval of a majority of council.

ARTICLE IX – VOTING

- 9.1 Consensus is the preferred decision-making model. However, it is recognized that voting may be required from time to time. Every parent member present at a meeting where a vote is taken is entitled to one vote.
- 9.2 All parent members elected and appointed to the council have equal privileges and voting rights. While the principal is the only non-voting member of the council, other council members may voluntarily exclude themselves from a vote in situations where an actual or perceived conflict of interest exists (see Article XIV).
- 9.3 Unless otherwise provided, a majority of votes is required to pass a motion.
- 9.4 Voting by proxy is not permitted.
- 9.5 Votes may only take place at meetings.
- 9.6 Motions may not be passed in the absence of a quorum of Council members.

ARTICLE X – QUORUM

- 10.1 To form a quorum as required for a meeting of the council:
- (a) a majority of the current elected and appointed members of the school council must be present at the meeting; and
 - (b) a majority of the members present shall be parent members.
- 10.2 If quorum is not achieved, council may proceed with the meeting at the discretion of the Chair, but may not vote on motions until quorum is achieved.

ARTICLE XI – COMMITTEES

- 11.1 The council may establish committees as necessary. Committees are established by a motion at a Council meeting. The motion shall set out the committee's mandate.

Membership on such committees shall not be restricted to members of the Council, although each committee shall include at least one parent/guardian member of the Council.

- 11.2 Committees may be terminated by Council vote, and shall be deemed to expire at the end of each Council term.
- 11.3 Committees do not represent Council but may seek Council approval of draft communications or other actions or representations.
- 11.4 Committees may receive money from Council through procedures set by Council.
- 11.5 Committees shall report to Council at least twice per Council term.
- 11.6 Committee meetings shall be open to the school community.

ARTICLE XII – FINANCES

- 12.1 The signing authorities of the Council shall be the Chair or one of the Co-Chairs, and the Treasurer.
- 12.2 All cheques issued on behalf of the Council require two signatures from the signing authorities.
- 12.3. All expenditures exceeding one hundred dollars (\$100.00) will be reported to Council at the next Council meeting.
- 12.4 Funds raised by the Council are intended to support the activities of the Council and Avalon Public School. Priority will be given to expenditures that will benefit the majority of the students.

ARTICLE XIII – FISCAL YEAR

- 13.1 The fiscal year of the Council shall be Sept 1 to August 31.
- 13.2 The Council will follow the financial requirements of the Board, including providing financial statements in accordance with Board policies.

ARTICLE XIV: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- 14.1 A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential.
- 14.2 Members of the Council will declare a conflict of interest in matters that they, members of their families, or business entities in which they have an interest, stand to benefit financially or otherwise either directly or indirectly by decisions of the Council.
- 14.3 Should an issue or agenda item arise during a Council meeting where a Council member is in a conflict of interest situation, he or she will declare the conflict of interest immediately and decline from the discussion and resolution.

ARTICLE XV: CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- 15.1 While it is the goal of Council to achieve consensus through discussion, in the event that a conflict arises, the conflict will be dealt with as follows:
- 15.1.1 If a Council member(s) or participant(s) becomes disruptive, the Chair will ask for order.
 - 15.1.2 If order is not restored, the Chair may direct the individual(s) to leave the meeting, though the removal from one meeting does not prevent individuals from participating in future meetings of Council.
 - 15.1.3 The Chair may request the disputing individual(s) to participate in a special meeting to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution to the dispute. Such a meeting should not be construed as a meeting of the Council.
 - 15.1.4 If an issue cannot be resolved at the local level, the Chair or Principal will request the Superintendent of Schools to provide direction.

ARTICLE XVI: COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

- 16.1 Any formal communication from Council or its officers, or a Council committee, where that communication advances a position on Avalon Public School or Board or Ministry policy or procedure or action, actual or proposed, must be co-signed by the Chair.

ARTICLE XVII: COUNCIL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 17.1 In addition to the roles and responsibilities stipulated in [Board Policy P.014.SCO](#), attachment 2, section 1.22 for the Council Chair, Council Members and Principal, additional roles and responsibilities of all officers are set out in Annex 2.

ARTICLE XVIII – CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

- 18.1 This constitution may be amended at the Annual General Meeting by approval of a motion by two-thirds majority of the parents/guardians in attendance of the meeting. OR
- 18.2 The Constitution may be amended by approval of a motion by a two-thirds majority of voting members of Council present at a meeting called for that purpose, provided that at least two weeks' notice is given for such a motion and details of the proposed amendments are circulated to all members with that notice.

ARTICLE XIX: DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE

- 19.1 This Constitution will come into force immediately upon the passing of a motion at a Council meeting to approve this Constitution.

SIGNATORIES

Nathalie Sharma

Co-Chair

February 22, 2010

Date

Teri Murray

Co-Chair

February 22, 2010

Date

Carrie Gillies

Treasurer

February 22, 2010

Date

Gina Pink

Secretary

February 22, 2010

Date

ANNEX 1: AVALON PUBLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL VISION STATEMENT

The Avalon Public School Council, a partnership of parents/guardians, principals, students, staff and community members, is dedicated to sustaining Avalon Public School as a child-centered, family-oriented school where children learn in an environment that is: safe, caring, creative, stimulating and challenging.

The purpose of council is, through the active participation of parents, to improve student achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. Council's primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations to the principal of the school and the Board.

The objectives of the council can be found in Article III of the Avalon Public School Council Constitution.

As a council, we believe in:

- A strong sense of community, with an understanding of the many cultures and abilities that comprise the school population. We strive to embrace diversity and encourage understanding, acceptance and the celebration of our differences.
- Open communication and dialogue to promote a positive and informative relationship among all council members.
- A high educational standard for our students and a commitment to a solid academic foundation for life-long learning.
- A forum for political action to allow all members of the school community a voice for their values and views on current educational issues.
- A commitment to the physical and emotional safety of all students, parents/guardians, staff and all council members.
- The flexibility to encourage growth and continuous improvement of the school environment and educational approaches.
- The Avalon Public School Principal Profile (see attached), created by council, to help define integral qualities and character traits for our school Principal.
- The school's emphasis on Character Development, using the [OCDSB Character Wheel](#) as a learning tool.

As a council, we support the Avalon Public School staff in their efforts to see that children leave school with:

- A complement of basic skills -- linguistic, mathematical, scientific, artistic, physical, technical and social.
- An enquiring mind and a desire for knowledge.
- Confidence, good self-esteem and high personal expectations.
- A strong character foundation with an emphasis on those traits featured on the OCDSB Character Wheel: acceptance, respect, appreciation, responsibility, fairness, optimism, perseverance and cooperation.
- An enhanced set of moral values – honesty, integrity and good judgment.

ANNEX 2: DUTIES OF MEMBERS

The following are the roles and responsibilities of the Council members:

a) Chair or Co-Chairs

- call school council meetings;
- prepare the agenda for school council meetings;
- participate in information and training programs;
- communicate with the school principal;
- ensure that there is regular communication with the school community;
- consult with senior Board staff and trustees, as required;
- facilitate input to the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training as appropriate;
- work in conjunction with the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils;
- prepare the annual report of the school council for submission to the school principal and to the school board if requested;
- in consultation with the treasurer, ensure that a general review of the financial records of the council is done on an annual basis by a member of the school community who is not a member of the council;
- conduct the business of the council between meetings including keeping the school community informed of current issues, dealing with priority issues in consultation with other council members as required;
- propose to the council, for voting purposes, how money raised by the council will be committed to the school over the following academic year;
- ensure the safe-keeping of council records;
- prepare correspondence as required.

b) Secretary

- takes minutes of the council meetings;
- prepare and distribute minutes to the council members (and to the school community as appropriate) within prescribed time lines;
- maintains a full and accurate account of all council meetings;
- provides for inspection of the minute book and records of the council to any member of council or member of the school's community, on request;
- arranges for the web posting of minutes to the Avalon Public School website.

c) Treasurer

- takes charge of any finances of the council, ensures the safe keeping of the council finances in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Board of Education, and provides an accounting thereof as may be required from time to time;
- provide an annual financial report to the council and the membership at large;
- ensures the safekeeping of the accounts, the books of accounts, and supporting invoices and receipts;
- consults with the school administration on budget and financial matters;
- in consultation with the chair or co-chairs, ensure that a general review of the financial records of the council is done on an annual basis by a member of the school community who is not a member of the council;
- performs such other related duties as may be assigned by the Chair of council from time to time.

d) Parent Member

- participates in council meetings;
- participates in information and training programs;
- acts as a link between the school council and the community;
- encourages the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the school community;
- may serve in a specific function such as, but not limited to:
 - Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils representative;
 - Ottawa Carleton District School Board (OCASC) representative;
 - Fundraising Coordinator;
 - Past Executive Member;
 - Special Events Coordinator.
- May serve in specific tasks such as, but not limited to:
 - assisting the Co-Chairs with correspondence as required;
 - sending notices of activities to the school community when necessary;
 - managing and editing the council Newsletter;
 - maintaining the council website;
 - coordinating non-fundraising volunteers.

e) The Principal

- supports and promotes the council's activities and operations;
- seeks input from the council in areas for which it has been assigned advisory responsibility;
- acts as a resource on laws, regulations, board policies, and collective agreements;
- obtains and provides information required by the council to enable it to make informed decisions;
- communicates with the Chair of the council, as required;
- ensures that copies of the minutes of the council's meetings are kept at the school;
- assists the council in communicating with the school community;
- encourages the participation of parents from all groups and other people within the school community, in the life of the school and the activities of the school's council.
- acts as liaison between the council and teaching staff.

f) Past Chair or Co-Chair

- provides advice to and act as a resource for the council for the purpose of continuity.

g) Fundraising Coordinator

- oversees all fundraising activities for the school council;
- manages the fundraising process including, but not limited to, the volunteer and parent feedback form, volunteer spreadsheet, determining the following year's fundraisers;
- appoints fundraising leaders to each fundraiser;
- reports to the council on the status of fundraisers when the fundraising leaders are not available.

ANNEX 3: AVALON PUBLIC SCHOOL PRINCIPAL PROFILE

Our principal is... a leader, an educator, a learner, a listener, a strong communicator, a person with compassion, empathy, and humour.

The principal of Avalon Public School:

- **Demonstrates leadership** to build a shared vision for effective teaching and learning with students, teachers, and parents. She/he cultivates a strong atmosphere of respect and safety through consistent and fair discipline that is reflective of school philosophy and procedures. Our principal recognizes the diverse skills and talents teachers bring and helps maximize their potential.
- **Demonstrates knowledge** by bringing a high level of understanding and skill in current research and best practices of teaching and learning. Our principal is open to innovation and supports teachers in creating dynamic learning environments where children feel confident to take risks, explore, and meet their potential. She/he is aware of and supportive of best practice programming for children with special needs, second language learners, gifted children, and others. She/he has an appreciation of and a willingness to advocate for all aspects of education, including the arts, physical education, and technology.
- **Models strong character** through respectful and empathetic interactions with all. Our principal actively encourages healthy character traits, including those represented on the shields in the lobby.
- **Embraces diversity** in the Avalon school community. She/he is sensitive to the diversity of our school population and encourages understanding, acceptance, and celebration of these differences.
- **Encourages and welcomes active parental involvement** through two-way communication and participation. Our principal maintains open, transparent, and timely communication with parents about all issues affecting the school community and the students. She/he works in partnership with the school council for the benefit of Avalon Public School.
- **Recognizes** Avalon Public School not just as an institution for education, but as a visible and active part of the community. Our principal is knowledgeable about and liaises with local social and community agencies and groups.
- **Reflects** on present circumstances and experiences and **envisions** next steps for the school community within the framework of OCDSB policy. She/he is able to balance present needs with consideration of upcoming needs in our growing school.

ANNEX 4: REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The Education Act R.S.O. 1990 c.E2

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90e02_e.htm

Ontario Regulation 612/00 – School Councils

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_000612_e.htm

Ottawa Carlton District School Board

<http://www.ocdsb.edu.on.ca/>

Ottawa Carleton District School Board – A Community of Character

http://www.ocdsb.edu.on.ca/au_hi_char_ed.asp

Ottawa Carleton District School Board Policies

Board Policy P.014.SCO – School Councils

Board Policy P.052.SCO – Fund-Raising in Schools

Board Policy P.067.SCO – Volunteers

Ottawa Carleton District School Board Procedures

Board Procedure PR.509.SCO – School Council Elections, Constitution and By-Laws

Board Procedure PR.540.SCO – Fund-Raising in Schools

Board Procedure PR.555.SCO – Volunteers

Board Procedure PR.616.FIN – Accounting for School-Generated Funds