

# Ryerson Height School Council Constitution

## 1.0 Name

The name of this organization shall be Ryerson Heights School Council, referred to as the School Council.

## 2.0 Purpose (as per Ontario Regulation 612/00)

2.1 The purpose of the School Council is to be a group of informed parents who: provide a voice, listen, respond, advocate, and participate to build relationships between home, school, and community.

2.2 The School Council's primary means of achieving this purpose is by making recommendations in accordance with Regulation 612 to the Principal of the school and the Grand Erie District School Board. Secondary means of achieving this purpose is through profits made by fundraising.

## 3.0 Ryerson Heights School Council Mission Statement

To provide a parent perspective, building relationship between home, school and community.

## 4.0 Composition:

The School Council shall be composed of the following people:

4.1 Parent/guardian members shall constitute a majority of the members of the School Council. This will include a minimum of five (5) parents but not to exceed twenty- five (25).

4.2 The Principal or Vice Principal of the school will be a required member of Council and their attendance will be mandatory at each meeting.

4.3 One teacher from the school other than the Principal.

4.4 A student representative (optional) will be welcome at all meetings. This will be a non-voting member.

4.5 One community representative appointed by the other members of Council. This person cannot be employed by the Grand Erie District School Board.

4.6 A member of the Grand Erie District School Board (eg. Trustee, Superintendent) cannot be a member of School Council.

## 5.0 Election of Parent/Guardian Members

5.1 A person is qualified to be a parent member of the School Council if he or she has a child enrolled at the school.

5.2 A person is not qualified to be a parent member of the Council if they are employed at the school. A parent member who works within the Grand Erie District School Board must disclose their employment at the first meeting they attend, and every September thereafter,

prior to being recognized as a voting member. A parent member may also remain on Council as a non-voting member.

- 5.3 A person is qualified to vote in an election of parent members of Ryerson Heights School Council if he or she is a parent or guardian of a student who is enrolled in the school.
- 5.4 An election of Executive Council members shall be held within the first 30 days of each school year.
- 5.5 The Principal of the school shall inform all parents/guardians at least 14 days prior to the Executive election meeting. The notice of date, location, and time will be given to each student family. The notice will also be posted in an area of the school accessible to parents.
- 5.6 The election of executive members will be by secret ballot.
- 5.7 The Principal of the school shall publish the election results, when they are known, listing the members of the Executive in an area of the school accessible to parents, via newsletter, or posted on the school's website.

## 6.0 Other Elections

- 6.1 The teacher member is a voluntary position and is appointed by the Principal of the school.
- 6.2 The community member is a voluntary position and is appointed by the Council of the school.
- 6.3 The optional student member is a voluntary position and is appointed by a staff member of the school. Other interested students are welcome to attend meetings as a member of the general public.

## 7.0 Term of office

- 7.1 A person elected or appointed as an Executive member of Council holds office from the later of:
  - a) the date he/she is elected or appointed;
  - b) the date of the first meeting of the School Council after elections, until the date of the first meeting of the School Council after elections in the next school year.
- 7.2 Voting and non-voting members shall keep their status, from the previous school year, for the September meeting. Declarations to continue as voting or non-voting will take effect at the next meeting.
- 7.3 A "graduated" member will not be required to return in September.
- 7.4 Each person elected or appointed as an Executive member of Council will only be able to hold the same position for a maximum of 3 consecutive years. After the maximum is reached, this person must step down from their position for 1 year before being eligible to run for this position again. If no other members show interest in the role, a 4th year may be granted.

## 8.0 Vacancies

- 8.1 A vacancy in the membership of School Council, or any Executive position, shall be filled by election or appointment.
- 8.2 A vacancy in an Executive position will be filled by the Chair, Vice-Chair, or by a member on a temporary volunteer basis, until the role is filled.
- 8.3 A vacancy in the membership of School Council does not prevent the Council from exercising its authority.

## 9.0 Officers

- 9.1 The School Council shall have one chair and one vice chair.
- 9.2 The chair must be a parent member of the Council and shall be elected by the voting members of Council.
- 9.3 A person who is employed by the Grand Erie District School Board cannot be an Executive member of the Council.
- 9.4 Ryerson Heights School Council shall have other officers (such as Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Fundraising Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator) the council deems necessary, will be filled on a voluntary basis.
- 9.5 Other officers of the Council may be appointed or elected. Appointment occurs when there is only one qualified member, acceptable to both the Principal and Chair, interested in the vacant position. Election occurs when there are 2 or more qualified members interested in the vacant position.

## 10.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 10.1 Every member of School Council shall adhere to a Code of Ethics, which states each member must:
  - a) consider the best interests of all students,
  - b) be guided by the school's mission statement to provide a parent perspective, enhancing students' success,
  - c) be guided by the School Board's mission to engage, support and inspire all learners to achieve and succeed,
  - d) act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of a School Council as identified by the School's operating guidelines, the School Board, and the Ontario Ministry of Education,
  - e) become familiar with the School's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them,
  - f) maintain the highest standards of integrity,
  - g) recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community,

- h) treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption,**
- i) encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued,**
- j) acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the Council,**
- k) respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the School Council,**
- l) not disclose confidential information,**
- m) limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole,**
- n) use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise,**
- o) promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community,**
- p) declare any conflict of interest,**
- q) and not accept any payment or benefit financially through School Council involvement.**

**10.2 The Chair must be a parent member, not employed by the School Board, elected by Council. In addition to performing the same duties as other Council members, the Chair also:**

- a) arranges meetings in conjunction with the Principal**
- b) prepares agendas**
- c) chairs Council meetings**
- d) ensures that minutes of Council meetings are recorded and maintained**
- e) facilitates the resolution of conflict**
- d) communicates with the Principal on behalf of the Council**
- e) ensures the Vice-Chair has the necessary information to lead a meeting in his/her absence**
- f) maintains a Chair binder of meeting minutes, agendas, and correspondence to be passed on to the incoming Chair**
- g) assists the Principal in preparing any Ministry of Education or Grand Erie School Board council related reports or grant proposals**
- h) votes in case of a tie**
- i) checks the Council mail slot in the school office regularly and ensures required follow through on any items**

**10.3** The Vice-Chair must be a parent member, not employed by the School Board, elected by Council. In addition to performing the same duties as other Council members, the Vice-Chair also:

a) assists the Chair with his/her duties

b) assumes the duties and responsibilities of the Chair in his/her absence

**10.4** The Secretary must be a parent member, not employed by the School Board, elected by Council. In addition to performing the same duties as other Council members, the Secretary also:

a) records minutes of the meeting, arranges for the minutes to be emailed to all Council members, provides a copy to the school's secretary for office binder, places a copy on USB drive, and provides hard copies to those members present at the meeting

b) makes any corrections to previous month's minutes based on feedback from members

**10.5** The Treasurer must be a parent member, not employed by the School Board, elected by Council. In addition to performing the same duties as other Council members, the Treasurer also:

a) obtains a statement of the Council's account and presents this at each meeting, ensuring accuracy and follow-up on Council's decisions

b) provides the school secretary with receipts for items purchased on the Council's behalf

c) does not make purchases with Council money without the approval of Council

d) assists with counting Council funds and creates a deposit slip for the school secretary

## **11.0** Compensation for Volunteers

**11.1** No member, voting member, elected, or appointed position shall receive any form of payment, pay, or salary for their work on Council. Gifts for terms of service are considered a thank you and not a payment.

## **12.0** Meetings

**12.1** The School Council shall meet at minimum four times during the school year, as per Board policy.

**12.2** The School Council shall meet on a date fixed by the Principal of the school within the first 30 days of the school year.

**12.3** A meeting of School Council cannot be held unless,

- a) a majority of the current members of the council are present at the meeting; and
- b) a majority of the members of the council who are present at the meeting are parent members.

12.4 All meetings of the School Council shall be open to the public.

12.5 All School Council will hold its meetings at the school.

12.6 The Principal of the school shall, on behalf of the School Council, give notice of the dates, times, and locations Council meetings to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school.

### 13.0 Committees

13.1 The School Council may establish Committees to make recommendations to the Council.

13.2 Every Committee of the School Council must include at least one voting parent member.

13.3 A Committee of the School Council may include persons who are not members of Council.

### 14.0 Voting

14.1 Voting members on Council consist of:

- a) Parent members
- b) Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Teacher Rep, and Community Rep.

14.2 Non-Voting members on Council consist of:

- a) Principal
- b) Student Representative
- b) The Chair, with the exception of a tie situation, in which case the Chair will vote.

14.2 Each voting member of the School Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by Council.

### 15 Minutes and Financial Records

15.1 The School Council shall keep minutes of all of its meetings, and records of all of its financial transactions.

15.2 The minutes and records shall be available upon request at the school office for examination by any person without charge. A summary of each meeting will be completed by the Secretary and distributed by the Principal via the school website.

15.3 Minutes and records shall be kept on file for a minimum of 4 years.

### 16.0 Incorporation

16.1 The School Council shall not be incorporated.

**17.0 Advisory Authority**

**17.1** The School Council may make recommendations to the Principal of the school or to the Grand Erie District School Board on any matter.

**18.0 Fundraising**

**18.1** The School Council may engage in fundraising activities.

**18.2** The School Council shall not engage in fundraising activities unless,

a) the activities are conducted in accordance with any applicable policies established by the Board and

b) the activities are to raise funds for a purpose approved by the Board or authorized by any applicable policies established by the Board.

**18.3** The School Council shall ensure any funds raised are used in accordance with all applicable policies established by the Board.

**19.0 Annual Report**

**19.1** The School Council shall annually fill out and submit the Annual Report as provided by the Board.

**19.2** If the School Council engages in fundraising activities, the annual report shall include a report on those activities.

**19.3** The Principal shall, on behalf of the School Council, give a copy of the report to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the copy is given, is enrolled in the school. Notice may be given by:

a) posting on the school's website

b) posting the report in the School in a location that is accessible to parents.

**20.0 Conflict of Interest**

**20.1** Any time Ryerson Heights School Council does business with the potential for monetary gain/loss with any person, agency or company, and a member of the council has a vested interest in any way with the particular person, agency or company, that member shall declare a conflict of interest and shall not discuss or vote on any such resolution relating to the matter.

**21.0 Constitution Review**

**21.1** The School Council Constitution shall be reviewed annually beginning in the school year 2019-2020, after the elections for that year.