

**William Mason School
Community Council Constitution
Adopted February 11, 2010**

1. Membership

1.1 Representative Members

The School Community Council will have the following Representative Members:

- (5 – 9) parents and community members elected by the community members present at the Annual General Meeting in November, for a 2-year term.
- (2) secondary students

1.2 Appointed Members

The School Community Council will have the following Appointed Members:

- The School Principal
- A teacher

2. Officers

2.1 The following School Council Officers will be elected annually from among the Representative Members:

- Chairperson
- Vice-Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer

The roles and responsibilities of the School Community Council Officers are listed in Appendix A (attached).

2.2 Two Year Terms

The term of office for Representative Members is two years with no limit on the number of consecutive terms that may be served. Approximately one half of the Representative Members of the SCC will be elected each year.

2.3 Vacancies

Vacancies among Representative Members will be filled by a Board of Education appointment subsequent to consultation with the SCC. This might include an instance where the vacancy needs to be filled for a period of time before the next regular election will be held.

2.4 Disqualification of Council Members

A School Community Council Member shall vacate his or her office as a Member of the SCC if the Member:

- a) is convicted of an indictable offence
- b) is absent from three or more consecutive meetings of the SCC without the authorization of the SCC and
- c) ceases to be eligible for election as a Member pursuant to the regulations or policies of the Board of Education regarding SCC.

A leave or suspension may be approved from the date an SCC Member is charged with an indictable offence.

Voluntary leave may be granted by the SCC.

3. School Community Council Meetings

3.1 Annual General Meeting

The Annual General meeting will be held in November of each year. During this meeting School Community Council members will be elected for a 2-year term and officers will be chosen.

- 3.2 The School Community Council will meet a minimum of 8 times per year. (December and June meetings are usually omitted.)

3.3 Representative Model of Governance

In this model, the School Community Council represents the wider school community. Meetings are open to the entire school community but only members of the School Community Council may decide upon matters brought before the SCC.

A member of the school community must contact the Chairperson to have items included on the agenda. In certain circumstances there may need to be in camera sessions or delegates may be required to represent respective groups.

The School Community Council reports to the school community using a communications strategy, an annual report at the Annual General meeting.

3.4 Voting

If possible, decisions should be made on a consensus basis. If consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote will determine the outcome. On matters requiring a formal vote, only Permanent Members of the SCC can vote.

3.5 Quorum

A regular meeting cannot occur unless there is a quorum of the SCC members present. (A quorum of the School Community Council shall be a majority of the Representative Members.)

3.6 Special Meeting

A special meeting of a School Community Council shall be called by the chair of the SCC if required to do so by the Board of Education or by a request in writing signed by no fewer than 25 persons who have a child attending that school or who are electors living in the school's attendance area. Only business pertaining the roles and responsibilities of School Community Councils can be considered at a special meeting.

4 Public Consultation and Communication

The School Community Council will consult and communicate with the school community through a variety of strategies which may include but is not limited to:

- Bulletin Board
- Student Agendas
- Website (meeting minutes posted on website)
- Newsletters (School monthly Newsletter, where pertinent)
- Minutes of SCC meetings (available by request)
- Surveys
- Meetings

5 Finance

5.1 Banking

A bank account is established under the name of the William Mason School Community Council and shall be used for the funds of the SCC only. Signing officers will be the Chairperson and the Treasurer. Two signatures are required on all cheques, banking transfers or withdrawals.

5.2 Reporting

The Treasurer shall provide a report (written or verbal) at each regular SCC meeting indicating the opening balance of the account at the beginning of the month, any transactions during the month, and the closing balance at the end of the month. The banking activity will be reported for the month previous to the meeting. This report is to be included in the minutes of the meeting.

A Grant Money Update / Treasurer's Report is to be provided at the September meeting. This report is also to be received at the North East School Division office by the due date (ex: September 21st, 2009); a written request for fund must accompany the form. Note: As of September 2010, the grant is a flat rate of \$ 300.00 plus \$ 2.00 per student (at enrolment).

5.3 Use of Funds

Funding is provided by the Board of Education and is to be used to support the initiatives undertaken by the SCC.

It is the goal of the SCC, wherever possible, to use these funds to provide support and enjoyment to the entire staff and student body. Use of funds have included: Christmas dinner, donations to athletes attending Provincial sporting events, Encounters with Canada, Cougar awards, and contributions towards Student Planners.

6 School Community Council Code of Conduct

The School Community Council will adopt a Code of Conduct. (Appendix B attached).

7 Conflict of Interest

A School Community Council member may occasionally find him/herself in a conflict of interest position in terms of some issue under consideration by the SCC. When this happens, the Member should declare that he/she is in a conflict of interest situation and leave the room for the portion of the meeting, thus refraining from participating in the discussion. The Member should not vote on any decision made on the issue.

8 Handling Complaints or Concerns

8.1 Complaints or Concerns about an Individual Student or Staff Member

Any matter concerning an individual student or staff member must be directed to the staff member of Principal. It is not the responsibility of the School Community Council to deal with the concerns or complaints about individuals other than to direct the concern to the appropriate individual. Board of Education Policy No. 408 – Student and Parent Complaints and Grievances, outlines the appropriate procedure to resolve complaints or concerns.

8.2 Complaints or Concerns about School Community Council Initiatives or Activities

8.2.1 Informal Complaints or Concerns

Provided School Community Council Members are comfortable in their knowledge and feel at ease expressing themselves, concerns or questions about SCC initiatives or activities expressed informally to members of the School Community Council maybe addressed immediately by the Member. If a Member is unsure of the appropriate response, he/she should say so but indicate that he/she will check and get back to the individual. If such a commitment is made the Member must follow through. After responding to the complaint or concern the Member should always ask if their response has been satisfactory. If the individual is not satisfied with the response, the Member should explain how the concern or complaint could be brought to the attention of the School Community Council in a more formal matter.

8.2.2 Formal Complaints or Concerns

Concerns or complaints can be brought to the attention of the School Community Council by addressing the concern in a writing to the Chairperson or by requesting that the Chairperson provide the individual with an opportunity to meet with the School Community Council at an upcoming meeting. The School Community Council will provide a written response regarding how they have or will address the concern or complaint.

9 Conflict Resolution Process

The Conflict Resolution Process will be used by the School Community Council to address both internal conflict, which may occur among individuals within the School Community Council and external conflict that may occur between the School Community Council and individuals, groups or organizations outside of the SCC. The conflict resolution process is outlined in *A Handbook for School Community Councils and Principals* (page 99).

If reasonable attempts to resolve the conflict have been unsuccessful, the Principal or the Chairperson will contact the Superintendent.

10 School Community Council Sub-Committees

Sub-Committees may be appointed on an ad-hoc basis to deal with matters of interest or concern. Committees can be internal and composed of SCC members exclusively or they may have external representation including parents, community members or interested and knowledgeable individuals. All sub-committees shall exist at the will of the Council and shall report to the Council. The School Community Council will act in a coordination role for committees acting in support of the SCC and the school program. No sub-committee may make decision or recommendations without the knowledge and approval of the Council as a whole.

11 Amending the Constitution

This Council shall operate as outlined within the framework established in this Constitution. The Constitution may be amended by the Council prior to the annual meeting of the Council or at a special public meeting convened for that purpose. Any subsequent amendments shall be reported to the public at the annual meeting. Should it be deemed necessary to amend the Constitution, the process shall be as follows:

- Resolutions regarding Constitutional amendments are to be presented to the Executive for their consideration at least 1 regularly scheduled meeting in advance of the Annual Meeting.
- These will then be considered and voted on by the Council. Decisions will be made on the basis of majority vote. Any changes that result shall be presented to the public at the annual meeting.
- Amendments will be submitted in writing to the Board of Education.

Appendix A

Roles and Responsibilities of School Community Council Members

The Chairperson will:

- conduct meetings of the School Community Council;
- ensure that all members have input to discussion and decisions;
- prepare meeting agendas in consultation with the Principal and other School Community Council Members;
- oversee operations of the School Community Council;
- establish networks that support the School Community Council; and
- act as a spokesperson for the School Community Council.

The Vice-Chairperson will:

- support the Chairperson in his/her duties, taking over when the Chairperson is unable to attend; and
- perform responsibilities assigned by the Chairperson.

The Secretary will:

- take minutes at School Community Council meetings;
- receive and send correspondence on behalf of the School Community Council;
- take charge of any official records of the School Community Council; and
- assure that the appropriate notice is given for all meetings of the School Community Council.

The Treasurer will:

- manage the finances of the School Community Council using procedures outlined in the Manual of Board Procedures: Module 2 School Community Councils.

Appendix B

School Community Council Code of Conduct

1. The School Community Council of William Mason School is not a forum for the discussion of individual school personnel, students, parents, or other individual members of the school community.
2. A member of the School Community Council who is approached by a parent with a concern relating to an individual is in a privileged position and must treat such discussion with discretion, protecting the confidentiality of the people involved and directing the parent in accordance with the provisions of Section 8 of the Constitution.
3. A parent or community member who accepts the position as a member of a School Community Council:
 - i. Upholds the constitution and bylaws, policies and procedures of the School Community Council.
 - ii. Performs his/her duties with honesty and integrity.
 - iii. Works to ensure that the well-being of students is the primary focus of all decisions.
 - iv. Respects the rights of all individuals.
 - v. Takes direction from the members, ensuring that the representative processes are in place.
 - vi. Encourages and supports parents and students with individual concerns to act on their own behalf and provides information on the process for taking forward concerns.
 - vii. Works to ensure that issues are resolved through due process.
 - viii. Strives to be informed and only passes on information that is reliable and correct.
 - ix. Respects all confidential information.
 - x. Supports public education.